

Wayfarers™

Fantasy Roleplaying Game

The World of Twylos Campaign Setting



Created by
G. Vrill

Wayfarers™

THE WORLD OF TWYLOS CAMPAIGN SETTING

A Ye Olde Gaming Companye Creation

Copyright © 2012

by

G. Vrill

ISBN: 978-1-907702-81-5

<http://www.yeoldegamingcompanye.com>

Cover art:

Leo Lingas

Back cover art:

Leo Lingas

Interior art:

Jeff Blascyk	Tony Guaraldi-Brown	Jana Pivkova
Matteo Bocci	Jesse Hawley	Jon Sideriadis
Monique Bonneau	Sarah Heinrich	Darryl Taylor
James Cavoretto	Leo Lingas	Scott P. Vaughn
Jeff Fairbourn	Emil Maxén	Fern Wood
Tony Feigel	Darren Patel	

Artwork attributions: Jeff Blascyk⁴⁷, Matteo Bocci^{103, 121}, Monique Bonneau¹⁰⁸, James Cavoretto⁹², Jeff Fairbourn^{25, 61, 69}, Tony Feigel¹²⁰, Tony Guaraldi-Brown⁸⁸, Jesse Hawley², Sarah Heinrich¹⁸, Leo Lingas^{6, 23, 35, 59, 75, 94, 95, 130}, Emil Maxén⁸⁸, Darren Patel³⁰, Jana Pivkova^{38, 41, 52, 65, 67, 77}, Jon Sideriadis^{37, 80, 96}, Darryl Taylor^{58, 73}, Scott P. Vaughn²⁷, Fern Wood^{9, 39, 51}

Pronoun usage: Male and female pronouns are used throughout this book. However to improve readability, occasionally just one gender is used when either would suffice. -The game is meant to be played by all.



*The ills of man are never healed.
Rather, new edifices are raised upon the ruins of the old,
and newer now again atop of those.*

*Who shall bring the last black brick upon the mortar?
Who will suck the last of marrow from our broken bones?*

It cannot last- it cracks and crumbles till even these curtains turn to ash.

Epilogue 1:709. "A Shadow's Fall" by Tabitha Morgan.

Foreword

Gaming changes lives. Chances are, if you're reading this, you're already one of us. If so, you know what to do: steal what you like, and change and throw away the rest. For years now, I've done the same, vigorously ripping off every source I could find, the more obscure the better- paintings, music, books, video games, and movies. Everything is fair game.

If somehow you're new to this stuff though, here's my advice- don't read this front to back. Skim it, look at the pictures, read over some of the interesting words, and see if it resonates.

Twylos was a dirty world. All that mattered was making it fresh, and weird, and simultaneously somehow better and worse than the real world out there. The moments were rare, but they were there- players yelling at each other, screaming at me, shocked into silence, crying in desperation, or finally laughing in triumph.

In the end, it was always about the players- not the characters, but the players- coming together, having fun, and maybe kicking some ass. But always trying to find that certain high, something truly new, different, and exciting.

It's my hope that the World of Twylos gives you at least one new way to mess with your players, and at least change their night, if not their lives. Cheers.

-G. Vrill

THE WORLD OF TWYLOS

Table of Contents

	page		page
1.1 Introduction	3	Vamooris	54
1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos	4	Vasqueray	54
A Brief History of Twylos	4	The Vehrlands	58
Twylos Chronology	7	Appendix 2.1.1: Special Items of Twylos	65
Gods of Twylos	8	Appendix 2.1.2: Creatures of Twylos	71
Kithain	8	Appendix 2.1.3: Example Campaigns	75
Zhol	9	Appendix 2.1.4: Glossary	88
Vorn	9	Appendix 2.1.5: Final Words	92
Rhiannon/Breyana	9	Map of Twylos	94
Ix/Ixus/Ixian	10	2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era	96
Aguierre	10	Introduction	96
Tamara	11	Twylos Chronology	98
Xeres	11	Guilds of Twylos	99
Typhon	11	Armech	100
The Sathar Gods	12	Drohksmere	101
Guilds of Twylos	12	Khaedor	104
Alchemists Guild	12	Nycene	105
Navigators Guild	13	Saethos	105
Slavers Guild	13	Tarach	106
Surveyors Guild	13	Vasqueray	106
Languages of Twylos	13	The Vehrlands	108
2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos	14	Off-World	109
On the Religions of Twylos	14	Appendix 2.2.1: New Disciplines	110
On the Guilds of Twylos	16	Appendix 2.2.2: Viral Magic	111
Places of Twylos	19	Appendix 2.2.3: Special Items of Twylos	116
Armech	19	Appendix 2.2.4: New Creatures	116
Drohksmere	28	Appendix 2.2.5: Glossary	119
Khaedor	36	Afterword, by G. Vrill	120
Nycene	43	Special Appendix: The Lodge of the Bronze Knight	121
Orethredon	44	The Lodge of the Bronze Knight	121
Saethos	44	The Main Lodge	122
Tarach	46	Lodge Members	124

Credits

Wayfarers and the World of Twylos would not have been possible without the contributions, advice, play-testing, and editing provided by many people. We would personally like to thank: Paul Charles Den Hartog (Heuristician), Qi Gao, Edward Cibor, Steve 'Gaddianheim' Stamps, C. F. Godfrey, M. Wolf-Meyer, Justin Ermler, Will Chapman, Anthony Holtberg, Brian Katakowski, Peter Katakowski, Rex Olinger, Josh Olinger, Lonnie Robertson, Bill Hays, Josh Robertson, Paul Sparks, Bill Roberts, Hybban, Kevin Downey, Mark Lewis, Stephen Dawley, Matthew Sprange, David C. F., Mike N., Steve E. S., Mike Pena, David G. Sinclair, Chris Bitzer, Kris Chester, Brandon Perdue, Kirk George, D. Clark, K. Clark, Jon P., Jessica P., Matthew J. Neagley, Liz B, and Daniel C. Mainwaring for their part in this work. We would like to give special thanks to Sylvain Boucher for his employing countless 'Sense Typo' spells upon the manuscript, and to the The Lodge of the Bronze Knight for their contribution to the YOGC community and this book. In addition, we would like to thank the artists who contributed their time and talent to this project.

INTRODUCTION

This is a description of the world of Twylos. This reference material is written mainly for Game Masters running a Wayfarers game. However, this guidebook might also be useful for any game system, as few system-specific details have been included and could easily be converted. Note that this guide is not meant to be a complete description of every location and NPC in this world. Rather, our aim is to provide the Game Master with a sense of flavor and, most importantly, some ideas that might be useful for launching creative and exciting adventures in a different or customized world.

The world described here is the synthesis of seven different settings, used in a series of campaigns that ran almost continuously from 1988 to 2006. These adventures, and the creation of the world of Twylos as presented here, would not have been possible without a large number of passionate and creative players over the years. This work is dedicated to the past gamers of those worlds, and also to the new players of Wayfarers. Enjoy.

-G. Vrill

A PLAYER'S GUIDE TO TWYLOS

The world of Twylos is old. Over the centuries, great cities and kingdoms have flourished but have since fallen into ruin. The first Empire of Irendor, far to the northeast, came to an end centuries ago. In turn, newer nations rose up, and have begun to grow fat and corrupt on the ancient wealth, magic, and technology of the older Empire.

These new nations were once the former colonies of Irendor. In the East is Drohksmere, loosely controlled by the trade conglomerate of the Ulgan Sceptre. To the South are the stone citadels of Khaedor, the debauched island kingdom of Vasqueray, and the island demesne of the power-mad Church of Ixus. The great nation of Tarach today dominates the West. And caught between these forces are the sleepy Vehrlands, expanses of steppes and rolling hills previously ravaged by a thousand-year war.

Irendor itself, diminished for several centuries, is now called Armech. The Great Houses that ruled the fallen Empire have returned to rebuild their nation from the ashes and rust of its former self.

Newer international organizations- the Guilds of the Slavers, Alchemists, Navigators and Surveyors- have united trade routes and industry across Twylos. The Guildsmen have become incredibly rich, so much so that they rival most national governments and the Great Houses in terms of influence. The Slavers Guild are less slave-drivers than they are managers, and the Guild now controls several cities, including the massive slum-ridden trade town of Tzalvas.

Recently, the Guilds have united under the Writ of Coins, allowing every Guildsmen access to any Guildhall and a slew of trade and shipping treaties. Gunpowder and other odd Guild technologies are becoming more frequent as the years pass. As a consequence, the Alchemists Guild in particular has become exceedingly wealthy, due to the popularization of Hedge magic and the accelerated rate of magical-scientific research they have brought about. The conveniences of Hedge magic and alchemical developments have become increasingly part of the noblesse lifestyle, and the Alchemists have called themselves the 'Slavers of tool and invention'.

Meanwhile, classical magedom and the Hermetic Tradition are becoming rarer. Mage academies have begun to close down, and most mages either practice their art in private or have joined ranks with the Alchemists. Mages have increasingly found themselves under attack from some of the major religions of Twylos- the fanatical Church of Ixus, the fallen Knights of Aguierre, the secretive Handmaidens of Zhol, and the druids of the elder Vox Duur.

The priests of these gods, however, have long been enemies, and have spent themselves combating the heresies of the others. The once-ubiquitous Vox Duur have splintered. Some of the Duurans have joined the goblins and gnoles and retreated into the deep forests. Others have re-united with the Church of Winter, a cult of demon worshippers beyond the fringes of polite society. But most others continue to fight against the Church, believed by the Duurans to be the original source of infernalism and Hermetic magic in Twylos.

It is now the year 213 of the Third Era. Peace and trade seem to be flourishing at an unprecedented level. Thus it might seem strange that the newest religion, the Church of Typhon, claims to celebrate the coming apocalypse. Throwing decadent feasts and parties, the Typhonae have rapidly spread across the land from their mother church in the city of Gyre, the so-called jewel of Twylos and artistic capital of the world.

The Imperial Houses, new Guilds, and other more secretive organizations lose themselves in avarice, searching out new riches and ancient magic. The old religions continue to wage their ceaseless crusades, while the Church of Typhon dances towards oblivion. Opportunity, power, and death await some fresh new blood. Welcome to the world of Twylos.

A Brief History of Twylos

The First Era

Twylos (pronounced TWIE-los) is a dark fantasy world in decline. In the earliest days of recorded history, humanoids lived in the mountains and valleys of modern Armech. These regions are still called by their ancient names, the Valan regions of Valstach (the northern mountains) and the Valstedt (an expansive plains). The recent historian Vladimir Ozmandian called this epoch the start of the First Era, which saw these humanoids develop agriculture, metalworking, and a coherent set of religious beliefs.

The Vox Duur

Although since the earliest days, Twylos has contained a large number of cults, political factions, and secret societies, the history of Twylos is the history of the Vox Duur. The Duurans, as they are usually called, were the first of Twylos' religions. Ozmandian places the emergence of the Duurans around 2300 First Era (F.E.). The Duurans are druids, and are essentially a blood sacrifice-based fertility cult revering the Black Man, Vorn, and his wife Rhiannon. The darker side of Rhiannon, Breyana, began to have a cult of her own, the Church of Winter, and while all these priests might call themselves Duurans and think of themselves as the true Vox Duur, over the centuries the Duurans have split into many sub-sects, continually fighting with each other. With the magic of the Duurans and metal weapons, the humans of the Valan region began to dominate the culture and consolidate themselves as a nation, ruled by a king who claimed to be descended from the war god Aguierre.

The Thainists

The Duurans avoided the growing civilized areas and cities of Irendor, preferring to live and worship in the wilderness or deep caves. As the Duurans grew increasingly estranged and distant, the Valan people came to revere Kithain and Zhol, gods of fate, destiny, and death. An extensive cult of Zhol was spawned in the vast armies of Irendor, with many soldiers worshipping Zhol's son Morday, also called Mordred. Large churches of these gods were built by their followers the Thainists, starting around 2000 F.E. While most of the other gods were perceived as terrible and fearsome, the Lady Kithain was viewed as nurturing, and this was reflected in the many projects undertaken by her disciples in the public service. The Thainists have remained a neutral faction, popular throughout Twylos, although their neutrality has often been seen as a source of weakness.

Irendor

Eventually the Valan people were united by a set of warring families, called Houses, into the great Empire of Irendor. Bloody warfare gave way to trade wars, which were equally brutal but with much less loss of life. As the Great Houses subjugated the outlying farming and hunter-gatherer societies, with their sophisticated magic and technology, the Empire of Irendor grew in size and status. While the Imperial House

Valstach still worshipped Aguierre, much of Irendor revered the militaristic Church of Mordred. The other Great Houses began to rival House Valstach for control of the nation. With the great wealth of the Houses, academic studies of art, science, and Hermetic magic began to flourish. In 1104 F.E., the first Hermetic academy, the Arcanum, was established just beyond the edge of Irendor by exiles wanting freedom from control by the Houses and churches. The Arcanum was open for over three centuries, but the Duurans finally drove the mages out and shut down the school in 776 F.E.

The Ixians

Sometime during the second millennium of Irendor history, a philosophical tradition was developed among the soldier class. Breaking with the rest of the churches, these warrior-monks believed that salvation and god were not to be found in outer realms and terrible magic, but in the depths of the soul. Calling themselves the clergy of Ixus, their fanaticism eventually led to a series of failed coups, both intellectual and martial. For treason, they were exiled from the Empire, shipped off and expected to die. The Ixians managed to survive, inhabiting the far-off island of Nycene, and gradually began to grow in power. The exile of the Ixians was just the first in a series of several waves of emigration from the core of the Empire to colonies in the East, West, and South. A later tradition dating from 500 F.E., called the Order of Ixian, attempted to take a more scholarly and peaceful approach. This was well-received, particularly by magicians and the historians that began to emerge, documenting the complex and opaque relationships, marriages, and bloodlines that the Irendi Houses accrued.

The Purge of the Antiarch

By the end of the second millennium, the Irendor Empire reached far across the north of Twylos. Colonists had begun to leave for all corners of the world, impeded by poor maps, bad records, and horrible monsters. Meanwhile, the heart of the Empire itself had grown soft. Work was performed by slaves, and the rulers of the Houses had grown apathetic. In the year 822 F.E., Caradoc, a former slave who had returned from the dead, raised a small army of fanatical followers. These men and women called Caradoc the 'Antiarch', the beloved of Aguierre and His hand on Twylos. With the righteousness of the Order of Aguierre, his army grew in number and destroyed all but one of the temples of Mordred, crushing the religious base of most of the lesser Houses and their militias. In this war, the Purge of the Antiarch, House Valstach was restored along with the glory of the Empire, and many of the rogue colonist states were folded back into Irendi control.

The Handmaidens

While the divine nation of Irendor settled back into peace and prosperity, the reverberation of war spread across the smaller fringe states of Twylos. The new nations of Khaedor, Verlainen, Nycene, and Vasqueray began to fight over control of the south and west. In 700 F.E., a group of Thainist widows, aggravated at their order's lack of response and grieving over the deaths of their families, took up arms and crossed Twylos, trying to suppress conflicts by slaughtering all in their way. They called themselves the Brides of Zhol, dubbed the Handmaidens by the Verlainen soldiers who lost to them at the first fall of Vesbridge, in a battle still commemorated today as "Maid's Misery". The Handmaidens moved west, slaughtering scores of Zhellan, Verlainen, and Sathar warriors as their numbers grew from the numerous widows, sisters, and children of those previously killed in battle. Eventually, they settled in Murdyne, a heavily-armed compound at the western edge of Twylos.

The Second Era

While the Order of Ixian used a complicated dating system throughout what is now called the First Era, Vladmir Ozmandian completely revised this system, using a specific event to pinpoint the end of the First Era. Thus, Ozmandian dates the end of the First Era and start of the Second Era (S.E.) with the exile of House Tharose from Irendor. House Tharose was the most progressive and seditious of the Great Houses, and Ozmandian believed that the removal of Tharose led not only to the formation of the great successor state of Irendor, Tarach, but was the first step in the destabilization and downfall of the Irendi Empire. House Tharose took vast tracts of land in the northwest of Twylos, wresting control from the Verlainen in a series of decisive battles.

The Fall of Irendor

Tarach was thus established as the main destination for colonists, and many of the Empire's brightest scholars and ambitious mercenaries left for the new, seemingly-limitless opportunities. Meanwhile, the Imperial House Valstach had been weakened by a long period of infighting, political machination, and assassination. The original Valstach bloodline, descended from Aguierre, had ceased to exist, and the last true Emperor, Illyrian Valstach VIII, died without a surviving heir in 213 S.E. As the Great Houses attacked each other for control of a now-meaningless throne, many of their supporting Lesser Houses fled for the outer colonies. Within a few centuries, the Empire ceased to have any sway over the matters of Twylos. In 237 S.E., control of Irendor transferred to an initially-ineffective council called the Iron Throne, who renamed their nation Armech. While the Fall of Irendor would continue for many decades, the seeds of new House control also slowly began to flower; towards the close of the Second Era, Armech would re-emerge as a major power in the world.

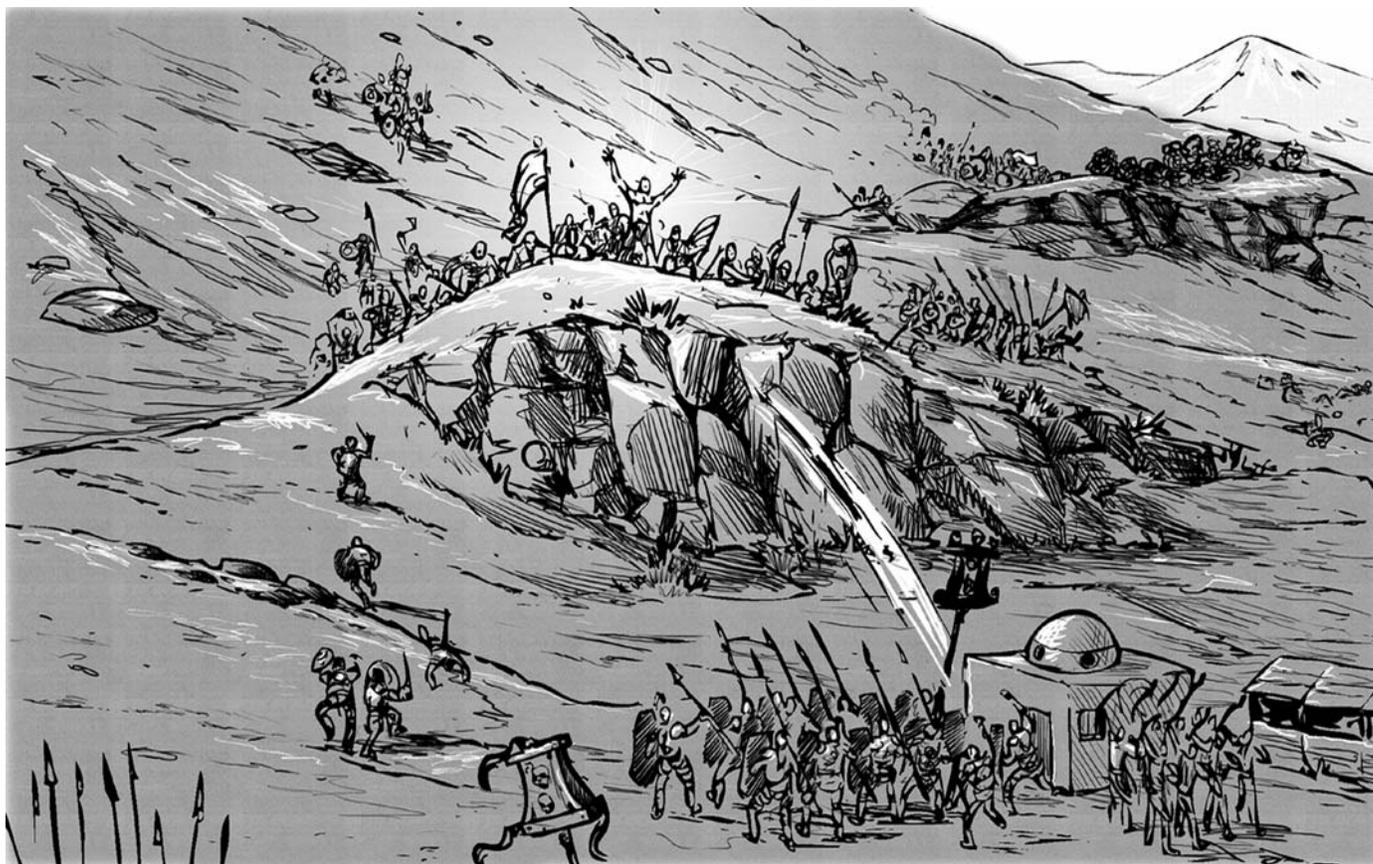
The Vehrlands War

As the Empire diminished, the strength of the colonies and nascent states grew. Eventually, the western nations came into conflict with each other. The hotspot for what would become a thousand-year long series of land wars was the Vehrlands, the region between Verlainen and Tarach to the north, Khaedor and the Zhellve to the east, and the older Empire of Saethos, of the reptilian Sathar, to the south.

The first conflict was sparked by human adventurers from the Vehrlands venturing into the hitherto-unexplored Saethan desert to loot the treasure of the dragon kings, the gods of the Sathar. The reptilian nation, previously quiet and thought to be quite small, rose up in fury against the other humanoids to the north. Throughout the Second Era, however, the Sathar could not contend with the combined forces of the northern lands, winning battles only when Khaedor and the Vehrlands were preoccupied with fighting each other. The southern reptilian empire collapsed during this period. The northern nation settled by House Tharosen profited greatly by supporting the Vehrlands tribes, and in 700 S.E., officially declared their independence from Armech, although by this point this was mere formality. The Mendhelose family took the crown and held it for the following 800 years.

Rhuaxen

During the Vehrlands War, there was intense interest in Saethos and what the reptilians might have hidden in the desert. The proximity of the Ixian island of Nycene, and the similarly hard conditions of both places produced a large exodus of Ixians into Saethos. In 508 S.E., a comet was widely observed across Twylos, and much of Saethos felt the blast and saw several days of irradiated skies when it crashed into the deep desert.



One tradition of Ixian mysticism believed in connections between the gods within and the gods without, and heralded the coming of this comet as a sign that the Ixian faith would soon sweep the world. The high priest of Sun Keep, Rogan DuLaine, believed this to be true, and took two advisors into the depths of Saethos to investigate the crash himself. His advisors devolved into priests of Xeres, the terrible god of madness, and DuLaine went insane wandering for nine years in the sands. When he returned to Sun Keep, the guardians of the Ixian sanctuary smashed him to a pulp, lest he contaminate the inner keep with his heresy. The writings of DuLaine survived, including his name for the huge mountain of crystal and fused glass that he found, Rhauxen. The humiliated Ixians stayed in Nycene, and the spiritual leadership of their church was transferred to a beautiful, innocent child, the Sun King.

Vasqueray and the Sea-kings

Nycene could not contend with their neighbors for domination of the southern seas and coasts. The island kingdom of Vasqueray had come to be ruled by a powerful family of sorcerers and witches known as the Sea-kings. Free from the wars ranging on the mainland, Vasqueray prospered, and culture and magical experimentation flourished. Gradually, the same problems that plagued the Irendor Empire began to affect the Sea-king dynasty, and the diseases and madnesses of incest took their toll. The last, most powerful, and most famous members of the dynasty, Lord Ixondr and Lady Muriel, suddenly disappeared in the wake of a massive court conspiracy to depose their bizarre rulers. The islands of Vasqueray, now free of central authority, began to fight among themselves and much of Vasqueray's wealth and art was lost. As before, some of the greatest artists fled to the more relaxed nation of Tarach to work happily and peacefully.

The Third Era

Ozmandian dates the end of the Second Era as the year 1279 S.E., and denotes this same year as the start of the current Third Era (T.E.). In this year, the famous Vehrlands Covenant was signed between Khaedor, the Vehrlands, and Saethos in a ceremony lasting several weeks, due to the vast number of dignitaries and agreements that needed to be reached. Incidentally, 1279 S.E./0 T.E. was the same year Vladmir Ozmandian himself was born. While the First Era was dominated by the rise (and fall) of Irendor and the major religions of Twylos, and the Second Era detailed the struggles of the outlying colonies to assert themselves and be recognized as mature states, the Third Era has seen the global unification of Twylos in the hands of great merchant Guilds and trade organizations. The first two eras were the subjects of Ozmandian's treatises, "The Theologies" and "The Histories", the work that established a single historical narrative for Twylos, assured Ozmandian's fame, and ultimately led to his death in the course of his research on the origins of the Ixians.

The Rise of the Guilds

Slavery was an essential component of Twylos society since the first days of the proto-Irendor Empire. Throughout the centuries, especially when the Houses began to grow decadent off their established wealth, there was a need for central organization, cooperation, and training of this huge work force. The Slavers thus became an independent group, working with the Houses and other governments to acquire and move slaves across the world. With large numbers of subjects and almost limitless funding, the Slavers became extremely good at their job. Their duties increased, and during the wars of the Second Era, the Slavers became a combination of local police force, jailers, trainers, and managers. Today, many slaves are temporary workers, serving months to years as slaves as punishment for crime. The largest number remains those born into slavery, which tend to be treated rather well. The

Slavers began to transport their cargo far distances, requiring sophisticated knowledge of shipping routes over land and sea. They also saw the need for medicine and psychoactive agents to aid them in their behavioral conditioning programs. For these reasons, massive international businesses, the Guilds, arose during the Third Era. The Slavers were the first of these Guilds, incorporating in 1 T.E. after the Vehrlands Covenant made reliable international transport a reality. The Slavers, and other Guilds, also helped enforce the dictates of the Covenant. In 45 T.E., the Slavers had convinced enough ship captains of the riches available, and the Navigators Guild was founded. The third Guild, the Surveyors, were established later (120 T.E.), as it was substantially more difficult to contact and connect with the caravan masters, trackers, and bandit leaders that would come to form their group. The Surveyors have since begun to create, protect, and improve roads, such as the Zhellan Trade road between Rheyas and Tzalvas, the main route linking the northern and southern countries of Twylos.

With their treasury, the Guilds paid three powerful magicians a large sum of money to map the world. In the academy founded by Gauston Vausse, Marachs Von Ehlling produced this map in 170 T.E., generally considered to be the greatest act of magedom to date. The Guilds initially attempted to keep the map a secret, but copies were soon leaked, and now the geography of all of Twylos is common knowledge.

The Ulgan Sceptre

The fourth and final Guild is that of the Alchemists, created in 166 T.E. Alchemy and proto-Hedge magic had developed in parallel with Hermetic magic, mainly used by local herbalists and apothecaries. However, the tenets and teachings of Hedge magic were finally codified by members of a mage academy known as the Guuran Tower. The Guuran Tower was a department of magical experimentation in the Ulgan Sceptre, which was a massive trade organization that came to dominate the far eastern colony of Drohksmere in the second century of the Third Era. Left to their own devices while the West fought itself in the Vehrlands War, the Easterners reconnected with the trade Houses of Armech, and also established positive relations with the Giants and Ogres of Andukar, a dangerous mountainous region that contained several lucrative mines. John Ulgan, founder of the Ulgan Sceptre, turned a small shipping operation into a trade network that spanned thousands of miles and brought several disparate city-states together into the new oligarchic nation of Drohksmere. As the Ulgan Sceptre matured, it came into several conflicts with the Guilds and the Armechian Houses. Frustrated by the bureaucracy and lack of profit-sharing, many members of the Ulgan Sceptre's Guuran Tower abruptly quit, contacted the Slavers and Navigators, and turned themselves into the Alchemists Guild. This led to a wide-scale adoption of Hedge Magic across Twylos. The success of Hedge Magic was also due to its seeming innocuousness; the Alchemists and Hedge Mages were seen as friendly eccentrics, compared to the reputation that Hermetic and Ritual Magic practitioners had as being greedy, violent, infernalists, and psychotic.

The Church of Typhon

The Third Era also saw the development of Twylos' last religion- the Church of Typhon. The great city of Gyre, a massive independent city-state, became a focal point for trade between the Guilds, the Ulgan Sceptre, and the aristocrats of Armech and Vasqueray. The Alchemists chose Gyre as their base of operations, helping to consolidate Gyre as Twylos' most modern and wealthy city. Some of this money went to the new Church of Typhon, a charismatic and fun-loving collection of priests and artists who seemed to revel in demonic and disturbing iconography, and threw enormous, sometimes orgiastic parties called Feasts of Typhon. With the support of the newly rich families and artists of Gyre and the south, the Typhonae rapidly spread across Twylos.

They have come to be hated by most of the other religious organizations, especially the Duurans and the Ixians, but the centuries of conflict between the Vox Duur, the Church of Winter, the Church of Ixus, and various other sects has rendered them somewhat impotent to marshal themselves against the Church of Typhon.

The Black Rose Rebellion

The coming of the Typhonae to Tarach coincided with the overthrow of the long-ruling Mendhelose family. Civil unrest had already begun to appear in Tarach during the early Third Era, but finally resulted in a rebellion against the lazy and decadent King Aaron Mendhelose. The leader of the so-called Black Rose Rebellion was Maraxam Belvaunt, established as the new King of Tarach. The name 'Black Rose' came from the rose-crest symbol of House Tharose, adopted by the Mendhelose family. The night of Belvaunt's usurpation, the banners of the Mendhelose 'Palace of Roses', Avenaigh, burned black. Belvaunt has quashed civil disturbances with his mercenary army, and while order has been restored to Tarach, many of the older nobles have begun to fear for their lives.

Contemporary Twylos

It is now the year 213 T.E. Armech is no longer a mere shadow of its former greatness, and there are rumors of ascent of another Emperor. While small-scale land wars continue as they always have, across the world there is a new era of international trade, relatively free of bloodshed. Twylos in the Third Era is a relatively literate place, with technological levels similar to the 15th century Renaissance of Earth. While most of Twylos is distinctly low magic and low fantasy, pockets of the world have high fantasy and technological elements about them. The historical account depicted above should be considered common knowledge to new player characters about to begin their adventures in the world of Twylos.

It would seem then that Twylos is thriving; why does this history begin by stating that Twylos is a world in decline? With the advent of global trade and travel, a number of smaller organizations, some of them also calling themselves 'guilds', have arose, such as the Bone Trade of Mask and Vussar, the Guild of Optics, or the Museum Scholars organized by the disciples of Vladimir Ozmandian. These groups, often associated with rogue magicians and curious scholars, not only aim to turn a profit, but also seek to discover hidden knowledge and magic best left undisturbed. The previous stewards and guardians against iniquity and infernalism- the Vox Duur, the Ixians, and the Knights of Aguirre- find themselves marginalized and confronted not with one great evil, but a host of lesser ones. It is difficult to know who to trust and what to believe. Across Twylos, in small villages or at the highest levels of government, leaders and ruling families have been infiltrated by the Cult of Winter, the Typhonae, demons, and the alien creatures of the mad god Xeres. Typhon is the god of apocalypse, and his servants claim that two or more of the Keys of Typhon, signs heralding the end of Twylos, have already come to pass. The great Duuran Hierophant Petrarch once considered a mirror as an apt metaphor for Twylos. The years ahead will determine whether Twylos is about to break.

Twylos Chronology

First Era

- c. 2300: Origins of the Vox Duur.
- c. 2000: Beginnings of the Thainists.
- c. 1400: Foundations of the Empire of Irendor.
- 1104: Foundation of The Arcanum near Umslamyr.

1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos

c. 1000: Origins of the Church of Ixus. Possible inhabitation of Voon.
822: Caradoc appears in Unsbrecht, announcing himself as the Antiarch of Aguierre.
820-800: Purge of the Antiarch.
800: Death of Caradoc in the Zhellve. Caradoc's Lieutenants scatter; swords of the Antiarch lost.
776: The Arcanum closes.
700: St. Agatha and the Thainists of Murdyne become the first Handmaidens of Zhol.
698: Maids' Misery at Vesbridge.
504: Anduran Maxillian and followers break from the Church of Ixus to found the Order of Ixian.

Second Era

0: Beginnings of Sathar recorded history. Exile of Great House Tharach from Irendor.
0-200: The Fall of Irendor. Colonization of Tarach.
50-217: The "Spice Days" of Piedmont.
101-102: Nilsovehn between Zouthan and Khallass.
213: Death of the last Emperor, Illyrian Valstach VIII.
231: The Vehrlands War begins when the dragon-kings of Saethos are slain.
237: Founding of The Aagsreicht. Ascension of the Iron Throne in Irendor/Armech.
300: Handmaidens turn Piedmont into a leper colony.
333: Beginnings of The Traveling Circus of Piedmont.
476: Founding of Luksharrow in Turth.
508: Rhaxen forms. Rogan DuLaine enters the desert.
517: Rogan DuLaine returns to Sun Keep and is destroyed by the Gatesmen.
601: Foundation of Arosquey.
668: Sebastian Mordechs discovers the Morningside Tombs.
670: Mordechs discovers Tharkenge.
680: Mordechs discovers Gothmenes at Tharkenge.
700: Tarach becomes a nation. Valstedt Slave road forged by the Slavers.
718: Avenaigh constructed.
800-1100: Height of Vasqueray's power under the Sea King legacy.
1200: End of Vasqueray's Sea King dynasty.
1279: Birth of Vladmir Ozmandian. End of Second Era.

Third Era

0: Vehrlend Covenant signed at Llesendor, ending the Vehrlands War.
1: Slavers Guild chooses their Guild symbol, officially becoming the first of the Guilds.
20: Birth of Pavis Vrayne.
23: Lord Ixondr retires to Thorneskeep.
45: Navigators Guild founded.
48: Vladmir Ozmandian publishes [The Histories](#).
50: Vladmir Ozmandian publishes [The Theologies](#).
53: Vladmir Ozmandian dies in Praxis.
77: Pavis Vrayne reorganizes the Museum Scholars.
98: Death of Pavis Vrayne.
103: First and Second Keys of Typhon revealed to Geryon Krassus.
120: Surveyors Guild founded.
133: Ulgan Sceptre takes control of Ullyade.
151: Death of John Ulgan.
160: Kierven Strauze kills the Baron Zostig and re-opens Xociene.
166: Alchemists Guild founded.
170: Kierven Strauze gives Napres to Gauston Vausse. Foundation of the Vausse Academy.
174: The Vausse Academy disappears.
182: The Symestra Gold-Rush.
184: Arosquey closes as storm clouds cover Rheyas.

185: Bienstock Massacre at Tzalvas.
190: Silence of Zostig.
192: Writ of Coins of the Great Guilds.
197: Aramach Vox Thrauxes moves to Napres.
200: Incident at Rhaxen.
203: Asantha Morgaine murdered by loethane the Red-Handed. Fayde Ehling revolts.
205: Founding of The Arcanum in Gyre.
209: Black Rose Rebellion in Tarach; usurpation and coronation of Maraxam Belvaunt.
211: The dragon Strabo destroys Symestra and Lockmere.
213: Present day.

Gods of Twylos

There are several major religions of Twylos:

- the Thainists, revering Kithain and Zhol, the gods of life, fate, and death
- the Duurans, an ancient druidic society worshipping Vorn and Rhiannon/Breyana
- the Ixians, who believe in the self, Ix, as a source of power
- the Knights of Aguierre, paladins in service to the old Empire of Irendor
- the Typhonaes, a new church celebrating the apocalypse
- the Suvan Azure, honoring the old dragon-kings of Saethos

In addition, there are smaller sects and cults that worship several other gods, including Xeres, Timmorn, and the lesser deities of the main theological traditions. Most people in Twylos believe and respect all the gods, regardless of their primary faith, and it is not uncommon to actively participate in the rituals and rites of multiple religions (the Thainists and the Duurans being the most common).

Beginning Faith magic-using characters will usually start as Thainists by default. The Thainists are a relatively benign, innocuous group found everywhere across Twylos. This then allows characters and players new to Twylos to explore the different philosophies and religions of the world, possibly changing faiths (even multiple times) as the character learns more and grows spiritually. There is no game system mechanism for changing a character's faith or religion. This must be handled in-game, usually requiring that the character talk with members of the religion, take new vows, and possibly carry out some task, like performing a ritual, acting in service of the church, or offering a donation.

Kithain

The Thainists: Symbols are the loom, the circle, or a mirror. The Thainists believe that Lady Kithain dictates, or just is, causality; she is a neutral, generally benevolent force in the universe, or nature itself. The Thainists are doubtless Twylos' largest, friendliest, and most popular sect. They are also the most widespread, found almost everywhere in Twylos. Thainists are generally respected and admired, and Thainist churches are havens for the downtrodden, sick, and deranged.

For player characters, beginning Faith and Ritual Magic practitioners (priests and druids) generally begin as Thainists. Dedicated Thainists get a +1 health point modifier to all healing magic. Primary Domain (all Circles available): Benefaction. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Revelation. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Tellurgy.

The Handmaidens: Symbols are the sword of Zhol, a teardrop, a hand, or a circle. Different from the Thainists, the Handmaidens claim to be the brides of Zhol. A small sub-sect, relatively secretive, they are devoted to ending wars and conflicts by violent methods, usually

attempting to massacre both sides until the war has ended. They are fatalistic and somewhat amoral, and believe strongly that those who wield weapons deserve to be slain by them. Female and eunuch clergy only, believing themselves the spiritual children of Kithain and the brides of Zhol. They have in the past strived to destroy the cults of Ixus, Ixian, Mordred, Aguierre, and the Vox Duur. The Handmaidens started officially when in 700 F.E., in the wake of the Antiarch, the clergies of Mordred and Aguierre were warring in the town of Murdyne, and a small group of women (the widows of six slain innocents) rose up to cast out all religious factions, killing a handful of both Orders in the process. They then proceeded to sweep across the Vehrlands, culminating in a bloody event called Maids' Misery, which ended the first series of battles in the Vehrlands War. Handmaidens usually take vows of poverty, giving everything they own save their implements of battle, to their church or to the Thainists.

Handmaidens live and die with their weapons. Damage spells with a range of Touch (e.g., Pain Touch) may be inflicted with a melee weapon used by the Handmaiden. Primary Domains (all Circles available): Benefaction and Damnation.

Zhol

The Order of Zhol: Symbol is the sword of Zhol. Zhol is death to Kithain's life. The Order believes that Kithain and Zhol rule the universe; Kithain weaves the patterns of life while Zhol decides where to cut the threads. While the Order doesn't enjoy the popularity of the Thainists, they are still as widespread and accepted (which is just as much the work of the Thainists as the Order of Zhol). There are believed to be three other deities under Zhol: Nergal, Mordred, and Gayla. Nergal is considered to be Zhol's brother, Mordred (or Morday in Irendi) his son/nephew, and Gayla his daughter/sister/wife.

Priests of Zhol gain a +2 modifier to Mental Resistance checks. Primary Domains (all Circles available): Benefaction and Damnation.

The Church of Nergal: No official symbols, as the Church tends to avoid such trappings. Every bone, grave, and cadaver in Twylos is a symbol of Nergal's presence. Nergal is Zhol's 'brother', appointed by Zhol to govern the underworld. The clergy of Nergal believe it is their job to help sort out and take care of the dead, to properly bury or dispose of them, and in some cases, help the living along. Many members of the Order of Zhol are proper clerics of Nergal, and vice-versa. The same goes for Thainists as well- there are Thainists who can and will recite Nergal/Zhol death rites at funerals, for example. The faiths of Kithain and Zhol are fundamentally connected.

Priests of Nergal gain a +2 modifier to Physical Resistance checks. Primary Domain (all Circles available): Benefaction. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Damnation. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Revelation.

Vorn

The Vox Duur: Symbol is a gnarled elm tree, or a stone square or circle. Usually called 'the Duurans'. The Vox Duur are an ancient earth-cult, the druids of Twylos, and as such the Vox Duur are believed to be the oldest sect on Twylos. However, their faith has evolved considerably since its beginnings. The Vox Duur (a Duuran/Irendi term meaning 'the Voice of the Land') originally paid homage to Vorn, Rhiannon, and Breyana equally, but a split within the cult led some followers to found the Church of Spring, while the others became today's Vox Duur. The Vox Duur, while generally benevolent, are quite closed to outsiders. The original Vox Duur were a blood-cult, and date from at least 2300 F.E. Vorn is the Black Man, Twylos itself, Male to Rhiannon/Breyana's Female. The Vox Duur's status in Twylos is similar

to that of Zhol's- while not appreciated by everyone, almost everyone respects or fears Vorn. The Duurans are found across the planet.

The Vox Duur believe in a doctrine of eternal recurrence, which they call the Voran Cycle. Everything, including Kithain, Zhol, Breyana, and Twylos, are just parts of the same system, which is Vorn. History plays itself out on Twylos in similar patterns time and time again- it is Vorn, unceasingly trying to resolve itself. If there are problems in the cycle, events transpire on Twylos or within Vorn to ultimately take care of the problem. The Duurans are much less deterministic, and thus less passive, than the Thainists. They behave proactively to fulfill Vorn's will. The Duurans suffered a major schism around 200 T.E. Many different factions split off, some joining with the Cult of Winter (which also suffered from the same splintering), some dedicated their lives to the eradication of the Cult. Others set themselves against the Church of Typhon, against specific mage schools, or mages in general. Still others ventured into the cities, or headed off into the deep wilderness to band with the goblins and gnoles. Now, Duurans will war against other Duurans, depending on specific philosophy. Duurans from some of the older sects, upon obtaining 5th Circle, sometimes undergo an elaborate ritual to become Duuran Bloodlords or Bloodmaids. Rarely occurring today, these leaders were usually appointed in times of crisis, to help defend a group of Duurans or exact revenge for heresy.

Duurans gain one extra Ritual Magic spell point per day for each Circle of Ritual Magic they possess. Primary Domain (all Circles available): Tellurgy. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Revelation. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Benefaction.



Rhiannon/Breyana

The Church of Spring: Symbols include flowers, young children and beautiful people everywhere. The Church of Spring and the Vox Duur have as intimate a relationship as the Thainists do with the Church of Zhol. Rhiannon is the ubiquitous goddess of fertility, youth, innocence,

1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos

and rebirth. Thus, Rhiannon maintains a strong following throughout Twylos. The Church of Spring honor Rhiannon as a mother figure, as do the Vox Duur and most of Twylos. They still respect all the other deities, but Rhiannon's gifts to Twylos are the ones that have made life worth living- laughter, youth, love, and joy. The Church of Spring and the Thainists often work and worship together.

Clergy of Rhiannon gain one extra Benefaction spell of 1st Circle per day. Primary Domains (all Circles available): Benefaction and Tellurgy.

The Church of Winter: Symbol is a snowflake or six-branched candelabra. The popular view of the Church of Winter is that it is a demon-worshipping bloodcult (often referred to as the 'Cult' of Winter). Breyana is age and corruption to Rhiannon's innocence; she is vindictiveness and jealousy. In general, the Church is matriarchal; females are priests and males are usually drones or mages. According to the Vox Duur, the Church of Winter pays homage to six demonic kings as well, named Rexor, Moloch, Asmoday, Kala, Bael, and Liira. The relationship between Rhiannon and Breyana is not straightforward. The two deities are thought of as twins, or even two sides of the same divine entity. The Vox Duur respect the power of Breyana, and in their own way, they pay homage to her. Not to glorify her, but to appease her, placate her, and make sure she stays as far away from Twylos as she can. They believe she is the destructive force, counter to Rhiannon's live-giving force. Therefore, many Duurans hate the Church, and hunt members of it down. However, during the Fall of Irendor, other members of the Vox Duur reunited with the Church of Winter; these are generally thought to be the Northern and some of the far Western druids.

Priests of Breyana regularly traffic with demons and other infernal creatures, seeking hidden knowledge from these entities. At any time, a priest may expend a spell of any Circle to gain a bonus equal to 1/2 that Circle to a skill check of any of the following skills: Arcane Knowledge, Dweomercraft, Extra-planar Knowledge, Magic Acuity, or Religious Knowledge. For example, a priestess of Breyana could sacrifice a 5th Circle spell to gain a +3 modifier to an Arcane Knowledge check. Alternatively, a druid may expend two Ritual spell points to confer a +1 modifier to such skill checks, to a maximum of +4 (at the expense of 8 spell points). Primary Domain (all Circles available): Tellurgy. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Revelation. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Damnation.

Ix/Ixus/Ixian

The Church of Ixus: Symbol is a golden, broad-leafed spear, a triangle within a double circle, or flames. Priests of Ixus and Ixian are both called 'Ixians', which occasionally leads to some confusion. Members of the Church believe that there exists some primal divine force, Ix, central to each person. Mortals cannot achieve or know Ix; rather, the best anyone can do is Ixus- a blemished, mortal, and imperfect image of the purity of Ix. The Clergy say that most people deny Ixus, causing it to become a deep rage. It is conscience, fear or courage, intellect, and awe. Clergy members say that it is the responsibility of every man to know Ixus- not by succumbing, but by becoming- the passion at the root of the individual. Sun Keep, the golden citadel of Nycene, is the focal point of Church organization. The historian Ozmandian puts them at about 1000 F.E., beginning with their exile from Irendor to the farthest corner of Twylos, and the Museum Scholars believe that it was this official dating that led the Church to mark him for death. There are lots of old stories and anecdotal reports that have instilled a sense of fear or hatred of the Clergy in commoners. There are reports of psychotic Ixian attacks, and many members are regarded as being extremely humorless, especially about their nomenclature: Ix is unspoken, as it is the unknowable, while Ixus and Ixian are different aspects of the mortal Ix, and Ixian in general loosely refers to members of either organization. Tensions

remain high between members of the Church of Ixus and most other religions, as members of the Church, while accepting of the other deities, tend towards agnosticism or apathy on their behalf. 'Hands' of Ixus are not uncommon- five members of the Church that act as a Church police force. One of these members is called the 'Mouth' (sometimes the 'Thumb' by detractors), and handles negotiations. There is speculation that a third internal group exists within the Church, the 'Eye'. The Church of Ixus regularly comes into conflict with the Church of Typhon, and is prone to infiltration by priests of Xeres.

The Church of Ixus believes that spiritual fulfillment (the "road to Ix") is along paths called 'amanas'. Example are: ax-amana (warriors; literally, the Way of Death), ehm-amana (scholars, different from the Order of Ixian), gul-amana (business trade), oolm-amana (Way of Xeres), ki-amana (families) and met-amana (art).

Priests of Ixus get a +2 modifier on resistance checks against Hermetic magic and Faith magic of non-Ixian nature. Acquiring Hermetic or Hedge magic nullifies this modifier. Primary Domain (all Circles available): Damnation. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Tellurgy. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Benefaction. Ixians tend to use fire magic. Spells cast by priests of Ixus that directly cause damage may, at the priest's option, inflict fire damage.

The Order of Ixian: No real symbols- although the triangle and an open book are both standard iconography. The Order of Ixian is more esoteric, elitist, and well-mannered than the Church. The Order believes that Ixian is the true wellspring of power and will within individuals. They have said that Ixus, as the Church calls it, is a base lust, ultimately destructive. True good can come only from introspection and the peaceful search for knowledge. Thusly, the Order is smaller and quieter than the Church, but has gained more respect for itself. Founded formally in the year 504 F.E. as expatriates from Nycene when the Church of Ixus first claimed it. They have since been welcomed back. Their leader was Lord Anduran Maxillian, a powerful man responsible for the founding of the old city of Rauthos (upon which the newer city is built) and who was credited with bringing a high quality of education to the Empire of Irendor.

Members of the Order apply a +1 modifier to all Knowledge proficiency checks. Primary Domain (all Circles available): Revelation. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Tellurgy. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Benefaction. Ixians tend to use fire magic. Spells cast by Ixian priests that directly cause damage may, at the priest's option, inflict fire damage.

Aguierre

The High Order of Aguirre: (ag-WHY-er) Symbols are a shining sun, an upraised blade, and a bolt of lightning. Also called by different people at different times, the Children of Dawn and the Protectorate, but generally referred to now as the Paladins or the Knights. Aguirre is also known as the Stormlord or the Paladinson. There are generally two sorts of clergy- priests and knights, who individually often take 'Paladin' as their title. Proud, warlike, and almost as zealous as members of the Church of Ixus, but much more orderly and civilized. The Order, now much smaller than at the peak of the Irendor Empire, sees itself as the champions of Aguirre's Word, the True Law. The Order believes in an absolute truth, absolute justice, that men hope and struggle to aspire to. They therefore tend a bit fanatical, acting more like crusading martyrs than a local police force. Their main temples are found in Armech and Khaedor, and their mother church is at the heart of Unsbrecht Keep, called The Unsgaard. It is here where the Librum Rexus was kept, the holy book of Aguirre that chronicles the events of the Order, specifically the Purge of the Antiarch.

The Purge of the Antiarch was a central historical event in Twylos, occurring between 820-800 F.E. In 825 F.E., a slave by the name of Caradoc escaped from Xendor Hall, and traveled the length of the Curve down to Unsbrecht. Two years later, he was captured by a group of Imperial guards who recognized the brands of slavery upon his back. Accordingly, he was stoned to death in a canyon just outside of town. He then appeared, resurrected, a year later in 822 F.E. to a small band of martyrs, and claimed to be the Antiarch, the savior-avatar of Aguierre.

Originally, about 1300 F.E., the Order of Aguierre was quite popular, when the Empire of Irendor was coming into its own. At the time, the Imperial Church (the Ironguard) revered Aguierre as being the father of the first emperor. However, during the conquest of Irendor and the making of House Valstach, the war with Khaedor, and the taking of Tarach, the Church of Mordred grew increasingly powerful and eclipsed the Order of Aguierre, not only in popular following, but in Imperial favor. The Antiarch claimed to have journeyed through the Underworld, where he was dragged before Nergal, who intended to just cast him into a Realm of Perjury. However, in the Darklands, Caradoc proved himself by taking the place of a young girl who had been wrongly cast into the Realm of Grave Penitence. (As an aside, although the Church of Zhol usually does not discuss the nature of the Underworld, the Order of Aguierre divides it up into separate Realms. Furthermore, these writings imply that Nergal made a mistake in deciding which of The Host, the term that the Order uses for the collective dead within the Underworld, should be cast into what Realm; a mistake that was then rectified by Aguierre.) Aguierre then chose Caradoc to ascend back from the Underworld, and take up his standard, and lead the so-called "Purge" of the Antiarch. For the next five years or so, Caradoc and his army (numbering 413, including Caradoc himself) set about destroying the Church of Mordred. When Caradoc was finally slain, in the Gray Hills on the final day of 800 F.E., only one temple of Mordred stood (a small chapel in Blüdszech) in all of Twylos. The Order of Aguierre then set about rebuilding itself.

A popular Order legend has it that his closest lieutenants wielded weapons of great power, the Seven Swords of the Antiarch: the Dravan Tzoul (the Widomaker), Gallenstein, Anvullier (the Dayblade), Vyrghanos Pyraday (the Flametongue), Axan Morn (Mageslayer), Balron Deathblade, and Genes Krystochs (the Wyrmtongue). There are reports that several of these swords have recently been recovered; sadly, none by the Order of Aguierre itself. The Knights fell from grace when the Empire of Irendor collapsed, and it is believed that this is something that some of their own clergy brought about. Some of the Order more recently have joined with the Ixians in the South.

The Paladins are highly trained in martial combat. Members of the Knights of Aguierre gain a +1 adjustment to their Armor Use grade (if none taken, treat as Armor Use I). Primary Domain (all Circles available): Benefaction. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Damnation. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Revelation.

Tamara

The Church of Silence: A dead religion. Tamara was the Irendi version of the name; the more common version was Timmorn. Also called the Queen of Tears or the Queen of Mists. Used to be a strange, quiet sect. Most priests were believed to operate independently. Members used to congregate at Timmorn's Well in the Zhellve, which was thought to be oracular. Church activity died down at the end of the last Vehrlands War. The only remaining aspect of this faith is a rather grim children's story, "Tamara and the Apple Tree", about a blind boy upon whom Tamara grants the gift of sight. Believed to be a metaphor for the Church's belief that when mortals were first created by the gods, they were stupid and happy. Tamara took pity on them,

and gave them the gift of intelligence, but with this gift came pain and suffering.

There are no longer any priests of Tamara. When they existed, priests of the Church of Silence gained an extra Revelation Domain spell per Circle each day. Primary Domain (all Circles available): Revelation. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Tellurgy. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Benefaction.

Xeres

The Mouth of Xeres: (ZAIR-ees) Symbols vary widely, but are usually somewhat bizarre; mouths are about as common as any other depiction. "The Mouth of Xeres" is nothing but a very informal group of clerics who have been 'touched' by Xeres. As such, everything from catatonic hermits to an infamous high priest of Ixus (Rogan DuLaine) qualify. Xeres is the god of insanity, madness, humor, disease, hopelessness, and so on- chaos with an absurdist bent. The Church of Ixus is extremely humorless about priests of Xeres and consider them to be among Twylos' worst cancers. Priests range from jovial pranksters to psychotic madmen.

Mouths of Xeres act as priests of any religion. Sometimes they are in disguise, sometimes they truly believe themselves as such (or previously were priests of other sects). Thus they may take on any benefit and Faith spell domains of any one other religion.

Typhon

The Church of Typhon: (TIE-fon) The infamous new church of Twylos' Third Era. Symbol is an eight-spoked wheel, the Table of Typhon. While all other religions of Twylos stretch back into the First Era, the Church of Typhon was founded at the start of the Third Era. The Church believes that Typhon is The End- the destructive force that is destined to devour the universe. A popular image is Typhon sitting down at his table with the other gods of Twylos and dining upon them, before eating the world. Church icons seem to be appropriated from the Duurans, ranging from beautiful depictions of children and spring scenes, to grotesque gargoyles and demons. For this reason, there is much confusion as to the relation between the Duurans, the Cult of Winter, and the Typhonae. The Church holds decadent "Feasts of Typhon", celebrations symbolic of Typhon's own feast; they are hedonistic and sometimes orgiastic, and usually have quite a turnout. Through these feasts, the Typhonae recruit followers and benefactors. According to the Church, Typhon has five faces, or 'keys'- stages he will take before his feast. Church history says that the first key was revealed to Geryon Krassus, a little-known poet who hung out with the Oberton Table, a misfit artist colony popular in Oberton. Opinions vary on the second keys and higher.

The Church of Typhon is based in Gyre and has other churches all throughout Twylos. Clergy often try to aid Thainists as well as members of all other religions take care of the sick and needy. Other religions are skeptical (Thainist, Church of Zhol, Church of Spring) or downright hostile (Ixians, Church of Winter, Duurans), of the Typhonae's intent. For being the most hated religion, however, they do very well for themselves, thanks to wealthy patrons and the fighting between all the other religions.

Priests of Typhon, the 'Typhonae', are skilled at summoning demons and other beasts, preferring to stay out of combat themselves. All summoning spells (of the Summoning School, or with the word 'Summoning' in the title) are treated as one Circle lower than normal, for every form of magic. Primary Domain (all Circles available): Revelation. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Tellurgy. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Benefaction.

The Sathar Gods

The reptilians of Saethos have extensive dealings with the humans of Gossar and Vussar, and Sathar traders can be seen, although infrequently, throughout western and southern Twylos. Aside from their mercantile activity (mostly trading metals, stones, spices, and animal skins from the desert), though, the Sathar seem highly xenophobic and keep to themselves. While they acknowledge Kithain and the other churches of Twylos, they have two religious sects of their own. One appears to be overwhelmingly popular, the Suvan Azule dragon cult, while the other only has a few followers, and seems reviled even among the Sathar.

The Suvan Azule: (soo-VAAN az-ZOOL) The main religion of the Sathar, also called (in Vussan) the Cult of the Serpent. Honors three great wyrms that supposedly live in the deep Saethan desert. Foremost among them, at Syeth, is Ayrrhannos Izain, the Dragon-King. There were two other great dragon kings, but as legend has it, they were slain by humans, precipitating the Second Vehrlands War and ending in the fall of the Sathar Empire, from which the reptilians never really recovered.

The Suvan Azule are tested with a series of ancient rites. Those priests who survive these ordeals, named for holy sites of Saethos (the Test of Vhog, of Vyuss, and of Stalos), become part of the Inner Circle of Sathar clerics. These priests gain a +2 modifier to Physical Resistance checks, and one extra health point upon acquiring each new Circle of spellcasting ability. For example, a 4th Circle Suvan priest has 4 additional health points. Primary Domain (all Circles available): Tellurgy. Secondary Domain (1st-6th Circle available): Damnation. Tertiary Domain (1st-3rd Circle available): Benefaction.

The Teavvites: (TOE-vites) Members of this apocalyptic, insect-god worshipping cult are also called the Spawn of K'Teauva. Their symbol is the Old Saethan character for change, which is an egg-shaped rune with two horizontal lines trisecting it. At Vhog is an enormous underground reservoir, which is the breeding grounds for huge insects, arachnids, and bugs of all kinds. Deep within the catacombs is a giant cocoon, 100 feet in length, that has been there since Sathar recorded history. Inside, claim the Teavvites, is K'Teauva, the Sleeping Goddess, soon to awaken and devour the world in her ravenous hunger. Not too popular; the cult has at most one thousand followers, generally found only in the deep desert and dark city cellars of Saethos.

The Spawn of K'Teauva have learned to conceal themselves, gaining a +3 modifier to Stealth checks. Primary Domains (all Circles available): Damnation and Tellurgy.

Guilds of Twylos

While there are many organizations across Twylos that call themselves guilds, there are really just four groups that are considered 'true' Guilds. Each of these four Guilds, described below, is an international group designed around some capitalistic venture, and each has a similar internal structure: there are Novices, Apprentices, Journeymen, and Masters. Guilds are centered around Guildhouses in particular cities- each Guildhouse has one Guildmaster, and each Guild has one home city, whose Guildmaster is the head of the entire Guild. Guildmasters generally stay at the Guildhouse, except in case of emergency or for semi-regular international conferences. Novices are the initiates into these groups, generally young men and women who also stay within the Guildhouse, where they perform clerical and menial tasks while they are instructed in Guild business in addition to acquiring a somewhat liberal education in history, politics, and a bit of science and art.

The Apprentices and Journeymen (title used regardless of male or female sex) do most of the legwork of the Guilds. Usually, groups of Apprentices are managed by one Journeyman. Novices graduate to Apprentices after a term of one to five years. Apprenticeship usually lasts a similar period, but in some instances is life-long. Successful and industrious Apprentices can become Journeymen. The rare Journeyman qualifies to become a Master; this is usually by appointment upon retirement of the previous Master of a particular Guildhouse. The largest cities may have more than one Guildhouse, but this is uncommon. The Guilds' success as international trading groups and bankers was initially built on a variety of older institutions dating from the Irendi Empire and its ties to Western, Eastern, and Southern colonies. The Guilds came into world dominance, however, with their united efforts to map the globe. It was the combined funds of the first three Guilds (the Navigators, Slavers, and Surveyors) that originally funded Marachs Von Ehling's World-Scope magicks, which helped found the Vausse Academy, but led to production of the first accurate (magically-created) map of the entirety of Twylos. The Guilds possessed this as a deep secret for many years, but gradually, their maps were leaked, and for a while it was common for the wealthier and more-educated of Twylos to display a map in the home or office.

In 192 T.E., the "Writ of Coins" was signed into place in Gyre. Essentially, this unified all the Guilds, allowing them (in theory, at least) to share Guildhalls, supplies, money, and most importantly, shipping and manpower. Although the Ulgan Sceptre has been openly hostile to the Guilds in the past, they have seen the value in a unified currency, which was also agreed upon the Writ's signing. While the Sceptre no longer attacks ships in Drohkan waters, they have stiff tariffs on Guild shipping in and out of Selhark, and unofficial piracy on both sides is still not uncommon.

Player characters wanting to join a Guild will find it difficult, time-consuming, and expensive. This is basically the same as going back to school. Admission fees to Guilds vary, but are usually between 50 and 5000 silver royals, for room, board, and education of the new Novice. Also, Novices are usually kept at the Guildhouse they have joined for a period of several years, which precludes adventuring.

The Guilds are best used as a source of- and resource for- NPCs. However, a campaign could begin with the characters already as Apprentices, under the guidance of an NPC Journeyman who would serve as their guide and friend to the new adventures. Also, while it happens rarely, the Guilds award honorary status to certain individuals (usually with the title of 'Associate' or 'Honorary', which grants the same status as an Apprentice). These people often have been frequent and important contributors to the efforts of the different Guilds, as the Guilds many times make use of non-Guildsmen for some of their unusual needs or emergencies.

The Alchemists



Symbol is a simple beaker. Newest of the Guilds, the Alchemists are essentially well-organized Hedge Mages. Due to their efforts and the valuable services they provide, they are the second-most powerful, wealthy, and connected of the Guilds, just behind the Slavers. The Alchemists have a rather complex hierarchy and educational system, centered around three internal symbols: the Organon (epistemology and scientific philosophy, or the general system for scientific discovery and knowledge acquisition, represented as an eye), the Pharmacopoeia (the scientific literature or set of collected knowledge, represented as a book), and the Alembic (the technologies, physical devices, procedures, and methods, represented as a distiller). The Alchemists are based out of Gyre. They often pay well for rare herbs and components, will readily buy magical items,

and offer non-magical and magical herbs, inks, poisons, potions and scrolls for sale. Some of the larger Guildhouses might also cast low Circle Hedge or Hermetic spells (such as Sense Magic or Translation) for a high price.

Novice Alchemists gain a +1 modifier to Herbalism skill checks. Magicians out of the Ulgan Sceptre's Guuran Tower invented and codified Hedge Magic, becoming the Alchemists Guild. Due to their sophisticated understanding of Hedge Magic, Guild Apprentices buy Hedge Magic Circles for one skill point less than the normal cost (e.g., Hedge Magic II is 6 skill points rather than 7). Journeymen and Masters gain a +2 modifier to Arcane Knowledge and Dweomercraft. Higher-ranking members continue to have the benefits of the lower ranks (e.g., a Journeyman still has a +1 modifier to Herbalism).

The Navigators



Also called the Oceanographers Guild, their symbol is the wheel of a ship. They are a large, wealthy organization of ship captains and seafaring merchants. Basically designed to coordinate shipping routes and protect against piracy. The Navigators came together as a coherent Guild around 45 T.E., with the advent of Ulgan Sceptre and re-emergence the world

trade market. The Navigators were based out of Rheyas, but have recently relocated to Turth. The Navigators sometimes hire mercenaries for their ship crews (although the work is grueling) or to guard certain boats.

Novice Navigators gain a +1 modifier to Seamanship skill checks, while Apprentices improve this by two, to gain a total +3 modifier. Journeymen and Masters additionally gain a +2 modifier to Leadership checks.

The Slavers



Symbol is a closed fist, shackled, with two links of chain. The Slavers were the first true Guild. The Slavers work with the governments of all major human-kin nations (save Nycene) to weed out undesirables, and to supply work crews (and help manage both of these things at a very low level). The Guild first got their start in the wake of the Vehrlands War, and took on their

symbol in the first year of the Third Era. Tzalvas is the home city of the Slavers. If pressed, the Slavers will hire non-Guildsmen to help catch escaped prisoners or guard the transport of slaves through hazardous terrain.

Slavers are well-trained in the arts of business and psychology. Novices may pick one presence-based skill and gain a +1 modifier to skill checks for that proficiency. Apprentices may pick another presence-based skill and gain another +1 modifier to a different skill. Journeymen and Master Slavers gain a total of a +2 modifier to both of these skills.

The Surveyors



Symbol is a sextant. Essentially the overland version of the Guild of Navigators, they were officially founded around 120 T.E. They chart land routes, do reconnaissance work, surveying, and search for mineral deposits and natural resources like water, and do some engineering work. Mercenaries out of necessity,

they will practically do anything for anyone, given the right price. The Surveyors were based out of Llesendor, but have taken over the Navigators Guildhouse at Rheyas as their home guild. The Surveyors are constantly short of manpower, and almost always are looking for temporary help to guard caravans and wagons, clear dangerous areas, or simply scout out uncharted terrain for new opportunities (springs, caves, creatures, and the like).

Novice Surveyors gain a +1 modifier on Wilderness Lore checks. Apprentice Surveyors may buy Tracking for one skill point per grade, rather than the usual two points per grade. Journeymen and Masters gain a +2 modifier on World Knowledge checks.

Languages of Twylos

Andukar: Language of the Andukar Giantkind; also spoken in Ulyyade.

Ceyneian/Ixian: Language of Nycene and the Church of Ixus. One of the main languages throughout the South and the Vehrlands.

Drohkan/Drohseck: Common throughout the East and in Gyre.

Duuran: Archaic. Language of the Vox Duur.

Fleshtongue: Archaic. Common vulgar name for the outdated Slaver's Cant.

Gossick: Main language of Gossar and the Saethan Desert. Common in the South.

Irendi: Archaic. Original form of Valan; mostly reserved for texts.

Ny'ryeth: Archaic. The goblin tongue of the Valstedt and the Ny'vraen Holdings.

Old Saethan: Archaic. A primitive, glyph-based tongue from the old Saethan Empire.

Queyan: (KAY-an) Main language of the South. Native tongue of Vasqueray; also spoken in the East.

Taran/Tarachian: Common trade language of the West, spoken across Tarach.

Valan: Main language of Armech (the old Empire of Irendor).

Verlyhne/Verlainen: (ver-LANE-in) Archaic. Old language of Khaedor and the Vehrlands.

Vussan: Language of Vussar, eastern Saethos, and the southern Durhve.

Zhellan/Zelan/Zhellvish: (ZELL-an) Spoken throughout the Zhellve, Khaedor, the Vehrlands, and the Middle Lands.

Many of these languages are related to each other, and thus characters who do not formally speak the same tongue might find simpler communication possible. Irendi was the parent tongue for Ceyneian, Drohkan, Queyan, Taran, Valan, and Zhellan. Valan is a modern version of Irendi. Verlainen shares some structures with Duuran and Ny'ryeth. Vussan is an amalgam of Gossick, Zhellan, and Verlainen.

If the Game Master wishes to streamline character creation or run a simpler campaign, he or she might allow an additional language to be spoken: **Guilder/Tradetongue**, which serves as the single main language spoken by the civilized humanoid races across all of Twylos.

GAME MASTER'S GUIDE TO TWYLOS

The previous sections contained information that should be common knowledge to literate characters beginning in Twylos. The following sections contain information that should be read by the Game Master only.

Everything described below should be altered as necessary for the purposes of the Game Master. This includes names, levels, and abilities of NPCs; monster numbers and types; and the location of various people, objects, and dungeons. In those cases where the pronunciation may not be obvious from the spelling, the phonetic spelling is also given parenthetically.

The Planet of Twylos: Twylos is an Earth-sized planet with a single moon and a single sun. Several other planets and countless stars can be seen in the night sky, but these have not been developed further here. Twylos is dominated by a single continent roughly the size of Earth's Eurasia (approximately 4,000 miles by 10,000 miles in size). Several large islands surround the main landmass. Due to a powerful spell commissioned by the Guilds, the world has been completely mapped, and the basic geographical organization is known to most civilized humanoids.

Dates and Time in Twylos: This guide has purposefully been written so as to give the dates only in years, not in months or days. Game Masters are free to devise their own calendar, although in our experience, using Earth's calendar works well and players do not suffer from any cognitive dissonance. It is easier if mundane details, such as the 24-hour day or March as the third month, are left intact.

Races of Twylos: The dominant humanoid race is human, with roughly 90% of most of civilized Twylos made up of humans. Within humankind there is a huge, now-intermixed diversity of body types and pigmentation. Orcs and half-orcs make up around 9% of society; orcs and half-breeds are as respected as humans, and there is little-to-no racism, even for half-orcs (whose parents are likely married). The last 1% is made up mostly of ogres, reptilians, and a few other humanoids such as dwarves, faeries, and ratkin. Ogres are found mostly in the Middle Lands and the East, especially close to Andukar where their numbers greatly increase. Some ogres are savage, acting more like bandits, while others are perfectly civilized if sometimes gauche. Dwarves and other dwarf were formerly slaves of the orcs, ogres, and giantkind, but in past centuries are now free if still somewhat rare. Reptilians (called Sathar for their land of origin) mainly dwell in the southwestern desert country of Saethos, although some Sathar are travelers and merchants and can be found far afield. Khulek were formerly enslaved by the Sathar, but they too are mostly free, and have retreated into the deep desert where they are largely hostile to outsiders. Ogres, dwarves, and Sathar generally live at the rim of human and orc social hierarchy, although even further a back are the ratkin, who mainly live in the South. Elves in Twylos are considered part of the largely-irrelevant faerie races, found mainly in the hills and glades of Khaedor and into the Valsiedt, and generally stay apart from humanoid society. Goblins and their hobgoblin leaders also shun humanoid civilization, keeping to themselves in the wilds, although on very rare occasions some goblins do enter the outer cities and villages. Gnoles are even more misanthropic, almost always attacking humanoid travelers and invaders into their tribal lands (including the goblins and each other). Harkumen are not found on Twylos. It is suggested that player characters be human. If nonhuman, it is suggested that characters be orcs, half-orcs, Sathar, or goblin.

Skills of Twylos: All standard and optional disciplines are available, except for Agnostic. The gods do not care whether you believe in them or not. It is suggested that the more powerful disciplines (e.g.,

Advanced Counterattack and mid-Circle magic) will require some degree of training. There are no trainers of High Circle magic- these individuals are on their own.

Equipment and Technology of Twylos: Assume that the technological level is approximately that of 15th-16th century Earth, with some anachronisms. Sailing vessels able to complete long-distance voyages have just become available. Scientific devices such as automatons and pocket watches are unusual but exist. Swords, crossbows, and the like are commonplace, although most humanoids in the civilized lands do not carry weapons. Firearms and gunpowder are a recent invention of the Alchemists Guild, but are prohibitively costly and are mainly luxury items for the wealthy rather than weapons of war. There are no airships, but a prototype railroad was tested and discarded.

Magical Level of Twylos: Twylos is a mostly low-magic world. Magical items are exceedingly rare, although the advent of the Alchemists Guild and Hedge magic have made minor potions and scrolls somewhat affordable in the larger cities. Casting of spells in public is rare, and especially for Hermetic mages, frowned upon. Casters of 4th Circle and higher are extremely rare, and mages and priests of the highest Circles are few in number- it is safe to assume that most if not all of the most powerful individuals are described in the encyclopedia below (numbering on the order of 20 in the entire world). Hermetic spell trading has been formalized, and is generally an intimate experience that rarely happens between strangers.

Death in Twylos: The whole of the afterlife for Twylos humanoids is called the Grey Lands. The Grey Lands are a huge, isolated expanse within the Realms of Perdition, overseen by the spectral minions of Nergal. They are generally not a place player characters will have direct access to- but travel to and within the Grey Lands is not unheard of in the stories of Twylos. Death rites are taken quite seriously in Twylos, and priests of Zhol and Nergal can be found throughout the civilized areas.

On the Religions of Twylos

Priests in general are held in high esteem by the people of Twylos. Most will think twice before attacking a clergy member, regardless of their faith, be it Duuran, Thainist, Typhonae, or Xeres. Swearing oaths to the gods is taken very seriously, and most people will consider the act of oath swearing an assurance of trust and truth-telling. The Game Master is encouraged to make the religious reality of Twylos quite clear to the players, and to actively enforce oaths sworn by players and NPCs alike. For example, suppose the player characters happen to engage in combat with some bandits who have kidnapped the Mayor's daughter. If a character uses Ritual or Faith magic, some of the bandits might mutter in awe. Perhaps they will stop fighting completely, apologize, and flee; perhaps they will continue to fight but resist attacking the priest or druid. If the bandit leader is captured, it might be the case that the characters wish to interrogate him to get some information. The bandit leader might plead for his life, telling the characters where the Mayor's daughter is, if they swear to Zhol they will spare his life. Suppose one of the characters still slits his throat; the Game Master might rule that this character now cannot be healed by the party's priest and has a -3 to all combat rolls, until they obtain absolution from a priest of Zhol. Of course, not everyone will behave in the same manner, and oath swearing should be quite uncommon. Regardless, an episode like this that occurs early in the campaign will help the players understand that they are in a world where the gods and their disciples are taken quite seriously and are powerful forces that are actively engaged in the minutiae of Twylos. For this reason, it

is suggested that Game Masters not allow the Agnostic optional discipline. The gods of Twylos are quite real.

For this reason, the Thainists are held in high regard by most people in Twylos. Thainists will gladly and freely tend to the sick and wounded. Of course, player characters that routinely abuse the graces of the Thainists without so much as a 'thank you' or cursory donation will soon find themselves out of favor and immune to magical healing. The only people who don't hold the Thainists in high regard, oddly enough, are the other priests of Twylos, who almost universally believe that the Thainists focus on the small, easy problems (such as crop growth, broken arms, or sword wounds) and ignore the larger, real problems of Twylos (e.g., demons, magic, and war).

Conflicts between priests and devout members of the various faiths of Twylos are quite common, however, and usually end in fighting, assassination, murderous plots, or full-scale wars. The struggles and conflicts of the various religious traditions of Twylos are central to understanding where the world is today. The historical overview in the Player's Section states the history of Twylos is the history of the Duuans. This is mostly correct, but it is more accurate to say the history of Twylos is fundamentally linked to the development of magic, especially in terms of understanding of the sources of magical abilities. The Vox Duur happen to be the culture on Twylos closest to these traditions.

Hermetic and Faith magic were used by the almost-godlike Arcanos that previously ruled Twylos, but after killing the Archons, the Arcanos were banished by the gods at the dawn of the First Era. The humanoid races initially used only Ritual magic, cast by the druids and goblins that were soon to become the Vox Duur. The whispers of the Arcanos reached some of the most powerful Duurans, who began to use Hermetic magic learned in their dreams. The language of the Arcanos is the language of Hermetic magic. This fact is not known to many, and claims to that effect would be treated with skepticism or bemusement in most practicing mages and people of Twylos.

Almost immediately, the advent of Hermetic magic led to a schism within the Vox Duur that remains central to the struggles on Twylos to this day. The traditionalists believed that Hermetic magic was the gift of demons, spoken in the language of demons, and would lead to evil. The mages, however, were split into two camps. The first group, who remained part of the Vox Duur, believed that Hermetic magic was as much a part of nature as anything else in the world, and that its darkness was only apparent when used to cause harm. By way of analogy, a sword was not seen to be intrinsically evil, but only became so when used for evil purposes. These newer Duurans still believed demons to be a corrupting and dark influence over Twylos, but thought that Hermetic magic might be a means of understanding this danger and threat, and possibly useful for combating it.

While these two groups of Duurans began to fight, a third group split off. Fully embracing Hermetic magic and its demonic origins, the members of the Church of Winter immediately fled in fear for their lives. Some priests of Breyana do not believe demons to be evil- or at least, no more evil than men themselves. They see Hermetic magic as a tool, and as a great boon that allows the humanoid races to take their fates more fully in their own hands and be less at the arbitrary mercy of the uncaring, violent, and chaotic gods. Other Breyanic priests think that the Arcanos are the epitome of evil, and believe mage magic to be the Arcanos' way at eventually returning to their beloved Twylos. Thus it is their duty to understand this complicated magic, so that they can prevent this from happening. These philosophical traditions have been echoed in other groups across Twylos to this day.

Hermetic Magic Is The True Evil: There are those that believe demons and mages to be essentially the same- both evil. These are the original Duurans and the Church of Ixus. The Church of Ixus also tends to

despise Duurans in general, for having spawned infernalism in the first place, and because it is difficult or impossible to determine which Duurans have which beliefs. Today in Twylos, there are as many beliefs about the Church of Winter, demons, Hermetic magic, and Hedge magic as there are Duurans. The Ixians feel it is safest to assume each Duuran is, or someday could be, an infernalist, and should be killed before being corrupted themselves or allowed to corrupt others. Many of the Knights of Aguierre and Handmaidens feel the same. One of the first sects of the Vox Duur to take this stance called themselves the Order of Nhul, after the 'nhul' rune of Hermetic magic used extensively in anti-magic and magic shielding spells. Many of the most fanatical exponents of this view believe that mages will lead to the destruction or ruination of Twylos, either directly or accidentally, and it's unclear which way would be worse.

Hermetic Magic Is A Dangerous Tool: Others take a more moderate stance, either from a lack of understanding of the historical roots and nature of Hermetic magic, or from a deeper understanding of the overall folly of the humanoid races and their long but petty history of armed conflict with each other. These groups try to act benevolently, and provide aid where they can to ease the ills of life. These would be the Thainists, some Duurans including members of the the Church of Spring and even the Church of Winter, some members of the Order of Ixian, and some of the more meditative members of the Church of Ixus, Knights of Aguierre, and Church of Typhon.

Hermetic Magic Is Good For Us: Then there are those who think that Hermetic magic is a powerful tool, to be used for the good of Twylos while being sensitive to its infernal origins. Many members of the Church of Winter, some Typhonae, and some of the Order of Ixian share this outlook. Most Hermetic practitioners in general feel this way, although some mages today are unaware of the demonic roots of Hermetic magic and the language used for its spells.

Hermetic Magic Is Our Salvation: Still others have embraced the Arcanos as saviors or demi-urges, finding much wrong with the world of Twylos as created by the gods. This is the view taken by most of the Church of Winter, a few Duurans, and some of the Typhonae. Some Knights of Aguierre, generally from Armech, have left their church to take this stance. While the Church of Silence had little, or little positive, to say about the demons, they too found Twylos an imperfect world, mainly full of suffering. Many Thainists and members of the Church of Spring still feel the same. Their gift of magic is thus a boon, allowing humanoids to try to take some control over their otherwise pathetic destinies.

On the Nature of Hermetic Magic: The title 'Hermetic' is sort of a real-world anachronism, coming from Earth's legend of Hermes Trismegistus. This type of magic in Twylos would be more properly called 'Arcane', as it stems directly from the Arcanodaemon tutors of the early Duurans. Game Masters are free to change the name of this form of magic (e.g., to 'Arcane'), or to invent a Twylos-centric reason for its title (such as deriving instead from the 'hermitic', reclusive nature of many mages), or simply to leave it as-is and not worry about it.

Game Masters of course are also free to change the origin of Hermetic magic itself; the Arcanos' claim may simply be a boast calculated to attract servants on Twylos. The Game Master should obfuscate the true origins, even though this is neither a particularly deep nor well-guarded secret on Twylos anymore. Regardless, the true intentions of the Arcanos, the Archons, and the gods- if indeed, there is or ever was any- should be kept from player characters, as their only route to such information is through indirect means (magic spells or the words of NPCs), and such information channels are notoriously suspect, being prone to bias, exaggeration, error, and outright lying. There are no privileged sources of information about the metaphysics of the world save the Game Master's private thoughts.

Hermetic Magic Is Our Blessed Destruction: Finally, a small number of priests welcome the end of Twylos in Hermetic magic and the Arcanodaemons. A few Duurans believe that Twylos is now in the last epoch, or even the last days, of the Voran Cycle, the eternal recurrence that, once complete, cleans Twylos of all its ills to make the world anew. Much of the inner circle of the Typhonic Mother Church also feel this way, although the Typhonae are divided as to what the correct course of actions should be to hasten the end. For these Typhonae, Typhon's table represents the wheel of the Voran Cycle or Kithain's loom.

Thus there is a full spectrum of beliefs on the fundamental powers underlying Twylos, all of whom are constantly at odds with each other and wage war almost constantly, if usually behind-the-scenes. Player characters and NPCs need not be priests or even have any magic potential to have strong beliefs about the theological traditions, historical events, and potential demonic takeover of Twylos. Conversely, low-Circle Faith and Ritual magic practitioners may not initially have well-formed thoughts on these matters. The Game Master should encourage players of these characters to develop these beliefs over the course of the campaign. Certainly, casting Faith and Ritual spells of the highest Circles requires a strong spirituality, and devout or even fanatical theological beliefs. Some priests share multiple allegiances, either publicly or in secret. Many members of the Church of Spring are also Thainists; some Thainist Knights of Aguirre are Ixian. Some Thainists and Duurans are secretly Typhonae.

Note that the clergy of the Suvan Azule, the Church of Silence, and of Xeres are not mentioned above. The Suvan Azule has little to say about Hermetic magic, thinking that these finer points of essentially Duran theology are irrelevant to their own history and ends. (Although there are parallels to be found with the Teavute heresy.) Priests of Xeres are not organized into any sort of comprehensive clergy and almost never work in groups. Most priests of Xeres are just mad, and believe themselves (often correctly) to be or have previously been members of other churches. For these reasons, player characters are discouraged from being priests of either the Suvan Azule or the Mad God Xeres. As for Timmorn, she is no longer worshipped on Twylos.

The Game Master does not have to determine which of these groups are right and which are wrong. In our experience, we have found that the most interesting games come about when the 'truth' is not defined, at least initially. Each religious organization believes absolutely it is correct and seeks the true path, while most or all others are misguided or horribly wrong. There are no heroes or villains in Twylos, at least not easily identified by the clerical robes they wear. Priests of Typhon in this sense make for some of the more interesting NPCs, as they tend to be outgoing and helpful, and one might gladly come along with the player characters. This priest might be openly Typhonic and willing to talk about the possible interpretations of his faith, healing them and helping them as he can, and sharing his knowledge of interesting items to find and places to explore. Meanwhile, the player characters head deeper to the dark heart of Twylos spirituality, history, and possibly apocalypse.

Campaigns are series of adventures with shared components- a world and the player characters. The best campaigns explore a few themes such as war, loss, personal spirituality, the demonic nature of Hermetic magic, and the end-of-times. The world guidebook here in the Game Master's section contains a number of specific NPCs, places, and stories that can be used together thematically to meet these ends. In Appendix 2.1.3, you will find an example of how some of these threads could be woven together to form the historical basis for a campaign in Twylos, as well as the outlines for three different kinds of campaigns.

On the Guilds of Twylos

Due to their particular influence on the development and economy of Twylos, this section deals more fully with the Twylos Guilds.

The Alchemists

The Alchemists are the newest Guild on Twylos, and while the Slavers and Navigators have more net wealth, the Alchemists are projected to soon eclipse them. The Alchemists are responsible for the popularity and training of Hedge magic, and have essentially codified the older Hermetic and classic alchemical traditions. The Alchemists do not control all potion making and chemical brewing, as many local apothecaries and traditional alchemists are still in business, especially in smaller cities and villages. Guildsmen are usually intelligent and miserly, prizing enchanted items and money above all. Many Guildsmen dabble in magical and scientific experimentation on the side. The Alchemists jealously guard their knowledge and guild secrets, and would never employ non-Guildsmen to aid in their business.

Services: The Alchemists offer many drugs, compounds, and other services at their Guildhouses. Note that many of these compounds can be obtained from local apothecaries, and in fact predate the Alchemists Guild, in some cases by hundreds or even thousands of years. In addition to possible sale of the drugs listed below, the Alchemists can also cast some Hedge magic spells for a stiff fee. As a general rule, 1st Circle Hedge magic spells (e.g., Sense Magic or Water to Wine) will cost 10 sc, and 2nd Circle spells (e.g., Reveal Enchantment) cost 100 sc. Higher Circle spells are not usually for sale. The Guild maintains an extensive archive of all enchanted items that pass through its halls.

Availability of different compounds depends on the rarity of the drug and the location of the Guildhouse. Common compounds can be found in major cities 95% of the time, in small cities and large villages 70% of the time, and in small villages 30% of the time (check weekly). Uncommon substances have a 60% chance to be found in major cities, 30% in small cities and large villages, and 10% in small villages. Rare substances have a 20% chance to be found in major cities, 5% in small cities and large villages, and 1% in small villages. Illegal compounds are not usually for sale; they are certainly not offered directly by the Alchemists Guild, but a successful Contacts proficiency check might determine where they can be obtained. Possession of an illegal substance is not a crime (although these substances will be confiscated if someone happens to be caught by the authorities), but the manufacture and sale of such is a crime in most cities. Each of these substances can be used or ingested once per dose.

Adjuvant of Reduvius: Rare, 10 sc per dose. Reduvius is a small red worm about half the size of a child's finger. They are called bloodworms, as they have similar feeding habits as leeches, and are found in the wet areas of and around Saethos. The bite of the reduvius worm is numbing, and the adjuvant is the extracted and distilled analgesic compound in the worms' saliva. It is a thick, oily and salty white liquid, and each dose consists of a thimble-full. Application of the adjuvant can make the healer's art easier on the patient; application of the adjuvant offers a +1 on Healing proficiency checks. In large enough concentrations, the adjuvant is a contact poison with paralytic effects: a Physical Resistance check must be made with a target number equal to the number of doses applied.

Ammonswake: Rare, 60 sc per dose. Ammonswake is an herb that grows in brackish water. It is a mild neurotoxin and also acts as a sort of truth drug, as the victim is lulled into a soporific state. It must be ingested, and provokes both a Mental Resistance check (target number 10) and a Physical Resistance check (target number 8). Failing the Physical Resistance check reduces agility by 1d6 points. Failing the

Mental Resistance check makes the victim susceptible to manipulation and will be far more likely to offer information willingly and truthfully. Ingestion of a single dose of ammonswake confers a -2 modifier to Mental Resistance. Additional doses will further intoxicate the subject, but will not reduce Mental Resistance beyond this penalty.

Black Ichor: Rare, 10 sc per dose. Black ichor is an acrid-smelling substance that looks like runny tar. It is a biological preservative that is somewhat like the 1st Circle Hermetic spell Preserve. One dose, injected into a specimen, will keep 20 lbs. preserved from decay for one year, but infuses it with this vile substance. Thus the ichor is not used for foodstuffs, but for preserving corpses. Given how expensive it is (10 doses for one 200 lbs. person), it is infrequently used.

Crave: Uncommon, illegal, 25 sc per dose. Crave is nothing more than a highly pleasurable and addictive substance. It is a combination of chemicals extracted from the brains of faeries and a tropical flower called Kailynsdream, found in Vasqueray and the regions around Gossar, Tzalvas, and Gyre. Crave is a frothy pinkish goo. It must be ingested to have any effect; it first acts to paralyze the subject with waves of ecstasy for about an hour (Mental Resistance check of 13, every point the check is made by reduces this time by ten minutes; every point it is failed by increases this time by ten minutes). A Physical Resistance check must also be made (target number 13 + the number of past doses of Crave ingested). Failure to make the Physical Resistance check leads to addiction. Crave addiction is nasty and withdrawal can lead to fatal epileptic fits. Every day after addiction that Crave is not taken, the addict must make another Physical Resistance check (target number equal to 5 + the number of days since the last dose was taken). Failure to make the check reduces the addict's endurance attribute by one. After two weeks, the subject is no longer addicted. If the addict's endurance reaches 0, he or she dies. After the two week withdrawal period is over, endurance recovers at the rate of one point per day of full bed rest. Crave is manufactured and used by the Slavers for conditioning and control of slaves. Some Alchemist novices are also given low doses of the stuff as a test of fitness.

Goodnight: Rare, illegal, 100 sc per dose. Goodnight is an ingestible poison made from a Saethan cactus, fortified with the venom of a Queyan sea urchin. Its name derives from its popularity as a suicide drug given to agents of the seditious Guild of Thorns, during the Second Era in the final days of Vasqueray's Sea King dynasty. Ingestion of Goodnight forces a Physical Resistance check (target number 14). Failure leads to death at the end of the following round. A successful Physical Resistance check still leads to a -1 adjustment to endurance for one day.

Green Ichor: Rare, illegal, 40 sc per dose. Green ichor is an accelerant and thickening agent to be added to other poisons, to make them more effective as blade and other weapon poisons. As the name indicates, it appears as a viscous dark green substance. In addition to removing the penalties for using poisons on a weapon, it enhances their effects and provides a +1 adjustment to the target number of any poison used in conjunction with it. It is only really useful when added to blood poisons; ingestible and contact poisons gain no bonus from the ichor.

Gunpowder: Rare, 50 sc per shot. One dose of gunpowder is required per shot of any of the firearms listed in the Game Master's Reference Book. Although firearms such as pistols and muskets are themselves expensive, it is the outrageous cost of gunpowder that is the limiting factor preventing these weapons from wide adoption.

Healing Herbs: Availability and price vary. Healing herbs are small packets of a greenish salve, to be applied topically to a wound. They are made from a thickened alcohol base, and the main active component of healing herbs is comfrey moss, found throughout Twylos

in temperate forests and hills. Depending on the efficacy, they confer a modifier of +1 to +3 to Healing proficiency checks. Healing herbs are effective only once per day, regardless of the number of injuries sustained by the subject. Some healing herbs also contain varieties of bryony or the fungus schizothyleryum, which can provide a bonus +1 to health point recovery or allow a Healing check to cure minor diseases (such as that caused by giant rat bites).

Normal healing herbs are common, cost 5 sc, and offer a +1 modifier to a Healing check.

Refined healing herbs are common, cost 10 sc, and offer a +2 modifier to a Healing check.

Enriched healing herbs are uncommon, cost 20 sc, and offer a +3 modifier to a Healing check.

Brown healing salve is uncommon, costs 25 sc, and offers a +2 modifier to a Healing check, and a +1 bonus to health point recovery.

Green healing salve is uncommon, costs 40 sc, and offers a +3 modifier to a Healing check, and a +1 bonus to health point recovery.

White healing salve is uncommon, costs 50 sc, and offers a +3 modifier to a Healing check. A successful Healing check can cure minor disease.

Hellfire: Uncommon, 40 sc per dose. Hellfire is an alcohol-based compound containing adrenal gland extracts from hardy humanoid races such as ogres and reptilians. It must be injected to be efficacious. Hellfire adds a +1 adjustment to both strength and endurance, and confers the Last Stand discipline to the target, for a number of rounds equal to 1d20 + the target's Physical Resistance modifier. One dose will instantly rouse an unconscious individual, which is the standard use for Hellfire. If more than one dose of Hellfire is taken in a 24 hour period, the subject must make a Physical Resistance check (target number 12 + the total number of doses) or die of a heart attack.

Zeaven: Zeaven is an opioid derivative that comes in many different forms. Zeaven is primarily a recreational drug, popular in the Middle Lands, Gyre, and Vasqueray. Its creation and continued use is the prime source of the infamous 'Procurers Guilds' notoriety. Zeaven causes pleasurable feelings, relaxation, is strongly addictive and acts as a potent hallucinogen. Abuse of Zeaven sometimes has permanent consequences, and a few long-time addicts are driven insane, believing the world to be full of demons. All forms of Zeaven are illegal, meaning they will not be sold by the Alchemists Guild.

Zeaven Blue is common, 10 sc per dose. Ingestion has a 10% chance of giving a +1 adjustment to presence, a 10% chance of giving a +1 adjustment to endurance, and a 10% chance of making the user mad (as the Madness spell). Roll separately for the chance of each of the three effects. These effects last one day. If madness is a side-effect, there is a 1% chance of the madness being permanent.

Zeaven-7 is uncommon, 40 sc per dose. Effects are as Zeaven Blue, but with a 30% chance of each effect. This is the most popular form of Zeaven. 2% chance of the madness being permanent.

Zeaven Earth is uncommon, 50 sc per dose. Effects are as Zeaven-7, but last a variable amount of time: 1d100 hours. 3% chance of the madness being permanent.

Zeaven Friendship is rare, 100 sc per dose (although the Slavers Guild procures it for far cheaper). It is used by Slavers in some of their slave conditioning procedures. It gives a +1 adjustment to presence and endurance, and the user is affected as if by the Friends spell for everyone they meet. 20% chance of madness for one day, 5% chance it is permanent.

Zeaven Nhul is rare, 80 sc per dose. Same effects as Zeaven Blue, but madness, if it occurs, is 10% likely to be permanent. It confers a 1% spell immunity for one day; this includes allowing the user to see through illusions, magical disguises, and invisibility.

Zeaven Dusk is very rare (available only 10% of the time in major cities), 100 sc per dose. As Zeaven-7, but madness is 10% likely to be



permanent. Confers spell immunity and visible penetration as Zeaven Nhul with a 5% chance. If madness is permanent, the ability to see through magical disguises and invisibility is also permanent. Zeaven Heresy is not manufactured, and exists mainly as a rumor. As Zeaven Dusk, but spell immunity and visible penetration is 30%. In addition, there is a 1% chance that the user slips into a trance and travels to the Ether overnight before returning to their body.

The resources of the Guild have made potion-brewing (Alchemy, as the 5th Circle Hedge spell) and scroll inscribing significantly cheaper, in some cases, than the guidelines given in the Game Master's Reference Book. Potion and scroll availability is rare. 1st Circle potions and scrolls cost 100 sc, while 2nd Circle items cost 400 sc. 3rd Circle and higher items are not usually available. The Alchemists also brew Potions of Mana for their own use, and they sometimes sell these to private mage academies and rich third parties as well. The Guild is currently negotiating with the Church of Ixus, to convince them that Hedge magic is fundamentally different from Hermetic magic (and thus not heretical). Furthermore, the Guild has acquired a few Ixian Scribes (see Appendix 2.1.2), and is interested in finding more.

Finally, the Alchemists Guild is more than happy to find the money to pay for magical items and, far more likely, reagents. Rare herbs, spices, and biological specimens will be paid for generously.

The Navigators

The Navigators are the second Guild, and tie the Alchemists in wealth and prestige. While the Navigators are responsible for coordinating much of the international sea trade, they are far from having a complete lock on all ship travel and transport. The Ulgan Sceptre rivals them for sheer size and number of vessels, and there are private ships docked in the harbor of every port town. It is infrequent, but not unheard of, for the Navigators to employ non-Guild captains and crewmen if necessary.

Services: The main service offered by the Guild is that of ship transport. They offer competitive rates, essentially the same as a private charter would be, that depend mainly on the distance to be covered and duration at sea. As an official policy, the Navigators will not transport anyone fleeing the authorities or that seem to be traveling with other suspicious motives. Ship transport costs 1-2 sc per person per day for food and fresh water, in addition to a base fee of around 30 sc per person for short journeys (one or a few ports away) up to 100 sc per person for transcontinental travel.

The Slavers

The Slavers were the first true Guild, although they existed as a coherent, well-organized group for centuries before their official

incorporation. They work with the leaders and governing bodies of most cities and nations, and are the largest and richest of the Guilds. Due to the nature of their often-unpleasant work, the Guild has two faces. The public face is charming. The Guild employs attractive, charismatic and diplomatic locals to take care of transactions, financial matters, meetings with clients, and the like. The other side of the Guild is kept carefully out of public view. These are the Slavers who deal with the acquisition, transportation and worst all, conditioning of new slaves. The Guild has refined its system for breaking and training new slaves with a variety of psychological and alchemical methods, occasionally utilizing torture and magical means if absolutely required. The Slavers also routinely inspect the slaves owned by ranches and mining companies, to ensure the Guild conditioning is still in place. They do not usually employ non-Guildsmen and women for these tasks.

The Slavers essentially have a monopoly on their trade. Slavery, in the traditional sense of enslaving previously free societies, is rarely practiced by the Guild and officially decreed. This form of slavery is generally regarded as unethical and immoral by most of civilized Twylos. Those who are slaves due to being captured are usually bandits, mercenaries, soldiers on the losing side of their battle, or the destitute. Because the Slavers have operated for centuries, the largest class of slaves are those born into slavery. In most places, these slaves are treated as well as can be expected, given rights and due respect, and regarded more as indentured servants than property. The third and growing class of slaves is that of temporary slaves. These are prisoners, captured by local governments (or, increasingly, by Guildsmen themselves), and sent to work for the Slavers for a period of several months to several years, or rarely, for the rest of their lives. This aspect of the Guild reflects the new role of the Slavers Guild in managing or even controlling property themselves, such as the regional government of Tzalvas and southern Khaedor. The Slavers also take a leading role in government in parts of the Vehrlands. The Masters of the Guild have centuries of experience behind them in political and psychological manipulation, crowd control, bureaucracy, and resource management, making them an oddly natural choice for leading small states.

Services: The services of the Slavers are more useful to larger organizations like farms, mines, and cities, than to the player characters. However, Slavers will often pay for captive humanoids and other races brought to their Guildhouses. 10-30 sc is offered, and this is higher for mages. Priests, on the other hand, will be apologized to and set free. The Slavers will quickly try to relocate slaves acquired in this manner, usually as far from the providing source as possible, to avoid future complications.

The Surveyors

The Surveyors were the third Guild to incorporate, but they have been nowhere near as successful as the other Guilds. This is in part due to the dangerous and slow nature of their job: to guard roads, trade routes, and caravan shipments, and to scout for newer, safer, and possibly profitable routes through uncharted wilderness. For these reasons, the Surveyors are the most likely Guild to employ non-Guild agents, and they are also the Guild with the highest attrition rate.

Services: Surveyors often hire local mercenaries to aid in transportation and protection of caravans. Because the Surveyors are not a rich organization, usually these hired hands are not paid in cash, but are fed and housed along the way for free. A standing policy is that these hired caravan guards are free to collect whatever plunder is obtained from bandits or other foes that are encountered. Particularly valuable shipments or guards hired for dangerous routes might be paid a modest wage (on the order of 1 sc per day).

The Surveyors Guild also acts as a sort of overland mail service. Messages are transcribed and given to a number of different carriers to

help ensure they reach their destination. Given the long duration of land travel, however, these messages are rarely urgent. The Guild charges a nominal fee of 10 sc for any message to anywhere in Twylos, and it takes one week to one year for the message to arrive.

Places of Twylos

What follows is essentially an encyclopedia of interesting and important places, people, objects, and stories. This guide is not comprehensive. Highlighted here are some of the more unusual aspects of the world of Twylos; while most towns have shops, farms, inns, and the like, we have left out many of those less-essential details, which the Game Master can make up or borrow from other sources.

These entries are organized geographically, and fall into three main classes: towns (villages, cities, and citadels), historical landmarks (monuments, tombs, and other places for adventure), and regions (large geographical areas). Areas of importance or that have unusual characteristics are the main entries of this guide, listed in alphabetical order. Smaller or less important areas are listed as subheadings within the entry of the nearest major location. Descriptions of things with considerable significance are labeled in italics. The Game Master should feel free to move these places, NPCs, and objects to other locations if that best suits the narrative of the campaign.

Descriptions of towns and other centers of civilization begin with a series of statistics about the makeup of that area. Population size of cities should be considered approximate, and in the case of larger cities, usually takes into account surrounding villages and farmland. For religious content of various places, Thainist, Duuran, and Ixian listings reflect the heterogeneity of these theologies. A town listed as Thainist will almost always have priests of Kithain, along with a small number of priests of Nergal and Zhol. A Duuran listing usually indicates the Church of Spring, along with some of the Vox Duur, and in a few cases might signal the presence of the Church of Winter. A town listed as Ixian will have some members of both the Order of Ixian and the Church of Ixus. A listing of Xeres could mean several things- some larger cities do have small shrines to the mad god, to pay respects. Other places might have priests of Xeres in disguise. For resources, Guilds, and religious listings, the order of the listing indicates the relative strength of those aspects in that area.

Landmarks contain a listing of the major NPCs and foes that dominate each location. Most listings begin with an approximate difficulty level of the dungeon or enemies therein, matched to skill level of a balanced group of four player characters. The Game Master should feel free to tailor these settings to the needs of the campaign. Several of the entries have difficulty levels that span a broad range. In some of these cases, this is because the dungeon was designed to be explored in repeated trips- perhaps the adventurers lack a key or magic spell necessary to move to a secret location, or possibly one of the monsters is much too tough at the present time.

Regions begin with a listing of the common (80%) and rare (20%) inhabitants of that location, which characters might meet in their travels along the road, or be ambushed by in the night. Most of these regional descriptions are quite general, reflecting their huge geographical size, so Game Masters are encouraged to add some variety to the people and things that the player characters will meet. These random encounters serve two purposes- first, to add some excitement and break up the monotony of a month-long trek across the countryside; second, to add some realism to the narrative flow of the game. Not every encounter and combat needs to end in bloodshed or death, and likewise not every encounter should be coincidentally tailored to the power level of the party. For example, the month-long trip down the Zhellan Traderoad might have the following series of encounters, not

including the several stops at different towns: traveling wine merchants on their way to Rheyas, some grazing cattle seen in the distance with a griffon circling overhead, an ogre ambush at night, and harassment by the Slaver guards of Tzalvas. Variety and pacing are the most important elements that the Game Master should provide during world exploration epochs of the campaign.

Armech (AR-mek)

Armech was once the seat of civilization, previously known as the wealthy nation of Irendor (EAR-en-door). During the First and Second Eras, it was ruled by an emperor chosen from the Great Houses, aristocratic merchant families in control of various resources and industry spread across the Valstach mountains and the expansive valley region known as the Valstedt. The Great Houses were, and still are, six in number: House Argaunte (AR-gaunt; symbol is a white ship on an orange banner), House Kray (white scythe and wheel on green), House Maxinay (black silhouette of a two-headed raven on blue), House Tzalbach (ZAL-bak; black tower on red), House Zouthan (ZOO-than; black anvil on red), and the Imperial House Valstach (VAL-stock; white-steel throne clenched by a gauntlet on black); additionally, there are a number of lesser Houses continually jockeying for prestige and position (e.g., House Thorncrust, House Maars, House Lutenze, House Dereday, and so on). As the Irendi Empire grew in numbers, colonization of Drohksmere, Tarach, Vasqueray, and the Vehrlands followed. However, due to a number of factors, including in-breeding and infighting, land wars, and environmental causes, the Irendi Empire decayed into a shadow of its former glory. The remains of the fallen Houses, united under the Imperial Church of Aguirre, now form the military-ruled state of Armech. The reconstituted parliament of Armech, made up of soldiers, priests, and plutocrats, is called the Iron Throne.

Armech still contains a number of mineral resources (iron, coal, and precious metals) scattered throughout the Valstach range, and agriculture in the Valstedt supports cold-tolerant crops such as barley. Taxation is high. Armech tries to impose a mandatory draft, and villages are mostly overseen by local militias, reporting to the Church and Throne. Armech's government is an oligarchic feudal system, with the Houses controlling land and valuable trade writs. Lesser Houses sometimes own properties themselves, or sometimes lease more valuable tracts from the Great Houses. Houses are continually bartering, exchanging, and suing each other over trade agreements- rarely does military action occur between Houses. When it does, it usually is in terms of 'nilsovehn', an all-out war between two Houses, conducted in strict accordance with Iron Throne laws. Generally anything goes in nilsovehn- the laws are designed to protect the other Houses and the rest of Armech from the brutal House warfare. Nilsovehn sometimes occurs between a Lesser and a Greater House, in an attempt for the Lesser House to depose the Greater House and take their Great House status. Rarely, two or more Houses align themselves against another in an attempt to completely destroy one House called 'grahloslaven'.

Armech's history is seeped in ancient magics and technology, religious wars, and infernalism. Thus, adventuring in Armech is more suitable for higher level or more experienced characters, although adventures that begin in the border lands or Valstedt might be appropriate for less experienced parties.

Bludszech (BLEWD-zek)

Major city and capital of Armech, built between a deep chasm and a dormant volcano.

Population: 80,000; 85% human, 10% orc, 3% dwarf, 1% ogre, 1% misc. (including demons, giants, goblins, jinn, undead).

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Resources: very wealthy, very high magical and technological levels; metalworking, mining (most precious and heavy metals), stone craft, trade, fishing, some agriculture, art, libraries, military and magical academies.

Religion: Aguierre, Ixian, Thainist, Duuran, Xeres, Typhon.

Guilds: Slavers, Alchemists, Surveyors.

Government: oppressive; militaristic control by the Iron Throne, chaired by Varrochs Ashven Zouthan (13th level human), well-trained army of 5,000.

Built across the Urun Trench, and in the shadow of the Bludscrieg, a dormant volcano, Bludszech is a harsh city. Zouthan, Argante, and Kray have controlling interests in Bludszech, a town rich in heavy metals, rare ores, and smithing skills. Bludszech is particularly xenophobic, though- its two major religions are the Church of Ixus and the Church of Aguierre. Strong winds and bad weather span Urun Trench; ruins of several bridges can be seen spanning it, but nothing holds today; instead the city is built around the Trench, and citizens just walk the five miles or so to get from the near side (the residential and religious districts) to the far side (the commercial, military, and governing districts). Waters that have carved out the Trench pour into the gloomy Lake Urun. On the near side of the Trench, at the base of The Crieg, is the Red Church, the cathedral of Aguierre. The earliest extant Temple to Ixus is high up, halfway up The Crieg. The Three Towers of the Order of Ixian are beyond Bludszech to the northwest. The Grey Vaults are built in a crescent shape around a northern peak, Aerspire, a short walk from the main of the city. The Grey Vaults are home to the original Book of the Dead of the Church of Nergal, supposedly the oldest text in all of Twylos. This Book is said to contain the name of everyone on Twylos who has died in chronological order. Grandfather Arved Tzalbas (15th level human, 8th Circle Faith) of House Tzalbach became the head of the Church with the fall of Zostig in 190 T.E. The Grandfather is interested in recovering some of the books and relics that remain in Zostig's ruined temple to Zhol (especially the Spade of Gayla). Bludszech also contains one of the only remaining temples to Mordred, once called the Hall of Morday, now called the Black Church due to its fire-blasted and ash-covered exterior. Bludszech is in the heart of the Valstach mountains. Well-traveled, patrolled roads out of town lead southwest to Thenzor Deep, forking to turn south to Sheandril, and north towards Xendor Hall.

The Iron Throne: On the far side of the trench is the Black Forge, the fortress used by the Iron Throne as the center of Armechian government. The Black Forge is a huge stone fortress that was once the citadel of House Zouthan, and contains the broken remnants of the famous Zouthan Forge itself. The current head of the Throne and of House Zouthan is Varrochs Ashven Zouthan, a humorless octogenarian. Lord Varrochs, like most of House Zouthan, worked in his early days as a House ironsmith. The Forge was used to construct great weapons by the master smiths of Zouthan, leading to their ascent as a Great House. Several of Twylos' enchanted weapons were first made in the fires of Bludszech, including two of the lost Swords of the Antiarch (the Flametongue and the Wyrms tongue). It was unfortunately destroyed during the war between Caradoc and the priests of Mordred, but the smiths of Zouthan are still the best in Twylos, jealously guarding their science at all costs. Zouthan smiths work with precious metals (gold, silver, platinum) and several heavy metals- iron, tungsten, titanium, and a rare earth element called chthonium. Weapons forged of expensive Zouthan steel and steel alloys are non-magically +1 to-hit and damage, usually costing ten times the normal price or higher.

The Manor of Ellery Daveniir: Towards the southwestern part of Bludszech, in the Ryes District, is a madhouse, the Manor of Ellery Daveniir. The Story of Sweet Ellery is a well-known fairy tale, a cautionary fable against raising the dead. Once a member of House Argante in the early days of the Second Era, Daveniir was raised from death with horrible results, committing suicide afterwards in a

particularly ghastly manner. She was raised again, and proceeded to butcher her family and servants, while exclaiming that the world was in fact a hellish afterlife. She was locked in her house until she died for a third and final time. Over the centuries, the Daveniir Manor has become madhouse for the elite families of Bludszech. One of Daveniir's inmates is Tahjana Valos. Ms. Valos was a lesser member of House Valstach, whom the Imperial House sorcerer Gen Vhoole discovered to be the last true descendant of the Valstach bloodline. He arranged to have her committed here after she slew her husband on her wedding day. While not mad before, she is close to suicide now. Unknown to Vhoole, Valos is pregnant, although in her hysteric state, she is not sure if the father is one of the wardens or another inmate, or if she loved him or not.

The School of Names: Near the Daveniir Manor is the Library of Pavis Vrayne, formerly known as the Irendor Museum of Hereditary Virtues and Lineage, but now usually just called the School of Names. While the School has been around since the earliest days of the Empire in the First Era, it was recently reformulated in the Third Era, and its main archives relocated to the present site by Pavis Vrayne, student of the great historian Vladmir Ozmandian. Members of the School are Genealogists, who try to maintain an elaborate record of family descent, marriage, and breeding- not just among the nobles of the Houses, but for all people of the world. To this end, some of the Museum Scholars (also called Vraynists or Name Scholars) spend much of their time traveling, collecting not only information and records, but also blood samples, pieces of corpses, and the like. For this reason, the School deals often with the Bone Trade, with whom they maintain a healthy competitive but collaborative relationship. Many of the Museum Scholars are magicians, who believe that knowledge of family lineage imparts some information as to a person's 'truenam', an elaborate and unique magical identifier that determines a subject's personality, strengths and weaknesses, and fate.

Admittance to the School of Names is highly selective, and (unsurprisingly) depends on the family name, status, finances, and intellect of interested candidates. Magicians from each of the four schools of magic are represented. While the Irendor Museum was first just a record-keeping system for House marriages, over the centuries some of the Name Scholars have developed a mystical or religious sense about their work, obsessively collecting any scrap of vintage clothing or historical trivia in the fatalistic, deterministic hopes of concocting a full sense of world history and destiny. The current Chairs are Erichs Veralin, Genealogy (15th level human, 7th Circle Hermetic), Ebron Hayes, History (16th level human, 7th Circle Faith), and Ruthienne Maars, Literature (12th level human, 5th Circle Ritual), all of whom are crypto-Typhonists and support the development of the School in this bizarre direction. The fourth Chair, Heindel Maars, Heralds (10th level human, 4th Circle Hedge) has been marginalized under the new directorship; he is cousin to Ruthienne and does not know of her paranoid Church of Typhon religious beliefs.

Once admitted and indoctrinated into the School's mysteries, a Name Scholar may analyze any individual with an intellect of 5 or greater. To do so, the Scholar must know the individual's name, and make a Heraldry check with a target number equal to the victim's intellect score. Possession of a biological substance (blood, hair, etc.) of the victim grants a modifier of +2 to this skill check. If this check is successful, the Name Scholar gains a +2 modifier to all resistance checks resulting from the analyzed individual. Conversely, the analyzed individual applies a -2 modifier to all resistance checks made against the Name Scholar's spells. Analyzing an individual requires ten minutes, the effects of which are permanent.

The Aagsreicht: The Aagsreicht (AHGS-rykt) is a private Hermetic school for training the elite of Armech, and is the oldest school for magic in Armech, dating from the First Era. Once reserved for House members, the Aagsreicht has been in slow decline since the fall of

Irendor, and accepts anyone with cash enough to pay the steep tuition costs. The Masters of the Aagsreicht include Countess Kayalyn Zouthan (16th level human, 8th Circle Hermetic), Arex Donovan (9th level human, 5th Circle Hedge), and Jamas Zhael (12th level human, 5th Circle Hermetic).

Ulug Prison: Zhael is also head of security for Ulug Prison, an island prison in Lake Urun. Ulug is where the most important prisoners of the Empire were, and still are, kept- it completely magically shielded both externally and internally, meaning that magic of all forms fail within the walls of Ulug. Marcos D'antoniir (6th level human), a Queyan-born courtier of House Maxinay and low-ranking member of the School of Names, purposely killed his gambling partner and two harlots to be thrown into Ulug for life. D'antoniir possesses the truename of Aramach Vox Thrauxes, the demon mage of Napres, and fears for his life and soul if unprotected outside Ulug.

The Escaped Slave: Giantkind and goblinkind can be found in the mountains around Bludszech, along with aggressive bears and wolves. In a cave about ten miles off the Longiron Road, an escaped minotaur from Vamooris has made his home. The Slavers captured this specimen and began conditioning, but the minotaur escaped, killing five Guildsmen in the process. The Guild is eager for its capture and return, hopefully with a minimum of civilian deaths. In the cave, the minotaur is dining on the bones of an Ixian, a goblin who was converted just prior to his death. Next to the corpse is an enchanted spear (+1 modifier to hit and damage) fashioned in the golden trefoil of the Ixians, and a golden triangle holy symbol worth 400 sc.

Fanjyr Castle (FAN-geer)

Landmark (ruined hot springs resort); moderate difficulty (levels 6-11).

Fanjyr was once a resort spot for the Irendi elite. At the northern reaches of the Empire, a massive palace was built over an extensive set of hot springs. Fanjyr always had to fight against things coming up from the cavern depths, but maintained a well armed and highly trained militia for those purposes. With the Fall of Irendor, Fanjyr was abandoned, to be reclaimed for several centuries by a few naga. Frescoes and other art in the bowels of Fanjyr still partially depict the beautiful god of the naga, an angelic woman (likely Timmorn).

One of the naga warlocks grew quite powerful, and created a demonic forge for the construction of minor magical items. After years of abuse, the demon of the forge (a bound Malebranche with Hermetic item enchantment abilities) created for it a set of animated implements supposedly to help its master's research. The last of these implements- four chains, a beguiling music box, and a sort of rudimentary buzzsaw- were imbued with evil spirits that slew the naga. The implements remain, as do some of the nagas' riches. In latter years, seeking the magic forge is an ifrit, Ezbeline the Angel, (12th level ifrit, 4th Circle Hermetic, who fancies herself the goddess in the frescoes) and her ten ghul servants, who first chanced upon Fanjyr searching for bones. The ifrit has set up her temporary quarters near the hottest of the springs in the lowest reaches of the Castle. Aboveground, a fir bolg (Shettin Bolg), his ettin step-brother (Grettin Bolg), and their 32 dwarf slaves have come to Fanjyr also seeking the legendary forge of the nagas. Ezbeline and the Bolgs conduct a sort of guerilla warfare, each seeking to destroy the other without getting too close.

Great Durvan Range

Region; mountains. Common encounters: bears, brigands, miners, ogres, orcs, traders, hunters, wolves. Rare encounters: dwarves, giants, trolls, undead, wyverns.

The Great Durvan Range, also called the Durve, stretches from Armech and across the north to Drohksmere, down throughout Khaedor, the Zhellve, and the Middle Lands, to Tzalvas. The northern range forms the region known as Valstach, which is the heart of Armech. The Valstach mountains contain many mineral deposits that contributed significantly to the development of the early Empire of Irendor.

Longiron Road

Landmark (unfinished railroad); low-moderate difficulty (levels 1-8).

The Longiron is the ruined remains of a prototype railroad that ran between Bludszech, Thenzor Deep, and ruined citadels in the north. Originally known as the Kray-Gauntre Rail-Line, it was built by House Kray for moving ores out of the rich deposits down to the smelting operations in Bludszech and the Deep, and traveling across the Ered Wastes to Szondarch. The Rail-Line was in partial operation, but with the Fall of Irendor and constant raids from Andukar goblin- and giant-kin, the whole operation was dropped. Much of the Longiron Road remains though- parts have been picked clean and overgrown with wildlife, but sections of railroad are intact in places, as are abandoned rail carts and engines. Much of Longiron was originally the Valstedt Slaveroad, built and used by the Slavers for moving their cargo from the mines of Valstach across the northeastern stretch of the Valstedt, and to the Drohkan colony far to the east across the Wastes.

Brennoch: Near the border between Armech and the Ered Wastes is a ruined station-stop and switching point once called Brennoch. Brennoch is now a miniature ghost-town, just a few empty buildings, including a loading crane for moving crates from cars on one line to another. Brennoch is home to a crazed ördog (a lesser demon with animal shape-shifting abilities) that believes itself to be a Duuran druid named Renald Ossiter. Additionally, one of the intact cranes has been taken over by a spirit-of-the-land (see Appendix 2.1.2), a malicious animistic possessive spirit that will attack newcomers with two supply hooks attached to movable winches. Ossiter may warn or aid friendly-seeming strangers, join with the spirit-of-the-land, or simply watch and laugh. Notably, the section of track from Brennoch into the Wastes might still be workable for several leagues, with some clever engineering.

Lhondoss: Some sections of the Longiron are in fact still in use, such as a stretch not far from Brennoch, between the border town of Tzalborg and a set of ice caves called Lhondoss. Tzalborg is one of a few small independent city-states that eke out survival just beyond the patrolled borders of Armech (although there is some friction between the border militias and these encampments). Tzalborg is set within the crumbling walls of an old stone citadel. The line is operated by three orcs calling themselves the Tzalborg Engine, and runs through a tunnel into the Wastes, to the oasis village of Sunday. Another section of the line goes underground, usually not in operation, runs along an underground stream and ends deeper in the mountains at a series of ice caves called Lhondoss, not far from Venoshua. The presence of ice and crystals makes this an attractive site for some of Tzalborg's braver sorts, but most of Lhondoss is sealed by Duuran wards (including an Oread ice nymph named Laana), as this was once a watch post of the Vox Duur against the suspected evils of Venoshua.

Venoshua: Venoshua (VEN-shwa) is not part of Armech proper, but is found in the northeastern reaches of the Valstach mountains. Venoshua is a citadel of ice, built into an extensive series of caverns and tunnels within the mountain, and was one of the first strongholds of the Church of Winter after they left the Vox Duur. It remains a small Breyanic enclave, under the Abbot of Venoshua (10th level T'suggha demon, 5th Circle Faith, 3rd Circle Ritual), who is an enormously fat frog-like T'suggha daemon (see Appendix 2.1.2) and his companion, Sister Betca (8th level human, 1st Circle Faith). Betca was formerly a Knight of

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Aguierre, now turned to Breyana, who wields the Arannasblade, the Bride of Abraxas (see Appendix 2.1.1).

Nightfall

Medium-sized fortress set above a tall pair of waterfalls.

Population: 6,100 (120 in Dawn); 76% human, 15% orc, 4% dwarf, 4% faerie, 1% misc. (including giants, ogres, ratkin).

Resources: wealthy, moderate magical and high technological levels; trade, shipbuilding, stonework, metalworking, woodworking, fishing, mining (few precious and heavy metals).

Religion: Thainist, Aguierre, Duuran, Ixian, Typhon.

Guilds: Surveyors, Slavers.

Government: strict; militaristic control by the Iron Throne, governed by Lady Gennivelle Argaunte (12th level human, 3rd Circle Hermetic, 3rd Circle Hedge), well-trained army and navy of 1,200.

Nightfall is an important component of the trade route between Armech and western Twylos. Barges continually move between Nightfall and Thenzor, bringing dry goods from the road to Westgate in exchange for Valan metal sent down the Thoresh River. Nightfall sits at the top of a pair of large waterfalls, the Nightfalls. An enormous sluice system prevents transport barges from plunging over 1,000 feet to the bottom. As opposed to the other major trade centers of Armech, Nightfall is a single structure of stone and metal, built onto and within Mount Serasz. River barges enter a large tunnel at the base of Nightfall, and goods are loaded onto sledges, wheeled out to the canyon on the opposite side.

Dawn: A long staircase winds down to the bottom of the falls. At the base, in opposition to the dirt and noise of Nightfall, is the serene village of Dawn. The cottages and manors of Dawn are quite large, and older members of House Argaunte and Zouthan come here for retirement. Dawn is well-protected by a small army of House soldiers.

Plunder of the Falls: Persistent rumors, especially among the soldiers of Nightfall, mention the vast wealth to be found at the bottom of the Nightfalls, from barges that went over the falls before the sluice was built. Because of the depth and turbulence of the water, the few salvage expeditions attempted (usually funded by speculative Argaunte retirees) have turned up nothing. In the murky bottom of the pool at the base of the falls is a small set of caverns. A hideous ablocanth has laired here for centuries, and using an old ritual, has turned many of the corpses from the barge workers into its undead minions. The ablocanth had a precious find on one of the barges- the Dayblade, one of the seven Swords of the Antiarch (see Appendix 2.1.1). One of his water-logged zombie slaves wields it. For sport, the ablocanth pitches his slaves against each other, only to recreate them if destroyed.

Rauthos (RAW-thows)

Major city.

Population: 32,000; 88% human, 10% orc, 2% misc. (including dwarves, faeries, gnoles, goblins, ogres).

Resources: wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, agriculture and husbandry, mining (some precious and heavy metals), metalworking, library, military academy.

Religion: Ixian, Aguierre, Duuran, Thainist.

Guilds: Slavers, Alchemists, Surveyors.

Government: strict; militaristic control by the Iron Throne, governed by House Kray, led by Avangilline Kray (11th level human, 3rd Circle Hermetic), well-trained army of 1,500.

Second of the four major Armechian cities. Rauthos was destroyed at the end of the First Era by a pair of dragons. They laid waste to most of the countryside, and it was several decades before Rauthos was rebuilt,

on top of the wreckage of the old city (which now lies buried beneath modern Rauthos). Wyrmsgate is a stone and bronze monstrosity at the city's far western end, commemorating the destruction of Old Rauthos with two giant statues of the dragons. The plumbing system of the new city is quite advanced, built by the Alchemists Guild to take advantage of the hot springs underneath town and in the nearby mountains. Many of the wealthier homes are warmed naturally by this elaborate hot water system. Rauthos itself is quite lush, although just outside town is a large scrubland, devoid of civilization. Old ruins can be found in the Rauthan Wastes, and the Museum Scholars believe that a civilization predating the first Irendi Empire once flourished there, before the land was wrecked. Many Duurans still live out in the Wastes. Being at the outer limits of Armech, Rauthos seems to be a sort of retirement community for many of the rich Imperial Houses, and the mean age of the populace is significantly higher than the rest of the Empire. The Order of Ixian began in Rauthos. Their library has been rebuilt and is still maintained by the Order.

The Astromancer's Tower: On a secluded mesa about two days' travel west of Rauthos lies the abandoned observatory of Jonsolon Markov (17th level human, 8th Circle Hermetic), the Astromancer. The Astromancer's Tower was a site for Guild of Optics astronomical observation, and Markov headed a project dedicated to studying lunar influences. Frustrated by lack of scientific progress, Markov journeyed to the demon-tree Umslamyr in the Ered Wastes, and had his wish granted. Returning to the Tower, he blew it up to fake his death and cover his tracks, flying to the moon of Twylos on the back of a mechanical owl. Markov now resides on the moon in a rebuilt copy of the Astromancer's Tower, where he continues astronomical research and is served by automatons. Markov is completely paranoid, believing correctly that the Opticians and Duurans both independently search for him, not believing him dead. His automatons and his Tower are replete with defenses, including a suborbital glass golem shaped as a lens that reflects and focuses the light of the sun (acting as the Immolate spell once per round).

Sheandril (shee-AN-drill)

Major city.

Population: 60,000; 91% human, 7% orc, 1% goblin, 1% misc. (including dwarves, faeries, gnoles, ogres).

Resources: moderately wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, agriculture and husbandry, mining (some precious and heavy metals), metalworking, woodworking, clothmaking.

Religion: Aguierre, Ixian, Thainist, Duuran.

Guilds: Slavers, Surveyors, Alchemists.

Government: strict; militaristic control by the Iron Throne, governed by Hideon Argaunte (14th level human), well-trained army of 3,000.

Third major city of Armech, and trade hub of Armech's southern plains. In contrast to the clutter and claustrophobia-inducing cities of Bludszech and the Deep, Sheandril sprawls across the expanses of the Valstedt, in the southern end of Armech. Houses Argaunte and Tzalbach mainly claim Sheandril, although many lesser Houses have controlling interests in the numerous villages that dot the Valstedt. Sheandril is the most relaxed of the major cities of Armech, due to the huge Valstedtic population that comes and goes for trading purposes. The city is constantly in flux. Sheandril is less of a city than an eclectic collection of villages, some of which are entirely made up of traveling tents. Other villages are permanent, and a few are enclosed by walls. The individual subdivisions of Sheandril do not always get along well with each other, and there are frequently skirmishes between their members. One of these mobile divisions, Sunflower Square, holds a hectic, huge market for farmers and traders twice per month. The last leg of the Valstedt Slaveroad heads north into Valstach, branching in the mountains to head west to Thenzor Deep and east to the capital city of Bludszech. The southern Slaveroad branches just out of Sheandril, to

head southwest to Moorcrest, and east across the Valstedt and into the Ered Wastes.

Thenzor Deep (THEN-zor)

Major city and landmark (underground city and shrine); moderate to very high difficulty (levels 7+).

Population: 40,000 (2,000 in Thenzor village); 76% human, 12% orc, 2% dwarf, 2% ogre, 10% misc. (including demons, doppelgangers, faeries, giants, goblins, jinn, undead).

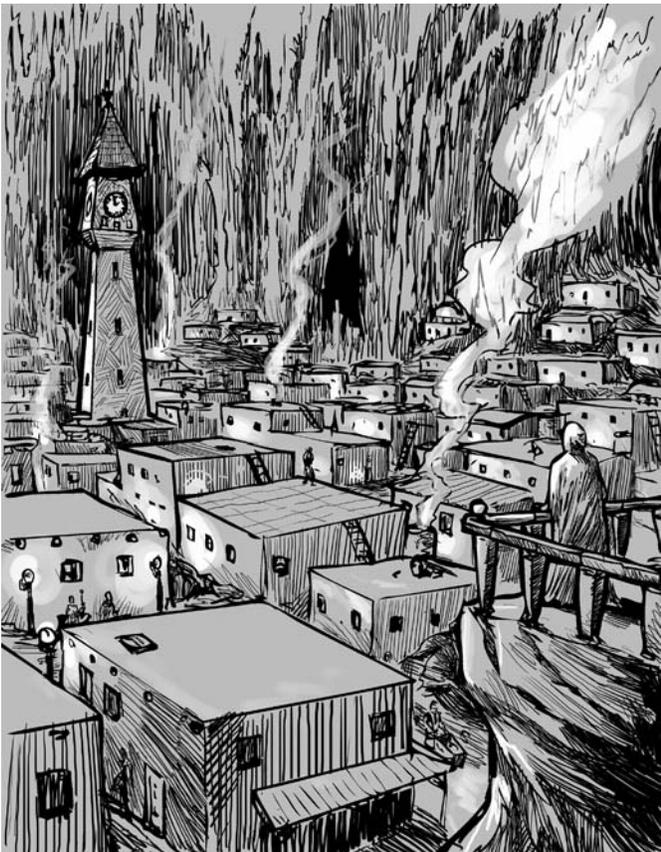
Resources: very wealthy, very high magical and technological levels; mining (most precious and heavy metals), metalworking, stonework, trade, fishing, art, libraries, military and magical academies.

Religion: Duuran, Aguirre, Thainist, Ixian, Xeres, Typhon.

Guilds: Slavers, Alchemists.

Government: uncaring; militaristic-oligarchic control by House Maxinay, led by Martin Zhenovich von Maxinay (17th level human, 7th Circle Hermetic), well-trained army and navy of 2,000.

Thenzor Deep, the fourth city of Armech, is a massive underground city and mining complex, dating from the earliest days of Irendor. Thenzor Deep has long been controlled by two Great Houses, Zouthan and Maxinay, and their descendents continue to plot against each other in modern Armech. Thenzor Deep is on the shores of Lake Thores, called the Lake of Spires for the tall natural rock formations, and is extremely murky and deep. Just outside the huge cliff-side cave opening is a village and warehouse complex called Thenzor. Most citizens live underground though; 'Deep' refers not to the depths of the lake, but the depths of the mines and caverns below. Generations have lived in the caverns below, and members of some of Thenzor's long-standing families look a bit different- slightly larger heads and eyes, and skin tones tinged with gray or pale blue. Thenzor is the last leg of the overland trade road connecting Armech and Drohksmere. From Thenzor, barges are loaded with supplies and taken downstream to Nightfall.



The Warehouse District: Thenzor Village has many acres of old warehouses against Thores. Some of the warehouse district is heavily patrolled by soldiers from each of the Houses, protecting goods and metal stored for later shipment. Much of the warehouse district, however, has fallen into disuse. It has become a dangerous slum, and at night all manner of blackguards and beasts emerge into the narrow lanes. Many of the Houses' informal business transactions, best kept off the records, are conducted here. One of these old abandoned warehouses, Building III-137, is tightly locked and contains several more wards within, including four draugr guardians. In an old trunk, wrapped in a ragged, bloody cloak is an ancient weapon, the Gallenstein (Appendix 2.1.1), now left here and forgotten for many centuries. An agent of the Bone Trade, Ludmille Ecker (9th level human, 4th Circle Hedge), has found old records suggesting its whereabouts. She and her assistants Erin Dallowy (8th level human) and Jaren Ulenge (7th level orc, 3rd Circle Faith) do not know how to get to it without alerting the Houses, particularly Maxinay, that something valuable has been left behind.

The Deep: Thenzor Deep consists of ten main underlevels. The first three underlevels comprise the city itself, a sprawling, almost unmappable place full of grime, corruption, and ancient goods and money. In the center of the first main level is a tall clocktower that serves to regulate light-dark cycles in the city through magical means. Four enchanted support pillars spaced throughout town acts as magical batteries for the clock. Next door is the Deep's most popular inn, also called The Clocktower, a sprawling multi-leveled establishment. Another popular inn is The Fifth Pillar. Just about anyone or anything can be found in Thenzor Deep, for trade, sale, or other means of procurement. The rest of the main underlevels are sealed off by the Houses for mining and exploration purposes. While dark things can be found beneath, the Houses try to tightly control who comes and goes from their mines. One large shaft, the Elevator, descends all the way to the bottom, but this is guarded by an army of House soldiers. The crest on the Elevator is that of House Maxinay: the silhouette of a large, two-headed crow with its wings spread. Other, smaller elevators and passageways connect various levels, some on the maps and some hidden.

Nox Ungor (underlevel 3): On the third level, the community of Nox Ungor is contained in a single large cavern. Guran's Delve is the sole inn here. A combat school run by several ex-Knights of Aguirre, the Red Academy, specializes in swordplay and finesse. Advanced Counterattack, Calculated Strike, Counterattack, and Weapon Mastery may be purchased for one less skill point if training is purchased from Academy tutors.

Szelain (underlevel 3): The inhabitants of Ungor sometimes fight with the townsfolk of Szelain, a more remote set of caverns housing a squat fortress and a large crypt. Szelain is home to the Genarch, eunuch Knights of Aguirre. Some of the Genarch are assassins, usually working for the ends of their own church.

Level 5B (underlevel 5): Level Five of the Deep contains a mining facility using undead workers. Referred to only as Level 5B, the lich Vox Ebenezer (10th level lich; 4th Circle Hermetic) oversees not only the mining operations but also the acquisition of new workers, using corpses obtained from the Slavers Guild or other more nefarious means. Vox Ebenezer's operation is strictly financial.

Maerswinter (underlevel 7): Found in Level Seven of Thenzor Deep is a large crystal-filled cavern, Maerswinter. The crystals of Maerswinter are resonant in the range of humanoid voices, and thus they produce otherworldly sounds when loud speech or singing is nearby. Maerswinter once housed a lavish theatre in the First Era, but the theatre has not been used since the lower levels of Thenzor were sealed to the public. A side-chamber in Maerswinter was later used by the Duurans as a means of entry and exit to the depths of Thenzor:

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

when the correct piece of music is sung in front of a certain sheet of crystal, a portal opens to part of the Ether which appears as a small quaint cottage floating in the void. Access to most other parts of Twylos have since been sealed, but another portal within the cottage leads to the Zolace Naturalists Prisons, an ancient Duuran site far to the west in the Vehrlands.

The Guild of Optics: The Guild of Optics is one of the more unusual organizations based in Thenzor Deep. The Guild is a small but international collection of tradesmen, nominally interested in optical supplies- lenscrafting, mirror construction, and fine metalwork. The Opticians pursue a number of scientific interests, in physics, materials, astronomy, perception, anatomy, physiology, and psychology. However, the tradework done is mainly a front for the magical investigations and mystical beliefs of the Opticians. The Guild focuses on necromancy, infernalism, and divination. This reflects the origins of the Guild, started in Oolvaunt with funding from Lord Ixondr and Lady Muriel at Velanieh at the end of the Second Era. The Guild of Optics and Oolvaunt's infamous Guild of Thorns shared a common membership in their first few years, before the fall of Vasqueray when the Opticians fled to Thenzor.

The Guild's interest in necromancy and infernalism also stems from the goals of the current Guildmaster, Edrac Reeves (20th level human, 8th Circle Hermetic, 5th Circle Hedge), who, when younger, tried to make himself immortal through strange magic. He succeeded, and now as an old man, falling apart and thoroughly disenchanted with immortality, has members of the Guild searching across Twylos to find some way to allow him to die. Reeves unwisely used the Egg of Voon as part of his ritual, only to have the Egg stolen away by a daeva in the service of Kiervan Strauze just before the fall of Zostig. Unknown to Master Reeves, the Egg now sits in the depths of the Zurvoten Mines. He is afraid to send Guildsmen in search of the Egg, though, as he is concerned their information, and the Egg itself, might fall into the hands of the Bone Trade. One of Reeves' Guildsmen, Nichordjan Durang (6th level human, 3rd Circle Hedge), suspects the Egg's involvement and where it might be located, and has begun to operate without the knowledge of the Guildmaster or the inner circle of Opticians.

These interests of the Guild have led them towards the cult of Breyana, although the Guild itself is strictly nonreligious. Thus the Opticians have been violently attacked by the Vox Duur and the Ixians in times past. The Guild is also on bad terms with other groups doing similar kinds of research, i.e., the Bone Trade and College of Names. For these and other reasons, members of the Guild tend to be extremely paranoid about being discovered as magicians. Opticians tend to have bizarre personalities, tending towards reticence or neuroticism. They dress in plain, nondescript robes, but some of them wear strange or colorful eyepieces. Guildsmen are usually quite introspective and philosophical, and some of the Guild's secret teachings sound theological; for instance, the Guild believes that true knowledge and humanoid self-awareness came with the invention of the mirror, as it was then that one could take a long, careful look at oneself. Membership to the Guild of Optics is quite exclusive, usually by invitation only to magicians of the highest intelligence and with similar philosophical outlooks. Once a Guildsman, though, members enjoy a number of privileges, including access to the Guild's extensive library of magical and scientific research: members gain a +1 modifier to skill checks for arcane or knowledge skills. Additionally, a few members of the Guild who are practitioners of Hermetic magic have worked out an elaborate acupuncture-based system for spell memorization, in order to forego the use of spellbooks (which would invariably reveal them as casters to their enemies). Guildsmen indoctrinated into this system of meditation- and pain-based spell storage can spend one skill point per spell to encode that spell permanently within their body (spell casting and daily memorization, though, remains the same- this simply allows the Guildsman to not need a spellbook for that spell). It takes one day per Circle to encode a spell in this fashion, and a Guildsman can have as many spells encoded in their body up to their endurance score.

The Cult of Gayla (underlevel 8): Within Level Eight is Ulung Village, built around the cavern-wall crypts of the Tzoulentomb. Ulung is the site of the Cult of Gayla, led by Brother Iivians (4th level half-orc, 2nd Circle Faith), Brother Odd (10th level human, 5th Circle Ritual), the undead priest Ximena (8th level spectre, 4th Circle Faith), and Sister Jennifer (9th level human, 5th Circle Faith). As opposed to most other religious sects, in which Resurrection is taboo, heretical, or the means of last resort, members of the Cult of Gayla are ritually murdered and are entombed in the Tzoulten, only to be resurrected 100 years later. In this way do they come to know god.

The Crypt of Carcodian Asmoday (underlevel 9): Sealed under tons of rock in a far-off corner of the 9th underlevel is a tomb of one of the masters of the old Order of Nnull, Carcodian Asmoday. The Order was one of two magical traditions to split off from the Zoran Academy, the other being the Tavash Morn. The tomb is guarded by two bound Obroch (see Appendix 2.1.2) and several magical traps. Within the sarcophagus itself is one of the Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday (see Appendix 2.1.1). Asmoday's wife remains here as a ghost, and she sees it as her duty to defend her husband's work by preventing the Jewel from being removed.

The Zoran Academy (underlevel 10): House Maxinay controls the very bottom, the tenth level, which hides the remains of Twylos' first organized group of Hermetic magicians, a pedantic sect of the Cult of Winter who called themselves the Tavash Morn (the "Children of the Word"). This is a large temple complex, now referred to as the Zoran Academy, and contains a sealed Gate to the realm of the Arcanos, legendary wolf-headed demons who first taught the Duurans the secrets of Hermetic magic. The Academy is past a complex maze of unmapped caverns, the Honeycomb Labyrinth. The Gate is sealed by three ancient Duuran gemstones, the Keys of Zoran (see Appendix 2.1.1 under "Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday"), now lost across Twylos. Members of the Vox Duur who know about Zoran and the Keys consider it a prime objective to keep the Tavash Morn from finding these stones and returning them to Thenzor Deep.

The Gate was originally created and sealed by the Order of Nnull, a splinter group of the Tavash Morn consisting of proto-Ixian sorcerers, opposed to the infernal means and ends of the Tavash. The Order took their name from 'nnull', the rune of anti-magic. The Keys are also sometimes referred to by older texts as the Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday, for the name of the Order of Nnull member who supposedly created them. Both the Tavash Morn and the Order of Nnull have long since disappeared; however, some of the Breyanic cultists have now returned to Zoran and taken this name again, headed by Master Virgil (14th level human, 7th Circle Hermetic), Sister Ghislaine (16th level human, 8th Circle Faith), the ex-Alchemist Lhassevehren (13th level human, 5th Circle Hedge, 5th Circle Hermetic), and Armsmaster Magin Stenzehl (12th level human). The members of Zoran have access to old and powerful magic; Stenzehl wears the Cloak of Blades and Sister Ghislaine possesses the Seraph Ring (see Appendix 2.1.1).

The Valstedt (val-STET)

Region; dry, cold plains.

Common encounters: brigands, gnoles, goblins, large cats, hunters, Slavers, traders, wolves.

Rare encounters: bears, Duurans, gnoles, griffons, performers, Surveyors.

The Valstedt is the great plains that forms the second, southern half of Armech. Instead of being organized into large, aristocratic merchant houses, much of the southern Valstedt is divided into local clans called Clades, including Clade Enroch in the village of Kristan, and Clade Mourthain in the village of Onstanze. Some of the best meat in Twylos is available in the Rauthan markets direct from Clade villages.



Untorsbrae: One of the northern villages is Untorsbrae, under dispute between House Tzalbach and the lesser House Dereday. The manor of Lord Andrian (2nd level human) and Lady Jacqueline Tzalbach (13th level human clone, 6th Circle Hermetic), the Brechthouse, sits on the edge of Untorsbrae in view of a lovely game-filled valley. Unbeknownst to all, the Lady Jacqueline is an ice-formed Antithesis (as per the 8th Circle Hermetic spell), who seeks her true self (unfortunately now dead in Ulug Prison). She is a powerful magician, and is served by Charles Anvolier, an ex-Journeyman of the Slavers (6th level human), who has so far been unable to ascertain the location of his Lady's "sister", nor does he know why she seeks her.

The Lost Courier: In the middle of nowhere, in mud flats towards the southeast of the Valstedt, a rusted iron helm is submerged in the mud and covered with weeds. This is the head of an iron golem, one of the first to be constructed, which sunk into the flats in the First Era. It appears as a man-sized suit of full plate armor, covered in mud and rust. If freed from the mud and cleaned of rust, it will continue its journey from Bludszech to the Arcanum, an ancient and abandoned

school of magic deep within the Ered Wastes. When it reaches the Arcanum, days later, it will descend down a hidden staircase to the old office of Lady Aerial. Having come this far to fail in its mission, it will go berserk and attack anything in sight until destroyed. Within the body of the golem is its message for the late Lady Aerial: a Magic Bag, containing a Scroll of Greater Golem and a magician from the First Era kept in suspended animation, Lord Anaximer duMaxinay (11th level human, 5th Circle Hermetic). DuMaxinay was a traitorous magician partially responsible for the exile of the Lady and her colleagues; he was sent here for questioning and execution. DuMaxinay will be understandably confused if revived, and speaks only ancient Irendi, but he is smart, will quickly grasp the situation, will be eager to acquire a spellbook, and then return to Bludszech (preferably the Bludszech of the First Era, given that he was kidnapped on his wedding night).

The Horror of Pestlesville: In the far eastern part of the Valstedt is the village of Pestlesville. Pestlesville is abandoned, as in 183 T.E. a magical battle between two sorcerers occurred in the middle of town. As part of their duel, a terrible greater gorgon was summoned.

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Bewildered, the gorgon (Mrs. Annabelle Ferox, formerly of Venoshua) petrified both mages and many of the townsfolk who could not escape. Left to the weeds, Annabelle remains among her statues, residing in the Pestle Inn. Several of the homes and stores contain statues of villagers caught going about their day.

The Worms Altar: At the northern part of the Valstedt, close to the mountains of Armech, is The Hag, a rocky hill just in sight of the village of Jylls. Both the name of the hill and the village come from a disgustingly ugly dryad who has long lived nearby, Jyllian Onze (6th level dryad, 2nd Circle Ritual). Ms. Onze possesses an Earthstone (see Appendix 2.1.1, 'Realmstones') as part of a braided leather necklace. Covered in brambles and forgotten is the Worms' Altar, an ancient Duuran ritual site. The Altar, unused for a few centuries, acts as an amplifier for Ritual Magic. If a sentient humanoid is sacrificed on it, the Ritual Mage gains a number of Blood or Gaea spell points equal to its skill level, and may cast any Ritual spell up to one Circle higher than the caster knows (e.g., a 3rd Circle Ritual Mage may cast Simulacrum). If any Blood or Gaea spell points are not used in this fashion, two nights from the sacrifice, the spectre of the victim shall arise to seek revenge on any nearby mortals.

Westgate:

Small city, Armech's port to the West.

Population: 2,600; 83% human, 15% orc, 2% dwarf.

Resources: wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, shipbuilding, woodworking, stonework.

Religion: Thainist, Aguierre, Ixian, Duuran.

Guilds: Navigators, Slavers, Surveyors.

Government: oppressive; militaristic-oligarchical control by the New Westgate Trade Commission, led by Chlodomer Kray (9th level human), army and navy of 230.

Westgate is a town with a troubled past. Originally, Westgate was a small trade-town at the edge of the Irendor Empire, on the coast of the Bay of Taliese. The success of Zostig, as Irendor's main access to points west, kept Westgate from becoming the major Imperial port. It was mainly used for smuggling and as a haven for pirates, leading to a long struggle between the local government of Westgate and the Houses of Irendor for control of the harbor. Towards the end of the First Era, one of the unsavory characters of Westgate did something to provoke the ire of the crazed priest Morgan. In retribution, Morgan constructed a permanent demonic gate in the caverns beneath town, which opened each month to let a new fiend through. Some of these demons emerged to Westgate and attacked townsfolk while others fled for parts unknown. However, some of the summoned creatures secretly remained underneath Westgate and began to dig out tunnels, building for themselves a small underground city. Their construction efforts were too random and extensive, and eventually they broke out into the ocean, flooding the caverns and causing Westgate to collapse into a massive sinkhole.

Westgate lay forgotten throughout the Second Era. The gate, while still in operation, opened only into rock and water, instantly trapping and drowning those creatures that came through. With the silencing of Zostig in 190 T.E., though, Armech had need of a new port to the cities of the Bay. Construction teams were moved to the ruins of Westgate, and House Kray led the efforts to rebuild the harbor. Westgate now has a few thousand residents, and does brisk trade with the other major cities of the Bay of Taliese: Rheyas and Tarach. Engineers have begun excavation and reclamation of the sunken city of Old Westgate, and independent groups have flocked to begin their own investigations. The Bone Trade has come seeking profits and First Era artifacts, while the School of Names desires historical information. The existence of the gate is unknown, but will undoubtedly be discovered as soon as the pumps begin to remove the seawater.

Xendor Hall (ZHEN-dor)

Small fortress and landmark (fortress of House Valstach and the Imperial tombs).

Population: 4,000; 86% human, 9% orc, 3% dwarf, 1% ogre, 1% misc. (including giants, goblins, undead).

Resources: wealthy, high magical and technological levels; mining (a few precious and heavy metals), metalworking, stonework, trade, library, military and magical academies.

Religion: Ironguard (Aguierre), Thainist, Ixian.

Guilds: Slavers.

Government: oppressive; militaristic control by House Valstach, led by Reinholdt Alantir Valstach (7th level human), well-trained army of 400.

Xendor Hall in general is a huge stone court about hundred feet above the surface, inside Mount Yseng. Surrounding it are a variety of mining camps, a stone fortress, and a military base- these are all collectively referred to as Xendor. Xendor is the ancestral home to the Imperial House Valstach. While the other Great Houses war against each other (usually Zouthan and Kray against Maxinay and Argante), the Imperial House mainly weathers internal struggles for power, with different members of the ancient Valstach family competing and championing their favorite heirs to the Imperial Throne.

Heirs of House Valstach: House Valstach claims to be descended from none other than Aguierre himself, and in this they are not wrong. Due to the centuries of infighting, though, the last of the true royal lineage and divine bloodline was assassinated in the later part of the First Era, with the rest of House Valstach unrelated to their great sires. The Empire is no more, however, and the ruling body of Armech is now the Iron Throne, a congress made up of representatives from each of the Houses, currently headed by the Lord Zouthan. The last emperor was Illyrian Valstach VIII- a sickly man who died in his thirties in 213 S.E. With his death, the Irendi Empire officially came to an end. A variety of factions in House Valstach are today competing to depose Zouthan, and the Iron Throne as a whole, and resume the old mantle of Emperor of Irendor. The aging patriarch of House Valstach is Reinholdt Alantir Valstach. Alantir is married to the Lady Kala Agnosses (0th level human) from Gyre, who has yet to give him an heir. Some of the notable members of House Valstach who have begun to scheme for his throne include Agness Valans DeMaxinay (Alantir's young niece, affiliated with House Maxinay only through a failed marriage; 4th level human), General Hector von Kausse (Warlord of the Imperial House, who claims to have some of the original Valan blood in him; 12th level human), and Alantir's advisor, the sorcerer Gen Vhoole (14th level human, 7th Circle Hermetic, 20 intellect).

von Kausse's claim is false, although Vhoole has begun wondering if he should support the General in an eventual rush for House dominance. Vhoole himself is not well-liked by much of the rest of House Valstach, but he alone knows that one carrier of the Imperial bloodline has survived to this day: Tahjana Valos, who was a minor member of the House. Valos herself does not suspect her lineage. Vhoole's Hermetic magic helped reveal to him this surprising fact, and he destroyed whatever scant and cryptic evidence he initially found, deep in the dusty archives of the School of Names. Vhoole believes the old stories about the powerful curse that damns those who physically hurt a member of Aguierre's bloodline. Thus, so as not to arouse suspicion, but conveniently remove Valos from a possible claim to the throne, one of his spells temporarily drove her insane on the day of her wedding. She murdered her husband and was sent to the Manor of Ellery Daveniir in Bludszech, her marriage unconsummated. Vhoole believes her a suicide, or soon to become one, and does not risk exposure by checking on her.

The Tomb of the Kings: The real Xendor Hall, however, is a squat building just out of town. It is the royal burial grounds for all the past Irendi Emperors, and the site of the main temple of the Order of Ironguard, the priesthood who pays homage to the deceased

demigods. The Church of Irons, also called The Ironguard, or The Cult of Rust (by Irendi dissidents), has as their symbol a clenched gauntlet clutching a crown (similar to the House Seal of the Imperial House Valstach). The Church of Irons was the official church of Irendor, based out of Xendor Hall. It honored all of the past emperors of Irendor, claiming that the first emperor was the son of Aguierre, and that all of the rulers since have been direct descendants, still imbued with the blood of the god. This is all past tense, as with the destruction of the Empire, the Church was disbanded. According to the Knights, the Ironguard sealed themselves in Xendor Hall when House Valstach fell. While the small city of Xendor continues to survive, the Hall itself is regarded with fear and great respect. The schemes of the Bone Trade have as of yet failed to come to fruition, and the Hall has been untouched since the early days of the Second Era. The citizens of Xendor are protective of the Hall, and fearful of what might happen if the doors are opened. This alone will prove to be difficult, as the Doors of Xendor Hall (see Appendix 2.1.1) were themselves enchanted by the Ironguard before they were disbanded.

Yseng Manor (EE-sing)

Landmark (House Maxinay mansion).

This is the historical center for House Maxinay, but it is hardly in use since Maxinay moved to Thenzor Deep during the Fall of the Empire. The huge mansion of the Maxinay family takes its name from the Yseng River that winds down from Xendor Hall. Built next to a waterfall, there is nothing in sight of the manor house, and no habitations within twenty miles. The seclusion suits the Maxinays, notorious among the Great Houses, and in the history of Irendor, for their eccentricity and cryptic or clandestine behavior. The Maxinays are famous for their diplomatic skill and cloak-and-dagger tactics in House politics, and almost all members of House Maxinay receive magical training; contrast this to House Zouthan, whose members value stoicism, integrity, and tend to shun magic. Their dishonesty has earned them the enmity of House Zouthan.

House Maxinay: True members of House Maxinay are bizarre in appearance and behavior, and rumors abound as to their secrets. The Maxinays have been accused of incest, of vampirism, of supporting the Cult of Winter and Church of Typhon, of committing infernalism themselves, or even being the ancient spawn of demons. In fact, different members of House Maxinay have been all of these things, although the real truth of Maxinay's origins is lost to history. The first humanoids to call themselves Maxinay, at the very start of the First Era, were the Metasci, an alien servitor race of the Archons (see Appendix 2.1.2). The Archons disappeared long before the First Era began, and were brain- and soul-devouring angels from one of the strange Dream Realms beyond the Ether. They were the mortal enemies of the Arcanodaemons and initially survived against them only because of their anti-magic shielding. While both the Arcanos and the Archons sought to dominate and enslave the young humanoid races of the gods, the Arcanos wanted to teach them and cultivate their culture, while the Archons only wanted to devour their brains and souls. During the eradication of the Archons in Oretedron, their servants fled to the farthest reaches of Twylos, ending in the nascent societies of Irendor, finally integrating themselves and breeding with the early humans and other humanoid races. This history is unknown even to the Maxinays. Almost all traces of the Archons have been obliterated from Twylos, and even their prior existence is unknown to all but two or three individuals.

Blood for the Lady: The Lady Quenlyn Maxinay (8th level human vampire, 2nd Circle Ritual) is matron of Yseng. Her half-brother Martin Zhennovich von Maxinay is the true head of the Household in Thenzor Deep, but they are not on speaking terms and he has left her behind in the country. The Lady Quenlyn is a vampire, requiring the blood and

tears of young virginal girls to keep herself young and human. She is among the less malicious of the Maxinays, especially compared to her young nephew Quenlin (6th level human, 2nd Circle Hermetic), vacationing with his aunt in Yseng. Quenlin is a charming albino, named for his formerly-doting aunt. As he has grown, he has become sociopathic and sadistic, and it is his task to obtain the girls that his aunt requires. Her condition pains and disgusts her, and she does her best to keep up appearances, despite the cruel taunting of her nephew who finds it rather amusing. Quenlin is a hemophiliac, and if damaged with an edged weapon will continue to take damage (1 health point every 3 rounds) until treated. For this reason, Quenlin is cowardly when it comes to combat, and he obsessively carries around some medicine and three healing potions just in case.



Zostig (ZOS-tig)

Ruined city and landmark (island of Napres); low to high difficulty (levels 1-15).

Population: 105; 86% human, 12% orc, 2% ratkin.

Resources: very poor, low magical and technological levels; fishing, salvage.

Religion: Thainist.

Guilds: none.

Government: none; despotic control by Mr. Gallan Brendl (3rd level human), untrained militia of 12.

Zostig was a city in two parts- half on the mainland, acting as port to parts west (mainly Rheyas and Turth), and half on a mountainous island called Zurvoten. Zostig was once wealthy, controlled jointly by several Houses. It was also a haven for pirates, smugglers, expatriates and criminals of all kinds. Zostig survived throughout the fall of Irendor, but with the death of the last emperor, power was seized by Kierven Strauze, a sorcerer who came to be called the Witch-King of Zurvoten. Strauze did away with most of the laws and bureaucracy, and turned over the local militia to the merchants. He then reopened the Xociene

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Mines (ZOH-seen), a wealthy deposit of gemstones, silver, iron and platinum; they were closed because of local superstition, and a few grisly murders that took place around the turn of the Era. He then retired to his newly-built palace called Strengor, rumored to be built by demons who sleep within rock tombs in the north part of Zuvoten, and was hardly ever seen or heard from again. Still, the people of Zuvoten believed he was immortal, as his servants and minions would continue to collect taxes for centuries until the end of Zostig.

As Zostig was home to many of the sailors of the Bay of Taliese, it was full of rowdy, lower-class inns and taverns. In one of the better quarters of town, near the Straussbourg Gate, was a private Hermetic school, the School of Gryvedyre Tonquey. Tonquey supposedly researched the lost works of Gauston Vausse (specifically the Command Word class magicks that Vausse specialized in, e.g., Command: Sting or Command: Die). Zostig is now a desolate ruin, although the buildings are intact. In 190 T.E., a silence swept over the city, and all trade to and from was disrupted. A preliminary investigation by the Navigator's Guild found only empty buildings and a few corpses. Zuvoten was turned into a leper colony, but even this met with a bad end, and now the island is mostly just a roaming grounds for undead, avoided by sailors and travelers.

The Quiet Halls: At the beginning of the Third Era, Zostig became the location of the new parent church for the Order of Zhol of western Twylos, the Quiet Halls. It was a small stone fortress, at the opposite end of a long road called Fade's Travail from Bluewater, the temple of the Lady Kithain. The first high priest was the Grandfather Aron Lucretius, born in the Second Era, who was originally a devotee of Aguierre before being converted in Bordermarch. An extensive set of caverns is under the Quiet Halls, that the priests used as tombs. These caverns are completely silent, due to some ancient ward (preventing speech and spellcasting involving verbal components). These caves are riddled with pits, many of which still contain wrapped or mummified corpses, and were called the Wells of Silence by the priests of Zhol. Several minor relics of the Order remain in the Halls, and one major relic- the Spade of Gayla (see Appendix 2.1.1)- can be found in the Wells. Because the Spade was used on many of the bodies here, the Wells contain less undead than might be expected. The deepest reaches of the Wells eventually connect to Xociene. Grandfather Arved of Bludszech is interested in reclaiming the Spade, among other things, and is looking to hire some trustworthy mercenaries to fetch it for him.

The Egg of Voon: Some poor stragglers still remain in Zostig, proudly trying to survive and eke out a living in the ruins. A group of crazed priests led by three ex-Alchemists, calling themselves the Tavash Morn, have descended into Xociene. These magicians have uncovered the resting place of the Egg of Voon (see Appendix 2.1.1), a powerful relic that acts as a necromantic spell engine. These Tavash Morn, unaffiliated with the true Tavash Morn of the Zoran Academy, are resurrectionists, hoping to use the power of the Egg to indefinitely prolong their lives and bring back the dead. The priests have acquired a number of corpses, kept fresh with the black ichor of the Alchemists (a preservative that prevents rotting) to begin their awful experimentation with the magics of the Egg.

The Black Ships of Zhol: The Black Ships were sighted most often in the waters around Zostig. Sighting of one of these ships was the worst of omens, and many captains would turn back to port rather than risk continuing the doomed voyage. Zhol, god of death, is also god of the seas, and a Black Ship is an unholy galleon staffed by three wraiths, six spectres, and a horde of fifty skeletons and sixty zombies. Rarely seen, and usually only on the horizon, there are old sailor legends of ships being boarded, attacked, and crewmen taken away to refill the ranks of Zhol's boat. The Zhellans have a saying, "zum ev merced", which means "beware of boats", and legends such as these have kept many Zhellans superstitious and fearful of boat travel.

Napres & the Lost Vausse Academy: Just south of Zuvoten is the isle of Napres (na-PREY). Napres was just a bleak pair of mountains jutting up out of the Vamooran Icesea, until in 170 T.E., Lord Strauze gave it to the newly-formed Magician's Guild (i.e. Gauston Vausse) as a location for his Vausse Academy, also called the School of Three. "The Three" refers to the three great arch-mages who founded the school- Vausse, Josiene Allandrohke, and Marachs Von Ehlling. Von Ehlling was responsible for both the construction of both the building and the world map that the Guilds of Navigators and Surveyors requisitioned.

The Academy was an impressive site: floating hundreds of feet in the sky, anchored to Napres by a gigantic chain. However, the Vausse Academy suddenly and mysteriously disappeared in 174 T.E. In the four years it existed, theoretical exploration of Hermetic magic flourished, and many spells of the Metamagical School were created or revised here. In 197 T.E., the demon-sorcerer Aramarch Vox Thrauxus (19th level demon, 8th Circle Hermetic) appeared and moved onto the island. Vox Thrauxes and his secretary Carmellina (3rd level succubus) inhabit a modest house of marble and mainly wish to be left alone. Vox Thrauxes alone knows the truth behind the disappearance of the Vausse Academy: powerful Horological magic sent the Academy back through time, stripped of enchantments, where it crashed into the Saethan desert in the year 500 S.E., and became the fused-crystal mountain now called Rhauxen. Under his tutelage, the witch Amanda Dawson and her newborn daughter Aprill fled Twylos in 199 T.E. for the lost Vausse Academy.

Drohksmere (DROWKS-meer)

Properly speaking, Drohksmere is the name of a small country in the far northeast of Twylos. Here are described many of the Eastern regions, including- but not limited to- Drohksmere itself. In the past century or so, Drohksmere has gone from being a quiet region in the shadow of the Empire, to being a powerful confederation of oligarchs. The name Drohksmere is now synonymous with that of the Ulgan Sceptre. Trade stretches from Cevrance and Ulliyade (loose allies of Inner Andukar and the Empire) all the way to Myrinae, the "swamp-nation" of Gyre. Of course, Drohksmere, Myrinae, and the barrens of Alhara are all commonly referred to as "The East" (at least by "The Westerners"). But Drohksmere, the crescent of land around the Great River Ulgos, is where all the money is.

The wilds of Drohksmere are the dwelling places of giants and dragons. Adventuring and exploration here are dangerous to inexperienced characters. A campaign that begins in Drohksmere might start with the player characters hired or pressed by the Ulgan Sceptre to travel to the Thorenze Valley or across the seas to Gyre and Vasqueray. Another possibility is that one or more of the characters have escaped or been rejected from Aea Convent, and struggle to survive in the swamp towns outside of Gyre.

Andukar (ANN-due-car)

Region; snowy mountains.

Common encounters: bears, giants, hunters, ogres, orcs, wolves.

Rare encounters: dwarves, miners, roc, titan, trolls, wyverns, yeti.

Andukar is the Land of Giants, a large region northwest of Drohksmere proper. Inhabited by ogres, orcs, and giants who mine the mountains for heavy metals and gemstones, they have one city, Szondarch, and a few camps scattered amongst the peaks. They do trade a bit with Armech and the Ulgan Sceptre, but it still is a wilderness region, generally inhospitable, cold, and deadly.

The Basalt Forge: A family of jotun giants operates the Basalt Forge out of a dormant volcano. Their goods are delivered by mammoth pack beasts to Szondarch, about a week away. The Giants trade with dwarves and Lazerus the Troll (9th level troll) for precious ores. Lazerus

jealously guards his source of metal, which happens to be a mine previously owned by the Heyverd family, now all butchered and rotting in their storm cellar.

The Giants' Skyway: This is an old route used by the titans of Andukar for moving across their nation. At the Skyway stations, an enormous gong and horn hang at the back of a cavern. Ringing the gong summons a mighty roc, carrying a gondola used for transport of one or a few giant-sized humanoids or goods. Unless within minutes, the horn is blown in a specific series of notes (indicating the destination), the roc flies back to its mountaintop aerie (50%), transports them to a random destination (25%), or attacks its summoners (25%). Of the several Skyway stations that existed, only three remain, at the border of Andukar and Armech, at the southeast corner of Andukar, and near Tharkenge.

Tharkenge: Tharkenge is far from modern civilization, is purported to be Twylos' tallest mountain. The human explorer Sebastian Mordechs claimed that Tharkenge was not natural, but rather seemed to be constructed out of immense stones. (Indeed, lost to history is the truth of Tharkenge- that it was built at the dawn of time by titan slaves of the Arcanos, as a tomb to the first of their number to die.) Mordechs spent almost two decades investigating Tharkenge, finally retreating in frustration when his assistant Arvyn, himself a skilled wizard, flew towards the mountain top, only to be devoured by the Black Wyrms Gothmenes. Gothmenes (double-size wyrm dragon) is revered as a god by the ogres and dwarves of Andukar, along with their interpretation of Vorn as Tapaan, the Black Giant. Gothmenes lives within Tharkenge, the first guardian of its eternal secrets.

The Valley of Storms: At the furthest reaches of Andukar is the hidden Valley of Storms, where savage dwarves feed on wild horses. Two titans, the King of Thunder and the Queen of Rain, live in a high cavern. The King possesses the Hammer of Storms (see Appendix 2.1.1), which he wields in one hand (consider the King to have the Great Strike discipline when using the Hammer).

Aylen

Medium-sized village.

Population: 450; 98% human, 2% orc.

Resources: modestly wealthy, low magical and medium technological levels; trade, fishing, some agriculture and husbandry, clothmaking, woodworking, shipbuilding.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; oligarchical control by the Ulgan Sceptre, managed by Mayor Kloryn Enders (5th level human), trained militia and navy of 80.

A way-station on the Ulgos River between Ulliyade and Selhark. Aylen is pretty much just a stop-over on the main Ulgan shipping route, a place where fleets can re-provision and make any repairs necessary. It's also a safe-marker, and there's a saying in Drohksmere: "it's as close/safe as Aylen", meaning that the worst is over and the trip is soon to be concluded. Aylen is also a large rural area- there are acres of farmland east of the river's banks (the western bank is too marshy to be cultivated) that are patrolled by guardsmen in the employ of the Sceptre.

The Black Patterns of Franz Dominer: One of the many farms was the retirement home of Franz Dominer, once a priest of the Cult of Winter who visited Umslamyr. Dominer escaped the wrath of the Duurans in part because of his wish- a small grain silo on the outside actually leads into an extra-planar space. Through the silo door is an extraordinarily large palace, grandiose while Dominer still lived. Fifteen grieving angels remain as the staff in Dominer's mansion,

including two that continue to cry over his corpse in a grand four-post bed. Through a secret door in the wine cellar is an elaborate device built to specifications in The Book of Black Patterns (see Appendix 2.1.1), a strange text found in a safe behind a portrait of Dominer in his upstairs study. The Book is a Xeres-infused text, in the first part describing the creation of a complex loom-like machine for performing painful torture; the second part appears like musical notation, ways in which the chords and strings of the machine should be pulled to evoke extreme suffering in particular ways. Another angel can be found within the device, tortured to death in the Black Loom. If discovered, the angels are somewhat naïve about this device and do not understand its workings. Dominer's mansion in fact exists in a small pocket of the Realms of Perdition, undetectable to outside magic and beyond the ken of the simple-minded angel servants.

Cevrance (ZEV-rence)

Major city; trade center of Drohksmere.

Population: 40,000; 80% human, 7% orc, 1% ogre, 1% misc. (including faeries, giants, goblins, ratkin).

Resources: wealthy, moderate magical and high technological levels; trade, mining (a few precious and heavy metals), agriculture and husbandry, fishing, shipbuilding, metalworking, woodworking, clothmaking, library, libraries, military and magical academy.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Aguirre, Ixian, Typhon.

Guilds: Slavers.

Government: chaotic; democratic control by the Cevrance Alliance, headed by Mallicent Ives (8th level human, 1st Circle Hedge) for the Ulgan Sceptre, Lady Jade Ullmyra (10th level human) for the Landszedt Council, and Guster Kluum (7th level orc, 3rd Circle Faith) for the Grain Silo, well-trained army and navy of 1,000.

Situated on the border between Armech, Andukar, and the territory controlled by the Ulgan Sceptre, Cevrance is sort of the Rheyas of the East- large, wild, and full of people from all over that corner of Twylos. In recent years, though, it's become more civilized (while the wildness spreads to the north and west), and is now even considered to be the region's artistic capital. This is thanks in part to several ex-Museum Scholars who moved here and founded the Blue Mare, a public library. Although Cevrance is unwallled, it maintains a standing militia that rivals most provinces, and so is as defensible as the other major cities of Andukar/Drohksmere. There is also a large, upscale commercial district, containing a world-class hotel (the Cevrance Goblet) and the Slaver's Guild. One of the many taverns of Cevrance is The Clocktower, a recreation of the famous inn of Thenzor Deep. Outside the large, flat headquarters of the Ulgan Sceptre is a tall statue of Jonnes Olgham IV, better known to the world as John Ulgan.

Cevrance is controlled by the Cevrance Alliance, a loose-knit organization of delegates from three main interests in town. The Ulgan Sceptre has the weakest influence, being relative newcomers to Cevrance. Their chairman Ives is new to Cevrance, having arrived from the Guuran Tower. The Landszedt Council have the strongest influence, being formed from the rich landowners who have been in Cevrance since the early days of settlement. Lady Jade is one of the most skilled diplomats in western Drohksmere, able to appease and attract the lucrative interests of the Sceptre while maintaining independence from the agenda. The third fraction of the Alliance is a farmers' collective called, initially despairingly, the Grain Silo. The Silo has a strong influence from the forces of Andukar and the Vox Duur, and their current chairman Kluum is himself Duuran.

Darkwater's Deep

Small city and landmark (underwater city); moderate difficulty (levels 5-9).

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Population: 2,000; 88% human, 10% orc, 1% ratkin, 1% misc. (including faeries, goblins, jinn, undead).

Resources: poor, moderate magical and technological levels; stonecraft, some agriculture and husbandry, trade, woodworking, clothmaking, shipbuilding.

Religion: Duuran, Thainist, Aguirre, Ixian, Typhon.

Guilds: Navigators, Alchemists, Slavers, Surveyors.

Government: relaxed; oligarchical control by the Ulgan Sceptre, managed by Mr. Ollam Mandrigal (5th level human), militia and navy of 90.

The Deep is a city of old stone buildings, heavily eroded by the storms that plague the Drohkhan coast here. Originally settled by Irendi colonists from Thenzor Deep, Darkwaters was chosen for the extensive caverns carved out by the sea. At the time, those caverns were relatively free of water, and the settlers built an extravagant city in the caverns underneath tall cliffs. Over time, however, the sea returned, slowly flooding the caverns and forcing the inhabitants of Darkwater's Deep to return aboveground, where they rebuilt their city on the cliffs above their first home. A lower tier of Darkwater, called Rhauntide, is built right at the entrance to the Deep in a calm cove. The outer section of Rhauntide is submerged, and some roads and staircases of Rhauntide descend directly into the sea. Some of Rhauntide's populace still find it disturbing to see the roofs and steeples of their ancestors' homes and buildings sticking up out of the water, especially on bright days when sharks and other creatures can be seen now living in the undersea village.



Lord of the Sunken City: Just about everything awful and aquatic can be found in the Deep, in the old city built into the caves. In the shallows, a family of five sea trolls (cephalopods) have captured a beastly ablocanth that they use for hunting. Deeper, in the still-submerged city, a host of six sharks and a cunning giant octopus are the pets of an evil jinn, Thanos Jooli (11th level marid, 5th Circle Hermetic), still furious at the ingenious system of pumps and levies built by the settlers to control the water. He has spent the centuries carefully collecting artworks left behind and tending to the architecture, which he begrudgingly admires. Jooli is a powerful elemental, able to summon water elementals to defend him if necessary.

The Deep Water Reclamation Society: The Society is devoted to returning to the caverns, and either rebuilding a settlement or salvaging the riches left behind. The Society has begun providing relatively cheap Potions of Water-breathing, maps, and exploration gear to independent teams that wish to descend into the depths. One of the financiers of the Society, Davos Magan, is a ghul that seeks revenge on Jooli for the horrible results of a Change spell cast long ago. Magan is well-connected with the Alchemists Guild through Journeyman Anne Yldings (5th level human, 2nd Circle Hedge). He keeps a stock of

Potions of Polymorph for when he has to appear in public, and provides Journeyman Yldings with fresh corpses and odd reagents.

Ered Wastes

Region; wasteland, steppes, some desert and mountains.

Common encounters: gnoles, goblins, hunters, khulek, ogres, orcs, wolves.

Rare encounters: bugbears, demons, Duurans, griffons, harpies, large cats, lindworms, traders, undead, wild horses.

The Ered Wastes are bleak steppes- a wasteland almost entirely devoid of civilization or much else. The ruins of the Longiron road course across the northern part of the Wastes, while more successful trade routes between the eastern Cities of Drohksmere and the rest of Twylos run along the southern, more hospitable part of the Wastes. If anything lives in the Wastes, it is the Duurans, and the associated flora and fauna such as gnoles, goblins, and ogres.

Umslamyr, the Wishing Tree: High within the Wastes, alone atop a hill, stands a huge elm tree- the only tree for miles (the only feature, really, beyond scrub and broken earth). This place, called Umslamyr (OOMS-la-meer), is Duuran hallowed ground- considered so unholy, the Vox Duur take seriously their duty to keep anyone from going to the tree (itself called Umslamyr, the Demon Tree), even if it means killing them to do so. Umslamyr is claimed to be oracular- giving men insights into what they most desire. The Vox Duur, however, believe it is infernal, a demon lord of long ago sealed away in tree form- that the gift isn't one of knowledge but of madness. Subject of a once-popular children's story called "The Wishing Tree".

Coming within 50 yards of the tree (e.g., beginning the ascent up the hill) will set off ancient Duuran magical alarms. This will immediately summon one earth elemental (as the 7th Circle Summon Greater Elemental spell) for each trespasser. Within 1d4 rounds, an ancient Duuran lich, Father Samuel (16th level lich, 8th Circle Faith), will awaken and arise from the hillside to turn away those who seek Umslamyr. Samuel will begin by casting an Earthquake spell (25% chance of opening a chasm; he and the elementals will not fall in any chasms opened by the spell), followed by some summoning spells to bring additional allies. Touching the tree for the first time causes the subject to sleep for three nights. Upon awakening, the subject gains one permanent point in both intellect and presence, and 1d4 + 2 skill points to be immediately spent. The greatest boon of the tree is in fact its ability to grant wishes. Umslamyr's power is effectively to cast, once, any single spell desired by the subject- e.g., Resurrection to bring back a lost friend or loved one, Cognizance to gain otherwise-unknowable information, or some manifestation of the Change spell. If Umslamyr is foolishly touched a second time, the subject dies instantly, no resistance check, their soul devoured by demonic lust. It should be noted that the Elemental wards around Umslamyr will activate each time Umslamyr is approached. Furthermore, the Vox Duur consider Umslamyr's 'boon' a great heresy and will seek to destroy any who have had contact with the demon tree.

The Arcanum: Approximately 60 miles from Umslamyr is the site of the original Arcanum, the first Mage School founded by the Lady Aerial Madelaen du Maxinay, Griswuld Morgenstern, Celena Tyrenaeus, and Jonsolon Ahnosses. As exiles from the old Irendi Empire, The Arcanum was the site of much seminal Hermetic research, until it was abandoned due to Duuran pressure just prior to the fall of Irendor. The Arcanum contains a number of traps, wards, and monsters, left by both the old masters of the school and their Duuran enemies, as well as some other creatures that have moved in more recently. Unfortunately, most of the magical lore and artifacts have been removed. The Arcanum was originally based on the Zoran Academy, but was the first real attempt at a secular organization for the instruction of magic. Its

precepts and foundations still serve as the major model for most Hermetic schools in modern Twylos. For example, Sense Magic is the first spell learned and inscribed into an apprentice's spellbook.

Gyre (GUY-er)

Major city, decadent home of the Alchemists Guild and the Church of Typhon.

Population: 91,400; 76% human, 12% orc, 2% dwarf, 2% ogre, 10% misc. (including demons, doppelgangers, faeries, gnoles, goblins, undead).

Resources: extremely wealthy, very high magical and technological levels; trade, art, clothwork, woodworking, fishing, agriculture and husbandry, metalworking, shipbuilding, libraries, military and magical academies.

Religion: Typhon, Thainist, Duuran, Aguierre, Ixian, Xeres.

Guilds: Alchemists, Navigators, Slavers, Surveyors.

Government: relaxed; democratic control by the Myrinae Merchant Council, led by Lady Rhiannon Calloway (10th level human), trained army and navy of 2,000.

Gyre is one of the largest and most prosperous cities on Twylos today, rivaled only by Turth in size and populace, but vastly exceeding the Taran city for intrigue and glamour. Built on the edge of a swamp and across a large delta, Gyre is spread over several miles of land and small delta islands. Gyre is world headquarters for one of the four true Guilds of Twylos, the Alchemists' Guild. Gyre is independent of the other nations of Twylos, but has trade alliances with Armech, the Guilds, Vasqueray, and the Ulgan Sceptre. Laws, the militia, and taxation are overseen by a near-anarchic Myrinae Merchant Council, with a membership that is constantly in flux. Lady Rhiannon from the famous Calloway family, a devout member of the Church of Typhon, oversees the Council but rarely interferes with the infighting there. The Council often attracts spectators in the balcony above the main floor due to the brawling (and at least once, spellcasting) that sometimes occurs.

The attractions of Gyre are numerous. The Shaylin Botanical Gardens collects flora from around the world, and has a small zoo of exotic animals. The Order of Ixian maintains Invictus Chapterhouse, an archive for historical documents and old books. Several galleries and curiosity shops are found throughout town, including The Odd End and The Crypt of Morgannon, a large mausoleum-turned-museum.

Without a doubt, Gyre is the heart of Twylos for art, fashion, design, and magical industry. This is fuelled by the immense wealth found throughout Gyre, from the families of Armech, Vasqueray, and Drohksmere that have moved here for retirement or trade opportunities. Fruits and flowers are plentiful. One current trend is lush silk garments, inspired by the dresses of Gabrielle Jeng (6th level human, 3rd Circle Ritual). Jeng is a priestess of the Church of Spring who ran a silkworm grotto in the village of Far Ellsdeep. The Ixians, under Churchman Bach Oulian (7th level human, 4th Circle Faith) and his Hand, have arrested her as a Breynic witch, and are holding her for trial (and most likely execution) in Jexen Keep, the walled stronghold of 30 Knights of Aguierre led by Master Thelonious (11th level human).

The Church of Typhon: While they fight about everything else, the Ixians and Duurans agree on one thing: that Gyre is also the heart of Twylos' corruption. In part, this is because Gyre is also the center for the Church of Typhon, currently led by Father Orms Dhalgang (19th level human, 8th Circle Hermetic, 5th Circle Ritual). His beautiful nieces, Sara, Chordelle, and Yllania (all 0th level humans), enjoy a sort of celebrity about town and are often seen at the outrageous Feasts of Typhon thrown by the Mother Church. 'Uncle' Dhalgang, as he's called, leaves the dirty work to two intense demons in his service. Mr. Beasley (12th level grigori demon, 3rd Circle Hermetic) appears as a

tall, gaunt man in an overcoat and carrying a doctor's bag; Violet (11th level grigori demon, 5th Circle Faith) is a silent young woman in an expensive gown. They travel together delivering messages and fetching people for Dhalgang and his allies in the Church. The Church is extremely popular in Gyre, as members of the Church act mainly as humanitarians. Although there are Thainists in Gyre, the Typhonae take on the classic role of the Thainists here: helping the sick and poor, engaging and financing public works projects, and the like. The Typhonae are also much more interesting, charming, and funny than the image of the Thainists. There are a few different factions within the Church, differing on views of public exposure, demonic contact and summoning, and the religio-political role of the Typhonae.

The Myrin Dragon: Gyre seems to have a limitless number of bars and restaurants. The Tooth-and-Nail is among the seedier institutions, and contains a pit in the cellar for amateur combat. Often bloody and sometimes fatal, the Tooth-and-Nail recently purchased an enormous crocodile being featured as the 'Myrin Dragon' (double the normal size, health, and combat bonuses listed under the Summon Fauna spell, with +4 modifiers to Physical and Mental Resistance checks, and a 1d4 + 1 armor absorption). So far the Dragon has claimed only a single victim, a drunken elf named Justin Heeger, the only person foolish enough to enter the pit against it.

Zeaven: Zeaven is a drug first developed by Rheyian Procurers that is popular in Gyre. Some Zeaven users claim to have seen demons walking the streets of Gyre, even engaging in transactions with humanoid merchants. Some of these demons appear as black shadow-draped figures, some as fat frog demons, some as walking corpses, and some as featureless piles of gray matter. In reality, moderate doses of some forms of Zeaven, taken by a regular user, will penetrate magical disguises and shape changing spells; several demons and doppelgangers do in fact live in Gyre.

The Oberton Art Community: Outside of Gyre in the fens of Myrinae are a number of villages and communes, including Yberon, Ellsdane and Far Ellsdane, and Burgoney, but most famous among these is Oberton, an artists' commune. Oberton was home to the Oberton Table, a loose collection of artists, writers, and actors. It was here that the Church of Typhon got its start- a minor painter named Geryon Krassus claimed to have divine revelation of two of the Five Keys of Typhon that were signs heralding the death of the gods and the destruction of Twylos. (Krassus is now deceased, and the Church of Typhon owns all his works.) The Court Jester is a run-down tavern and theatre outside of Oberton which is no longer in use. Behind the stage is an old prop storage shack that still contains several moth-eaten costumes and faded set pieces. A partially-collapsed bookshelf contains a stack of loose pages and books, most of which have been eaten by bugs, but under glass a few volumes remain intact, including the odd Book of Spheres (see Appendix 2.1.1).

Auntie Greensleeves: One of the many games played by children in Gyre is Auntie Greensleeves, a hopscotch-type of jumping game involving rhymes intended for safety and mockery. The real Auntie Greensleeves (9th level troll, 5th Circle Ritual, 57 health points) lives deep in the Myrinae swamps. Her own daughters (4th level trolls, 2nd Circle Ritual or Hedge) lurk closer to civilization and infrequently attempt to steal children left alone in the outer villages. Often a slavish cadre of grindylow will accompany them. Auntie keeps three crocodiles as pets, and possesses several horrible items of power, including Kael's Jawbone, a relic of a Thainist priest that grants a +2 modifier on Mental and Physical Resistance checks. Auntie's Oil, which she brews in her swamp hut, allows her to magically travel through the large mangrove trees found throughout Myrinae (as the 4th Circle Hermetic spell Fold Space).

The New Literature of Twylos: Oberton still has several major artists working there, including Jean Averon (8th level human), possibly Twylos' best painter and owner of The Invisible Gallery, and Maeve Tagente (7th level human), a famous playwright. Ms. Tagente is a playwright and the leader of the Morilund, an avante garde theatre movement. Her newest work is "Mandy and the Wolff", a bawdy black comedy about a novice Alchemist (Mandy) stalked by a nightmarish, comical wolf. It ends with a chase through the audience, with Mandy hiding behind members of the audience, and both actors asking the advice of random people. Finally, the audience must decide whether the Wolff devours Mandy or marries her.

Tagente is most famous for "Kiss the Bride", which now travels throughout Twylos with its own devoted entourage. It stars Tagente's protégé, the actress Vivian Calloway (5th level human), claimed to be the loveliest woman in all of Twylos. Some members of the audience know all the lines, and stage their own concurrent performances during the show. The common theme in her work is the belief that theatre should be dynamic, interactive, fantastic, and funny. Prior to "Mandy", Tagente improvised a piece in Bludszech, "Freeing the Slaves", in which she bought three slaves and freed them.

M. M. Umbrage (2nd level human), an author and critic also based out of Oberton, has written that Tagente's "Slaves" is commentary on the work of the other major contemporary playwright, Christopher St. Ives (8th level human); that Morilund is fundamentally about freeing theatre from the slavery of the realist, classicist style. St. Ives works in Bludszech and attended the performance of "Slaves" incognito. Umbrage claims that St. Ives champions the *Ars Retis* ("Return to Art") style of theatre, with his work focusing on true representations of reality. His hallmark piece, and the most popular play in Twylos today, is "The Book of Days". A full week in real-time length, it has actors eating, sleeping, and living on three separate stages. Real combat, bloodshed, and spellcasting are supposed to be part of the story, which is about the fall of House Ursbridge (a fictional Great House of Irendor). His first work, "Chains", is considered a masterpiece by the Church of Ixus; it involves three characters: a blacksmith, the brother of a Slaver, and a slave who finds meaning in slavery, and is about work, motivation, and personal pride. St. Ives has not published in 10 years, somewhat understandable given that "Book of Days" took about as long to write.

Aea Convent: About 100 miles southwest of Gyre through the swamps is the remnant of Aea Convent, a former abbey and school for gifted young ladies of Drohkan wealth. The Convent was part of Nadür, essentially an attempt at creating a suburb of Gyre away from the decadence and violence of city life as Gyre began to grow rich. Unfortunately, while Nadür was built in a sunny glade outside of the myre, the swampland grew and the city sank at the beginning of the Third Era. Aea, built on a hill, is now just above water-level, and a few remains of the town (a church spire) can be seen sticking up out of the dark water. Aea Convent was initially constructed collaboratively by Thainists and Ixians, and was a hallmark of new Nadür. It has since been abandoned and largely forgotten.

However, the Convent is now being used secretly by a coterie of Alchemists and members of the Church of Typhon, unknown to almost all within the ranks of both organizations. A cadre of around sixty magically-inclined young women are kept here, brought from all over Twylos and brainwashed with techniques that the Guildsmen stole from the Slavers and Opticians. While these unfortunate young ladies are used for a variety of purposes, generally bizarre or horrific experiments, most of them are kept unconscious or in suspended animation. One group that is not are the twelve Aprill clones (each 7th level human clones, 3rd Circle Hermetic), constructed copies of the daughter of the sorceress Amanda Dawson. Dawson was believed by the Typhonae to have been taught the secrets of Hermetic Magic by the Arcanos themselves. Her infant daughter Aprill was somehow retrieved

from Rhaxen in 200 T.E. and brought to Aea, where simulacrum were made of her. The real Aprill died in the process, but about thirty copies were created. Highly intelligent, some of the clones have escaped and fled to quiet and far corners of Twylos. Currently, the Alchemist Master of Aea, Headmaster Asmodean (14th level human; 7th Circle Hermetic, 5th Circle Hedge), is tutoring one of the clones named Abby (3rd level human clone) who, rather than being a powerful magician, is permanently masked with a Greater Magic Shield of 99% efficacy that emits at a radius of 10 feet. This prevents the use of magical items and spell casting within this radius, and blocks the effects of spells and magical devices entering the perimeter. The creation of such persistent anti-magic was the central goal of the Alchemists' Aea project, financed by the Ixians of Sun Keep (without knowledge of the Typhonae involvement in other parts and projects). While Asmodean feels very fatherly towards the girl, he dares not approach her, as Asmodean is horribly disfigured by a past alchemical accident: his face is burned off and his arms are scarred stumps severed at the elbows. He overcomes these deficits by wearing a Mask of Disguise and a custom-made magical armature that gives him two fully-functional prosthetic arms, devices that would be rendered useless in Abby's anti-magical presence.

Myrinae

Region; swamp.

Common encounters: brigands, crocodiles, gnoles, goblins, snakes, spiders.

Rare encounters: balaur, carnivorous plants, catoblepas, demons, gorgon, hunters, ooze, trolls, undead.

Myrinae is the giant swamp of southern Twylos. As Gyre is surrounded by the Myrinae swamps on all sides, Gyre is almost always approached by boat. Several dry regions exist within Myrinae, and close to Gyre several communities have been able to survive. Deeper into the swamp are goblin and gnole tribes that harass these villages.

Oolmsdome

Landmark (defiled temple of the Duurans); moderate to high difficulty (levels 8-13).

Once the Duuran shrine of Alumeer, Oolmsdome was corrupted by the madness of Xeres. It is located at the northern edge of the Ered Wastes, about a week's travel from Cevrance. Within the lowest reaches of Alumeer, in the Fane of Irenaeus, the heir to the Imperial Throne Hubener Valstach asked the Duurans for advice in 313 F.E. They summoned an Arcanodaemon, the second of three ever brought to Twylos, which imparted a number of cryptic prophecies. In banishing the demon and deciphering its words, the priests were driven mad, helped along by the arrival of Mouths of Xeres. The Vox Duur, unable to destroy their defiled temple, buried it in the earth. Recent lindworm activity has uncovered the magnificent blue dome, revealed in a chasm in the ground. A small window in the dome is the only real access to the temple, now a pit of Xeran heresy known as Oolmsdome. The copy of the Arcanos' words still exists within the Fane, although the rest of Oolmsdome is filled with horrible spawn of Xeres and the dead Duuran priests. Included in these horrors are four wendigo, a fountain that continually spews shuggoths, a monstrous hydra, and an insane criosphinx named Hieronymous who has discovered in these ruins the legendary Box of Delights, and alternately focuses on solving it or storming the halls in frustration.

The Mouth of Oolmsdome: Xochian Paine (10th level human; 4th Circle Hedge, 4th Circle Ritual) and his familiar, the two-headed crow Edweird, come and go from Oolmsdome. Xochian is the region's Mouth of Xeres. While malicious and psychotic, he is not aggressive,

and will seek to interfere with or injure trespassers of Oolmsdome indirectly. Paine possesses one of Oolmsdome's three Wands of Plenty (see Appendix 2.1.1). These are Duuran wands, originally constructed to be Wands of Plant Growth for agricultural purposes, and uniting together to form a Staff of the Druids. With the coming of Xeres, these Wands have now been corrupted. Xochian's Wand has 1d10 + 10 charges, while the other two Wands (lost elsewhere in Oolmsdome) have 1d20 charges. Xochian is quite eager to use his wand, and will do so if the opportunity arises. However, if confronted in direct combat, he will aim to escape.

The Palace of the Covenant

Small village (Treen) and landmark (castle of the mad Ulgan heir); moderate difficulty (levels 5-9).

Population: 85; 100% human.

Resources: very poor, very low magical and moderate technological levels; some agriculture and husbandry.

Religion: Duuran, Thainist.

Guilds: none.

Government: oppressive and violent; despotic control by Captain John Ulgan V (9th level human), trained army of 34.

The heirs of John Ulgan are among the wealthiest people in modern Twylos; in a matter of a century or so, they have amassed a fortune rivaling that of the Great Houses of Armech. Ulgan died in 151 T.E., leaving behind a large family from a total of three wives and an unknown number of other women. One of these Ulgan heirs, Captain John Ulgan V, has been ostracized from the rest of the family. Taking his fortune and a small private army, he retreated to the wreckage of a castle from the first days of Drohkan colonization. He employed builders to reconstruct the palace, descending deeper into madness, and believes himself to be The Covenant, the legendary future god-emperor of Drohksmere. The story of The Covenant has been popular with soldiers of Drohksmere for many years, especially in the outer reaches such as Thorenze. They believe that a warrior-king will unite the disparate fiefs, steadings, and provinces of Drohksmere, disposing Ulgan and Armechian control to become Emperor of the east, thus succeeding where Caradoc the Antiarch previously failed. Captain John is not The Covenant, but several of his soldiers share his madness and think him their divine ruler. Of the 70 men initially stationed at the palace, only 46 remain, and 12 of these have been imprisoned for sedition, along with five of the remaining 12 architects and workmen. Out of food and desperate, the false Covenant's men have begun to violently demand provisions and other services from the nearby village of Treen. John's advisor and lover, Mazarin (7th level human, 2nd Circle Hermetic) knows that John is sick, but she goes along with his delusions out of sympathy.

Selhark

Major city, the Ulgan Sceptre's main trade center.

Population: 76,000; 85% human, 12% orc, 1% reptilian, 1% dwarf, 1% misc. (including giants, goblins, ogres, ratkin).

Resources: very wealthy, moderate magical and high technological levels; trade, shipbuilding, woodworking, fishing, clothwork, art, agriculture and husbandry, libraries, military and magical academies.

Religion: Thainist, Typhon, Duuran, Aguierre, Ixian, Xeres.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; oligarchical control by the Ulgan Sceptre, managed by Mayor Jereg Ulvins (4th level human) and Armsmaster Cornelian Graye (11th level human), well-trained army and navy of 4,000.

The second of the Ulgan Sceptre's two main cities, Selhark is the larger, crazier, and less-classy of the two. Selhark is a bit larger than

Rheyes, and while it doesn't contend with Turth just yet, Selhark is growing faster than any other city save Gyre. By Ulgan mandate, Selhark is closed to the Guilds. The Church of Spring runs the lovely Gyzem Gardens, open to the public. Selhark also boasts a world-class university, Ambherall.

The Gladiator Schools: Selhark is home to Twylos' finest gladiator slavepits. The different schools and camps tend to have colorful names: the Selhark Fleshfarm, the Zolan Fortress, the Guild of Teeth, and the Dead Seven. Gladiator schools have a considerable range in their expense and prestige; some deal mainly with slaves who have no choice but to fight, while others are costly academies for the Drohkan elite. The Shade Moon is one of these high-end schools, with excellent training available for a steep price. Training at the Shade Moon in Resilience, Stunning Blow, and Unarmed Combat cost one skill point less here, at the expense of two weeks study and 200 sc.

Szondarch (ZON-dark)

Medium-sized city of the giants.

Population: 10,000; 34% ogre, 25% giant, 20% orc, 15% human, 5% dwarf, 1% misc. (including goblins, raktkin, trolls).

Resources: wealthy, moderate magical and high technological levels; mining (most precious and heavy metals), metalworking, stonework, trade, some agriculture and husbandry.

Religion: Gothmenes and Tapaan (Duuran).

Guilds: Alchemists, Slavers.

Government: strict; militaristic control by the Szondarch Home Office and Szondarch College of Mines, ruled by Lord Torsten Skint (15th level daitya giant), well-trained militia of 100.

A trading outpost run by the various mining factions of Andukar. Szondarch is a sight to behold- it is the City of Giants, where giants and ogres walk the streets and are more common than humans. The large open-aired Winter Market is where many of the local ranches, mining groups, and tradesmen meet to exchange goods. Szondarch is remarkably peaceful, kept in check by the patrols of Szondarch Home Office, eight fir bolg wearing plate armor and wielding well-crafted swords and large crossbows. The head of the Home Office itself is Lord Torsten Skint, a daitya giant and infamous flesh-eater, occasionally dealing cautiously with the Slavers or Sceptre to provide him with a fresh body or two for an extravagant banquet. The smiths of Szondarch's Ironworks are some of the best in Twylos, using a magically and technologically advanced smelter that employs four fire elementals to help create enchanted arms and armor for a high fee. Lord Skint's Home Office works with the Szondarch College of Mines to manage and collect tariffs from the many mining groups that operate in and around Szondarch.

Headache Clan: Headache Clan is one of several ogre clans living and working the mines and lumberyards in the area. While the chief of Headache Clan is Jun Large (10th level ogre), an incredibly fat and strong ogre, the real leader is Mister Lagos, (13th level ogre, 5th Circle Ritual magic, 4th Circle Faith magic, 18 presence) of Tapaan (Vorn). Due to Lagos' cunning, Headache Clan is one of the biggest and most successful of all the ogre work gangs in Andukar.

Titan Holding Tanks: Szondarch is built over old ruins apparently dating from before recorded history. The depths of these caverns are just beginning to be explored by the College of Mines, due to a large steel door and strange energy field that limited exploration to the upper ice caves. The exploration team of the College is in for a nasty surprise. In metal chambers beyond, six titan slaves of the Arcanos are in stasis in steel canisters, awaiting the return of their masters.

Symestra

Ruined city destroyed by an ancient wyrm, and landmark (Duuran laboratory); moderate to very high difficulty (levels 7-20).

Population: 278; 84% human, 16% orc.

Resources: very poor, low magical and technological levels; salvage.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran. Guilds: none. Government: none; control by Strabo (smok dragon) and Linus Elmut (9th level human, 5th Circle Faith), untrained militia of 23.

Symestra is now a ruined city, just destroyed by the smok dragon Strabo in 211 T.E. Once a quiet town on the Gyre-Ullyade trade route, a mother-lode of precious metals was found in a village of Lochmere by the Surveyor's Guild in 182 T.E. A flood of mercenaries, prospectors, and miners filled Symestra- it was predicted that Symestra was to be the next Zostig. In fact, the town became huge, like Zostig- but not because of the local government (Strauze's disbanding of the militia and local council), but in spite of it (the mayor of Symestra and his advisors couldn't reorganize fast enough to keep up with all the people coming into town). Symestra now is a different story. With the coming of Strabo, Symestra is nothing but a refugee town, a ghost town. Destroyed in Strabo's wake was the small Hermetic school, the School of Lurvynns Vannass.

Strabo, Wyrm of Half-Moon Mountain: Lochmere is the burnt-out remains of a small village in the mountains. It too was a simple community like Symestra until the Boom of 182. Unfortunately, something happened to "awaken" an old smok dragon named Strabo, who lived high within a local landmark- Half-Moon Mountain. Lochmere was destroyed by Strabo in one fell swoop, before the dragon flew south to Symestra. Strabo has now essentially imprisoned the survivors of Symestra and Lochmere, all consolidated in a few intact buildings in Symestra. Initially, ships unwittingly attempting to dock were destroyed; now no ships dare enter the harbor, so the survivors are stuck. Father Elmut, a Thainist and the sole surviving member of his church, tries to keep the villagers hopeful.

The Gold Nugget and the Garden: Half-Moon Mountain unsurprisingly takes the name from its shape (somewhat fin-like). Strabo is the lone Dragon in the area, as he was initially captured in Andukar at the end of the First Era by Naturalist Duurans. The Naturalists brought him to one of their research facilities inside Half-Moon, the Ceynoloth Garden (SAY-no-loth), and kept him in suspended animation for future study. Their studies were interrupted by the arrival of a Mouth of Xeres, and the Garden devolved into madness, lost to the rest of the Vox Dur. During the Boom, many mining groups came to the area. One of these, the Golden Nugget Trading Company, discovered an entrance to Ceynoloth, and accidentally activated an ancient mining apparatus designed to bore through rock. The tunnel borer injured Strabo, awakening him, and caused him to go into a berserk rage. Strabo now extorts payment from the helpless survivors of the Symestra massacre, using members of the Golden Nugget, now charmed and insane. The most useful ex-miner, a magician named Eliot Bosch (8th level human; 4th Circle Hermetic, 1st Circle Hedge), falsely believes himself to be a vampire, due to his discovery of a Cloak of Shadows in the Garden crypts, along with some Naturalist alchemical recipes that require the use of fresh blood. Bosch periodically visits Symestra to extract payment from the villagers, usually meager amounts of coin, food, and drink, and occasionally tries to drink their blood if he chances on a villager alone at night.

Thorenze

Region; mountains.

Common encounters: bears, brigands, miners, ogres, orcs, traders, hunters, wolves.

Rare encounters: dwarves, Duurans, erinyes, giants, griffons, harpies, imps, lindworms, trolls, undead, wyvern.

Originally settled by prospectors from Thenzor Deep, the Thorenze Valley is one of the richest places in Twylos, containing around two dozen different mines of all sorts- iron, silver, gold, platinum, gemstones, and so on. It is contested by a variety of petty warlords: the Brothers Murdochs (one has a blue and white crest, the other a red and white crest, both depict falling towers; each is 10th level human), the Madame Krindolina Eyrinse of Eyrinskeep (also called "Demonskeep" because of the golden woman-headed erinyes atop the black and white flag; 12th level human, 6th Circle Hermetic), the Baron DuVray of Ouberous (popularly called "Wormskeep" after its black wyvern-bearing red flag; 11th level human), Lord Aerick of Verdansk (sporting a green and brown flag depicting a large tree; 8th level human), the Ulgan Scepter (a thorn in everyone's side), and the miners themselves, who dwell in cavernous communes known as "steadings". War is ever-present, especially between the Brothers, and between everyone and the steading-folk.

Just south of the Thorenze Valley is a hilly wasteland known as Lower Thorenze, plagued with bandits, monsters, and, far to the south, the Vox Dur. Lower Thorenze is home to many small townships: Vrainen (near Ouberous, known for its ranches), Ravenna (far to the mid-south), Cantor (a large township just north of Ravenna, getting bigger due to Ulgan merchant activity), Ersis (a small village low on the road between Ullyade and Thorenze), Dalthros (on the road west between Eyrinskeep and Verdansk), Mercata (a village not too far from Vrainen), and Mercae (just north of Cantor, in the mid-south part of the region). Due to the hostile and bleak terrain, and the economic importance of the region, two armed garrisons have been set up- the Gravel Pit (a few days south of Eyrinskeep, near a mine that was recently abandoned due to the invasion of four lindworms) and the Griffstone Roadhouse (between the Gravel Pit and Ersis, on the road back south to Ullyade). The General Constanze Ulvins (7th level human) is stationed at the Gravel Pit. He is the leader of the civilian militia of Lower Thorenze, sort of by default, and has kept Lower Thorenze thus far free from rule by any of the northern warlords or the Ulgan Sceptre. He has taken it upon himself to ensure that it stays that way. The symbol of Ulvins and his men is a closed gauntlet upon a green and white shield.

The Plight of Eyrinskeep: While Eyrinskeep is nominally named for the Erinyes that plague the area, some know that its' banner depicts not one of those monsters, but rather a Succubus. Madame Krindolina's family has their roots in the Church of Winter. Krindolina herself is a skilled sorceress. For these reasons, the Duurans have long despised Eyrinskeep. It is only in recent times that they have been able to do anything about it: DuVray would happily attack Eyrinskeep, if not for the Eyrinse's old ally in Verdansk. (The Brothers are too busy with their own battles.) However, Lord Aerick's son Thomas (0th level human), his only heir, is a cripple, barely able to walk let alone speak. Thomas' mother, the Lady Kaela (2nd level human), is kindly and loves her son, but Lord Aerick is quite bitter. The local Duurans, led by Father Samuel (9th level human; 4th Circle Ritual), have promised they will heal the boy if Aerick will join the battle on their side against Krindolina. Eyrinskeep will soon be attacked.

Laern the Dead and the Wicked of Ravenna: Ravenna is small even by Thorenze standards, consisting of just twenty or so people. Ravenna is at the outer limits of Thorenze and civilized Drohksmere, and is obviously a village in decline. Most of the inhabitants are old, as many of the children have left for opportunities elsewhere in the valley and the mines. Compounding these problems is Laern the Dead (7th level human) and his followers, who survive mostly by banditry and hunting. Two years ago, Laern was a slave in Ravenna, who was falsely accused of murdering his master Tomasz Drybohk and lynched

by a Ravenna mob. In reality, Drybohk faked his death so that his family might receive insurance money from the Slaver's Guild. Laern was dragged through the streets, drowned in a nearby pool, and left for dead. Three days later, Laern returned to Ravenna wielding the Dravan Tzoul (see Appendix 2.1.1), and killed Drybohk's family, Drybohk himself (hidden in the cellar), four other townsfolk, and torched the farm. He then retreated into the forested hills a few miles from Ravenna, where he now has six followers, including a young Thainist priestess Melissa (6th level human, 3rd Circle Faith). Soon thereafter, Melissa's older Thainist sisters became Handmaidens, re-consecrated their shrine from Kithain to Zhol, and now in equal parts revere and despise Laern. While they will not lay a hand on the wielder of the Dravan, and will aid him if necessary, the Handmaidens also seek his destruction. They have erected a statue of Laern in the Ravenna commons.

Torsche (TORSH)

Major city, built on ten tiers around a mountain.

Population: 31,000; 85% human, 12% orc, 2% dwarf, 1% misc. (including faeries, goblins, ratkin).

Resources: very wealthy, high magical and technological levels; stoneworking, trade, clothwork, metalworking, agriculture and husbandry, art, libraries, military and magical academies.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Ixian, Aguierre, Typhon.

Guilds: Alchemists, Slavers, Surveyors.

Government: strict; militaristic control by the Honorable Friends of Torsche, led by Lord Baalphegor Pheng (actually Reginald Molliphant, 4th level human, 6th Circle Hermetic), trained army of 800.

Torsche is a beautiful city built up and around Mount Vyenze. This large and successful city is divided into ten tiers, a series of stratifications that form a semi-circle around the mountain. The first four tiers form a large sprawl at the base of Mount Vyenze, while the highest six tiers are located in terraces up the mountain itself. Torsche is generally governed by the Honorable Friends of Torsche (sometimes called the Ninth Circle), a conglomerate of four merchant families with

loose ties to both Armech and the Sceptre. However, they generally defer to Lord Baalphegor Pheng for the most important decisions. Lord Baalphegor is a powerful mage who lives in a private estate on the tenth and highest tier. Torsche shares many characteristics with Gyre, such as magnificent gardens, and thriving artistic and scientific communities, although Torsche is much smaller, and well under control by the Ulgan Sceptre and the Ninth Circle.

The Strange Case of Lord Baalphegor Pheng: Lord Baalphegor Pheng was schooled at Arosquey prior to its closing, where he was a classmate of Garrison Bones, head of the eponymous Bone Trade. At first friends, they became bitter rivals before graduation. Pheng lately had been experimenting with some ancient machinery acquired in the ice caves beneath Szondarch. Unfortunately, the real Baalphegor Pheng accidentally disintegrated himself after setting off a protective

ward. His manservant, Reginald Molliphant (4th level human) found the ashen remains of Pheng and in a moment of carelessness, put on the device himself. Molliphant now wears an Arcadian Spell Engine (see Appendix 2.1.1), an infernal artifact pre-dating the First Era, designed by the Arcanos to provide their servants with Hermetic power. Molliphant, with his new gift of powerful magic and surrounded by the trappings of Pheng's manor, believes himself to be Lord Pheng. He has not been seen for several weeks in an attempt to reconstruct his memories. Meanwhile, Molliphant's daughter Winnifred (0th level human) has become worried about her father's disappearance. Winnie lives with her mother, Reginald's estranged wife Gwenna (1st level human) in a flat on the Fourth Tier.

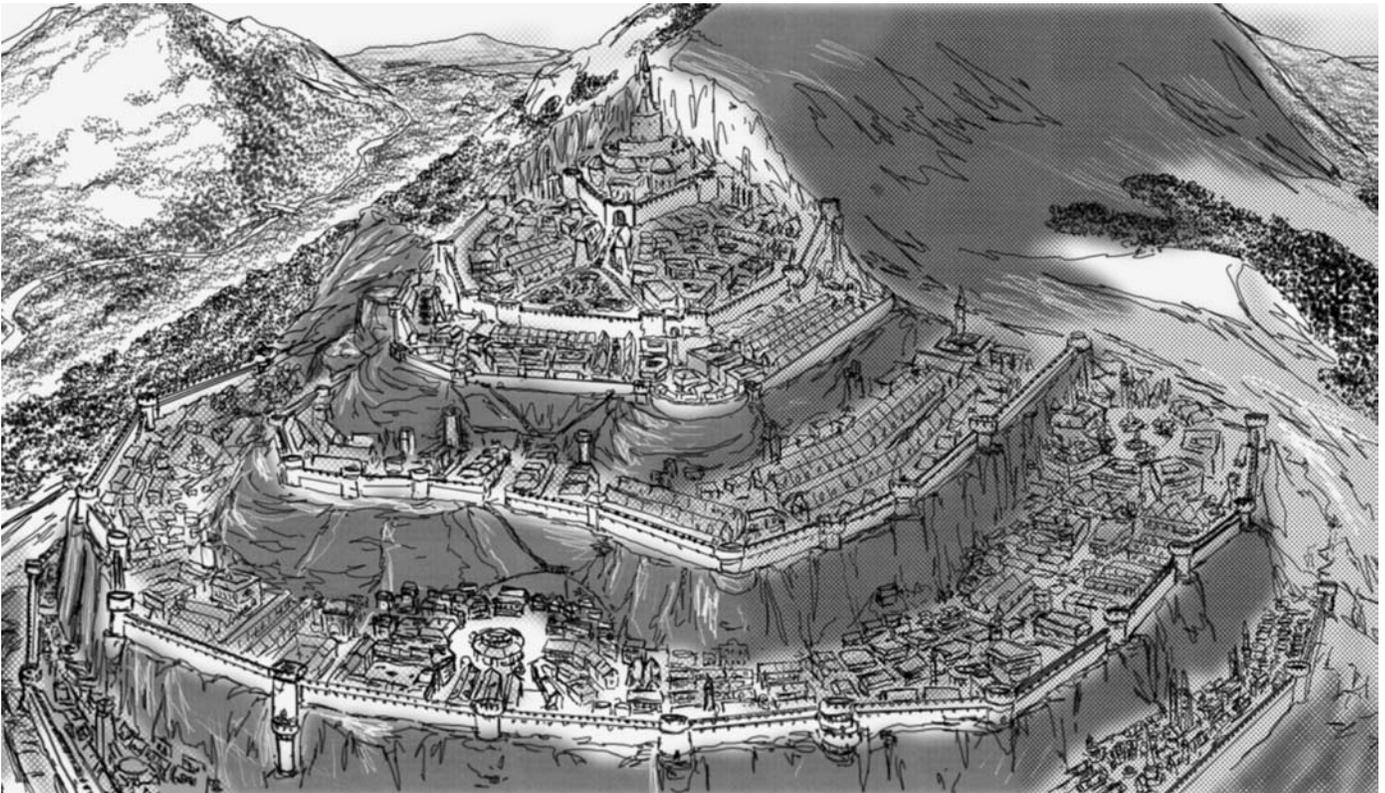
Ulyade (YOU-lee-ahd)

Major city and home of Ulgan Sceptre.

Population: 40,000; 89% human, 10% orc, 1% dwarf.

Resources: extremely wealthy, very high magical and technological levels; trade, shipbuilding, woodworking, fishing, art, agriculture and husbandry, clothwork, libraries, military and magical academies.

Religion: Typhon, Thainist, Xeres, Duuran, Aguierre, Ixian.



2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Guilds: Alchemists, Slavers.

Government: strict; oligarchical control by the Ulgan Sceptre, led by Mayor Jen Broghaum (8th level human, 3rd Circle Hedge), trained army and navy of 1,000.

The city of Ullyade is the home city of the Ulgan Sceptre, the extremely wealthy and powerful merchant company that has made a fortune over the second century of the Third Era. They are so rich that they are effectively in control of Drohksmere (excepting those regions not part of Drohksmere proper, e.g., Gyre) and have begun to have a dominating influence over the politics of Armech. The Ulgan Sceptre takes its name from the popular story that Jonnes Olgham and his friend Jamis Bledsoe were both destitute, with Bledsoe ruined by a series of mishaps and poor dealings with the Guilds and the Houses of Armech. Olgham, with his last electrum scepter, bought Bledsoe's entire fleet (two small shipping boats), and began transporting goods up and down the River Ulgos. Within a decade, he had turned it into a massive trade empire and retired. Many of Olgham's heirs still live in Ullyade, even though they were bought out many years ago by the merchant groups now controlling the Sceptre.

The Ulgan Sceptre has recently founded a private Hermetic School called the Guuran Tower. Some powerful magicks in the spheres of Enchantments and Charms have been leaking out of the Ullyade region since the start of the Third Century of the Third Era. Magicians not content with the profits they were making from their discoveries left the Ulgan Sceptre and founded the Alchemists Guild, moving to Gyre to get away from the Guild-unfriendly Sceptre.

Khaedor (KAY-dor)

Also called The Middle Lands, Khaedor is a collection of diverse city-states that bind the north, east, and west of Twylos together. Loosely, Khaedor is divided into the northern region, dominated by Rheyas, and the southern region, mostly controlled by Tzalvas. In actuality, the midlands between them, called The Zhellve, is owned by neither, but patrolled by the Knights of Aguierre out of Bordermarch. Connecting the north and south is the Zhellan Traderoad, a highly-trafficked and somewhat paved highway that cuts through many mountain passes and winds along the beautiful Khaedorian highlands. The Traderoad is surpassed in danger only by the remains of the Longiron Road and the Ered Route from Armech to the Ulgan Sceptre; brigands of all sorts make a fine living preying on the many merchants and caravans that seem to ceaselessly make the journey up (from Tzalvas to Rheyas) or down (from Rheyas to Tzalvas).

Khaedor is a good location for beginning characters, as there are many opportunities for travel, exploration, and escape to the more dangerous east and west. The adventures might start in a small village somewhere on the Zhellan Traderoad, allowing the characters to head off towards either Rheyas and the north, or Tzalvas and the east or south.

Bordermarch

Medium-sized fortress, citadel of the White and Black temples.

Population: 3,100; 90% human, 10% orc.

Resources: modestly wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; stonework, metalworking, trade, military academy.

Religion: Aguierre, Thainist.

Guilds: none.

Government: very strict; militaristic-theocratic control by the Knights of Aguierre, led by Lord Alain Rhauaire (15th level human, 3rd Circle Faith), well-trained army of 500.

A heavily-fortified keep within the Southern Durve, one of the last great keeps of Old Khaedor. Bordermarch essentially divides the northern, more civilized part of Khaedor from the rougher south. Bordermarch is owned and governed by the Knights of Aguierre, who have one of the two temples in town, the Shrine of Vivianne Sixblades. Sixblades is also known as Whitehall, as it is made of radiant marble, kept sparkling clean by the acolytes of the temple. This also differentiates it from the other temple in Bordermarch, the Black Hall (dedicated to Zhol). Father Ymerash (12th level human, 7th Circle Faith) is the high priest of the Black Hall, attended by two skeletal attendants wearing faceless masks, who carry his box-like a few other priests of Zhol, he has lived for several centuries, but his legs, his right hand, and his left eye are all gone. These two temples flank the thoroughfare through the 'March, and otherwise, Bordermarch is relatively small and unadorned. There is an inn and a small number of shops in the town square for travelers.

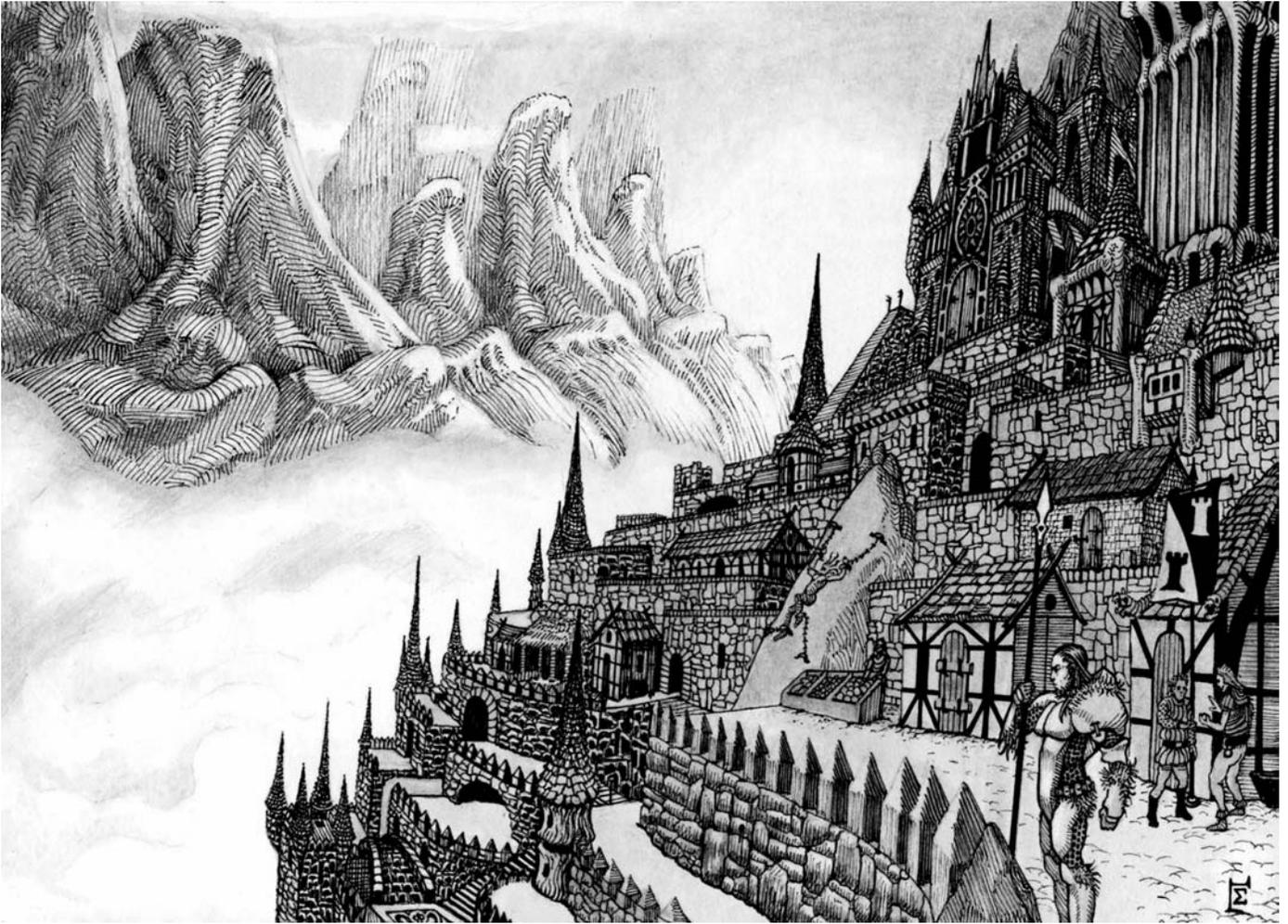
The Knights of Arawn: The proximity of the Church of Zhol has swayed some of the paladins of Aguierre. These warriors are the Knights of Arawn, named for the man-at-arms of Sister Vivianne, after whom the Whitehall is named. In the wake of the Vehrlands War in mid-Second Era, Vivianne and Arawn settled here from the west, helped rebuild Bordermarch, and with a small army (partially undead) killed or pacified all of the nearby soldiers. The Knights are a fringe group within Bordermarch and the Church of Aguierre. Usually they are Knights of Aguierre who are indoctrinated into the rites of Zhol after seeing too many friends die; occasionally, members are Thainists who have new need of combat skills.

The Xerichsblade: Along the Traderoad are a number of other fortresses, smaller in stature and historical importance than Bordermarch. One of these, four days north of town and half a day east into Tivers Vale, is Tivenskeep. Tivenskeep is the estate of Voran Aramoor and his family. Unfortunately, Lord Aramoor (8th level human) has progressively gone insane, and now mistakenly believes his wife Julianne (2nd level human), son Alain (0th level human), and closest retainers to have been replaced by doppelgangers. They do not suspect that they are about to be murdered in his madness. Aramoor wields the Xerichsblade (see Appendix 2.1.1), a cursed two-handed sword.

The Cursed City of Spiders: A week south of Bordermarch is the Tzvali Warbridge. The Warbridge, built by captured Sathar during the Vehrlands War, stretches over a canyon and is besides a waterfall, Brielle's Veil. Within view in the gulch below is Netheril, the City of Spiders. Once a large city of Zhellan stone, Netheril had a large temple to Morday (now called Mordred, the son of Zhol), the Cathedral of Ghent. It was one of the first cities to fall to the Knights of Caradoc during the Purge, as the citizens welcomed the host of the Antiarch as saviors. Mordred cursed the city, causing massive spiders to creep out of the earth and wrap the city in webs, feasting on the damned villagers.

Still today, when the mists are low, Netheril can be seen still encased in silk, and full of the terrible spiders of the dead god. In the main nave of the Cathedral lives the largest of these spiders. The bodies of the Antiarch's men are still encased in silk, their fluids long ago sucked from their husks. One of these bodies still wields the Genes Krystochs, one of the legendary Swords of the Antiarch (see Appendix 2.1.1).

The Giants of Bordermarch: The paladins of Bordermarch are in a near-continual war with the mountain-dwelling giants native to the region. The forces of Bordermarch have been mostly successful at keeping the giants from harassing travelers along the Zhellan Traderoad, and have pushed back into the mountains in a somewhat-futile attempt at their eradication. A large number of giants (approximately 300, not counting their ogre minions) dwell in the mountains, mostly in cavern-citadels called steadings.



In one of these steadings, the massive fir bolg captain Ongor the Third owns one of the famous Swords of the Antiarch, Vyrhanos Pyraday (the Flametongue). His family has possessed this weapon for generations, and they have come to be known as the Fire Giants of the Durve. Several years ago, a captured Ixian priest, Urich Vonolan (11th level half-orc, 5th Circle) was tortured into submission, and this priest now serves the Fire Giants as well. The stading of the Fire Giants is far from Bordermarch, and so they rarely come into direct conflict with the Knights anymore.

Brandmoor

Medium-sized village.

Population: 512; 88% human, 10% orc, 2% misc. (3 demons, 4 dwarves, 3 faeries).

Resources: poor, low magical and moderate technological levels; trade, agriculture and husbandry.

Religion: Thainist.

Guilds: Surveyors, Slavers.

Government: strict; oligarchical control by the Brandmoor Transport Authority, led by Surveyor Guildmaster Thompson Delauney (8th level human), militia of 30.

A modest trade-town along the Zhellan Traderoad. Brandmoor is managed by the Surveyors and Slavers, in conjunction with a merchant collective called the Brandmoor Transport Authority, which oversees horses, caravans, and wagons in the area. Brandmoor has a couple sizable ranches to keep the Transport Authority in business. The largest inn in Brandmoor is named Red Pudding, owned by Mrs. Irene Khale

(2nd level, 1st Circle Faith). The pudding served at the inn takes its name from the blood of slave girl and barmaid Jaana Eilonwy (0th level), who has scars up and down her arms from preparing the dish. Mrs. Khale applies Heal Minor Wounds spells as needed.

The Halifax Trade Emporium: Brandmoor is notable for the Halifax Trade Emporium, a surprisingly large curio shop that has collected strange goods from passing travelers for the past several decades. In 195 T.E., the Halifax family was killed by three demons with innate shape-shifting abilities, who promptly inserted themselves into the community and took over the Trade Emporium as the 'Halifax Brothers'. These are Henry R. Halifax (common demon, has Cudgel of Demolition), Sterling R. Halifax (lesser demon, 2nd Circle Faith, has Bag of Useful Goods, Nael's Fleshrod, and Dagger of Life-Stealing), and Gregg Halifax, Jr. (greater imp, 5th Circle Hedge). The store is full of black humor, such as an enormous wooden key, painted gaudy gold, inscribed 'The Key of Typhon', and the corpse of a gnome that has been turned into a marionette. The Halifax Brothers do not make much mischief around town; rather, they scour travelers and caravans for magical goods, in hopes of a later theft or ambush down the road, sometimes using Imps and Peryton as allies. The Brothers possess a pair of Portal Boxes (see Appendix 2.1.1), that they use when traveling abroad, to ensure items they acquire safely and quickly return to their shop. They also search for information, and a number of years ago, obtained Nael's Fleshrod (see Appendix 2.1.1) from unsuspecting merchants coming down from Rheyas. The Fleshrod was used in 200 T.E. by the Halifaxes to return an Arcanodaemon to life, and has not been used since. The Halifaxes also have a few books for sale, including a copy of "Paedra and the Ogre King" and "Vehrland Travels", written by the Duurans Humboldt and Janessa (Naturalist

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

followers of Petrarch), a light-hearted travelogue in which the couple kill and eat every creature they come across, and discuss its habitat, physiology, preparation, and flavor.



Paedra and the Ogre King: This is an old tale, recently reinvented and popularized in the mid-Third Era. Paedra is a young Zhellan shepherdess, in love with the mayor's son Herrick. When Herrick comes of age, he joins the Navigators Guild and quickly rises to the rank of Apprentice. He leaves to seek his fortune on the seas of Twylos, leaving Paedra in their village. The night before he goes, they promise their love to each other. Paedra gives Herrick a copper ring inscribed with the word 'Truth', and Herrick gives her a similar ring inscribed with 'Faith'.

Unfortunately, Paedra's flock is in a valley plagued by ogres. The ogres begin to harass her and steal her sheep. At first timid, lonely Paedra grows bolder over the year, hiding and throwing rocks, and finally chasing after the ogres and smacking them with her walking stick. Impressed with her bravery, the Ogre King Arak Mourndr watches her from afar, when she sleeps, and tells his subjects to avoid bothering her. As time has passed, letters from Herrick slow and then stop.

Mourndr is a widower. After another year (the second since Herrick left), the Ogre King comes to Paedra in her cabin at night, and tells her she must marry him, lest his ogres resume stealing her poor sheep. Angry and scared, she refuses. The ogre theft is redoubled, and Paedra begins waging a small war against the ogre bandits.

The third year passes. Mourndr again comes to Paedra, and insists that they marry. He offers her a crown of gold, but she violently rebuffs him. Paedra comes close to killing one of the ogres in a raid on her flock, but stays her hand.

The fourth year. Mourndr comes again, for the last time. He offers her a ring- it is her copper ring that she gave to Herrick, now tarnished, but the making and the word 'Truth' is unmistakable. Distraught, she demands to know where the Ogre King got it. He explains that a traveling merchant, selling the wares of dead sailors, was taken by his clan. Paedra agrees to become the Queen of the Ogres, but on one condition- that she be allowed to return to her village one month each year. The Ogre King agrees and they are wed. In Paedra's despair, it is a loveless, unconsummated marriage. After discovering what the ring is, Mourndr also gives her a ring of stone.

One night, Paedra cannot sleep. It is the next year, and it is her month to be at home. A knock comes to her door. It is Herrick, returned from sea after these five years. Paedra believes him to be a ghost and chases him away. He returns the next morning, but she is in town doing errands. By chance, she runs into the merchant, since released by his ogre captives. She questions him further about Herrick and the ring, and he admits that the ring was sold to him by a drunken sailor, to pay for his gambling and brothel debts. Herrick matches the description of the philanderer. Stunned, Paedra goes into the valley and sleeps.

When she awakens, it is night. She is due to return to the Ogres. She goes home to collect her possessions, where she again meets Herrick, who has been waiting in her cottage for her return. She confronts him about the ring. Arak Mourndr, come to fetch his wife, overhears her accusation and his stammering response. The enraged Ogre King enters the cottage and bludgeons Herrick to death. Paedra removes her own copper ring, and drops both of them on his corpse. She returns to the oare enclave and does not leave again.

The Ranchers' Problem: A flock of twelve griffons roosts about four miles from Brandmoor, above a valley that used to contain many wild horses. With their food supply gone, the griffons have begun to attack the Brandmoor ranches.

Kandallay (can-deh-LAY)

Small village and landmark (waterfall and oracle).

Population: 116; 90% human, 10% faerie.

Resources: poor, moderate magical and low technological levels; clothmaking, agriculture and husbandry, trade.

Religion: Thainist, Timmorn.

Guilds: Surveyors.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by the Lady Arwen Jaevis (3rd level human), militia of 10.

A peaceful village, Kandallay is one of the oldest settlements in all of Khaedor. While out of the way, the villagers have several small farms, while the Ames and Vespers families trade well-tailored clothes. Kandallay is also a rich source for comfrey moss, the essential ingredient in the healing herbs prepared by local apothecaries for centuries, and now codified by the Alchemists Guild. Comfrey grows throughout Twylos, and healing herbs are usually common and inexpensive throughout the world.

The Gremlin Princess: Kandallay is owned by the Lady Arwen Jaevis. Her son Harold (2nd level human) has fallen in love with a gremlin princess named Missy Eeks (3rd level gremlin). The 26 gremlins live with a bunch of faeries (11 sidhe, 5 pixies, 7 sprites, and a fat elf shepherd) in a spring-fed cavern about twenty miles from Kandallay. One of the sidhe, Roo the Vermin (4th level sidhe, 1st Circle Ritual), is Missy's occasional lover and finds this hilarious. He and Missy have a bet to see how far she can string him along; she does care for Harold, but doesn't understand the naïve boy's depth of feelings.

Timmorn's Well: Timmorn's Well is a deep pool of water underneath Timmorn's Veil, Twylos' tallest waterfall at 3000 feet. Kandallay is most

famous for the Veil, and in ages past was a much larger village to serve the pilgrims that would come in the summer. It was previously a sacred place for the followers of Tamara (the Church of Silence) who believed it to be oracular, when the Church of Silence was still in existence. It's hard to get to-rough terrain through the monster-infested Durvan Range. The only thing to denote the Church's former presence is a marble statue of their Lady off to the side of the pool. Nowadays, a mighty wyvern has moved into the location, feeding on the native deer and caprinae (sheep and goats), as well as making trouble for the Ogre shepherd gang that has long been part of Kandallay history (for both good and ill). The Well is still oracular, though, because of the ageless, nameless sylph priestess (8th Circle Faith) who resides in the pool. She will give helpful but cryptic responses to a single direct question, once in anyone's life.

Lurneslyle (LERNs-lile)

Large village.

Population: 900; 84% human, 12% orc, 4% misc (including dwarves, faeries, ogres).

Resources: moderately wealthy, low magical and moderate technological levels; trade, agriculture and husbandry, stonework, metalworking.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Ixian.

Guilds: Slavers, Surveyors, Alchemists.

Government: oppressive; monarchical control by Lord Mars Wellings (8th level human), army of 70.

Lurneslyle grew out of a trading community along the Slaveroad between Khaedor and Irendor/Armech. Lurneslyle grew larger during the Second Era. Lurneslyle has had a history of power struggles, although the current Lord Wellings' family has governed Lurneslyle peacefully since just after the beginning of the Third Era.

Guild Sediton: Recently, the Guilds have become interested in controlling Lurneslyle. Guildmasters Orin Brecht (9th level human, Surveyor), Jenna von Errant (10th level human, Slaver), and Sigurd Pentecost (8th level human, 4th Circle Ritual, 1st Circle Hedge, Alchemist) have begun to conspire to depose Wellings and assume governance of town. The Guilds do not want to wage all-out war, but instead have initiated a smear campaign against Lord Wellings. So far this has proved successful, as Lord Wellings already had a reputation for boorishness.

The Guilds plan to deliver some foreign slaves to Lord Wellings, but these 'slaves' will be disguised mercenaries and Guildsmen. Food delivered to Lurness Keep, Lord Wellings' compound, is now laced with steroids to increase the aggressive tendencies of his men. After a few weeks, the Guilds will stage a revolt, triggered by violent treatment of the slaves by Wellings' drugged men. However, unbeknownst to the Guildsmasters, one of the Apprentice Slavers informed of part of the plan is having second thoughts. Sister Courtney Numenor (3rd level human, 2nd Circle Faith) is nominally a Thainist, but is actually a young priestess of Typhon, secretly converted in Tzalvas. Years ago, on her initial trek to Tzalvas, Sister Courtney fell in love with another member of the caravan, Aldredge Wellings (7th level human). Aldredge is a distant nephew of Lord Wellings, and has now returned to Lurneslyle where he is Armsmaster of Lurness Keep. The Armsmaster spurned his young admirer out of hand, and does not remember her. Armsmaster Aldredge will almost certainly be killed in the slave revolt. Sister Courtney is not entirely clear on the plan's details and is debating how best to proceed.

Meers

Small village.

Population: 236; 68% human, 32% orc.

Resources: poor, low magical and moderate technological levels; stonework, agriculture and husbandry, trade, metalworking.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran.

Guilds: Slavers, Surveyors.

Government: strict; monarchical control by Princess Allandra of Rheyas, led the Baron Stahlding (7th level human), trained militia of 40.

Meers is a small village along the Zhellan Traderoad between Rheyas and Tzalvas. Like several other such villages, it survives primarily by herding sheep and associated enterprises (e.g., woolen goods). Meers is nominally governed by the Baron Stahlding and his family, quartered at Meercrest, a small castle on a crag above the village. In reality, most of the villagers and the Stahldings slavishly acquiesce to the whims of the town apothecary, Silas Comfrey (4th level human, 2nd Circle Hedge). Comfrey (an assumed surname) possesses a Ring of Appeal (as Necklace of Appeal), obtained four years ago at Brandmoor's Halifax Trade Emporium. He has used this in the time since to obtain influence and favors from the townsfolk. While Master Silas is a petty man, he does not grossly abuse this power. He does not suspect that the Halifax Brothers were well-aware of the Ring's magical properties, have been watching the effects in Meers in amusement, and will soon be coming to take it back.



Moorcrest

Major city, gateway between Khaedor and the old Empire.

Population: 39,000; 81% human, 14% orc, 5% misc. (including dwarves, goblins, ogres).

Resources: wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, agriculture and husbandry, metalworking, stonework, woodworking.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Aguirre, Ixian.

Guilds: Surveyors, Slavers, Alchemists.

Government: strict; oligarchical control by the Surveyors Guild, led by Guildmaster Marquessa Allandrohke (13th level human), well-trained army of 2,400.

The city is the fulcrum of trade between Armech and Khaedor. Moorcrest was initially the leading candidate for the Surveyors Guild home city, but internally it was felt the Houses of Armech had too much influence over the trade operations here. This is true- an extraordinary amount of bribe money flows south from Armech into Moorcrest. House silver finances numerous mercenary operations to subvert the trade contracts and caravans of other Houses and independent groups. For this reason, the people of Moorcrest have come to think that they have more to fear from each other, than from the goblin and gnole tribes of Ny'raen. Even the usually fair Guildmaster herself is not above taking money from the coffers of Armech.

Help Wanted: In recent years, the Surveyors have become interested in establishing a trade route through Myrinae, along the River of Lillies, down into the Gyre delta. This is Guildmaster Marquessa's pet project, although it has been difficult to find workers brave or stupid enough to attempt the long journey through the entire vastness of the swamps.

Ny'vraen Holdings

Region; steppes, forest, and some marsh. The goblin lands.

Common encounters: gnoles, goblins, snakes, wolves.

Rare encounters: bears, Duurans, rhinoceros, spiders, undead.

Between the Valstedt, the Ered Wastes, and the swamps of Myrinae are the goblin lands of Ny'vraen. The goblins are loosely organized into tribes, led by larger, horned goblins called hobgoblins. The hobgoblins practice Ritual magic, and share many customs and characteristics with the early Duurans. The Duurans of the wilds, along with the gnoles, have an uneasy alliance with the Ny'vraen goblins, as each group sees the encroaching humanoid civilization as a threat. Over the centuries, the expansion of the Valstedt to the north, and the Drohkan frontier to the northeast have pushed the goblin tribes deeper into Myrinae. Gnoles and goblins are not necessarily hostile to travelers outside of Ny'vraen, but as no roads and cities are found within the Holdings, they will take a dim view of entry into their lands.

Rheyes (RAYS)

Major city and home of Surveyors Guild. The city of storms.

Population: 51,000; 89% human, 10% orc, 1% misc. (including demons, dwarves, faeries, ratkin, undead).

Resources: modestly wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, fishing, shipbuilding, metalworking, woodworking, agriculture and husbandry, art, clothwork, library.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Ixian, Agueirre, Typhon, Xeres.

Guilds: Surveyors, Navigators, Slavers, Alchemists.

Government: relaxed but occasionally oppressive; monarchical control by Princess Genevieve Allandra (7th level human; 2nd Circle Hermetic), trained army and navy of 700.

Rheyes is a huge city and major trade center, not just for the Middle Lands but for Twylos as a whole. The flag of Rheyes is a green flag with a black spade (as in cards) in the upper left-hand corner, and a tower (like a rook) in the lower-right. Rheyes is the home city to the Guild of Surveyors, headed by Guildmaster Jon Iosham (11th level human). Rheyes is pretty clean; however it may be unscrupulous at times, especially about ship docking restrictions. Rheyes is currently ruled by the Princess Genevieve Allandra, latest in the family of descendants of the former House Allande of Irendor. The Princess, her family, and her cohorts reside at Talaslay, a great castle in the center of Rheyes. She is called by her detractors the Queen of Spades, or the Bitch-Queen of Rheyes, as there's a feeling among some of the local merchants that she's re-organized the city militia into gangs of brutal tax-collectors. A nastier and unsubstantiated rumor is that she taxes so harshly and so unpredictably in order to finance her own Zeaven addiction.

The Procurers of Rheyes: Rheyes is infamous for its drug trade. Like most specialized groups who call themselves Guilds, the Procurers' Guilds are not Guilds in the standard sense, but are thuggish gangs of drug peddlers and Alchemists' Guild dropouts. Most Procurers operate out of a single storefront and employ one or a few chemists. Variants of the hallucinogen Zeaven are most popular, with Zeaven usually inducing a dream-like state. Other drugs include Green Ichor, Ammonswake, and Goodnight, and many Procurers also sell poisons to the brigands, mercenaries, and assassins that come to Rheyes.

The Gift of Arosquey: Rheyes once had two famous magicians' schools- one of which was the largest school outside of the Empire, called *Arosquey*, also called "The Thirteen Halls", with a penchant for Necromancy. (The other was a private school called Zieth Cour, Zhellan for "Shade's Courtyard", but is more rumor than reality.) Arosquey was founded in the mid-Second Era during the peak of Rheyen and Sea King prosperity by Queyan magicians from Oolvaunt (headed by the charismatic Nael), and is found on an island just off the coast of Rheyes. The school was extremely lenient about what was permitted, and developed a reputation for experimental magic. Unfortunately, one of these experiments in the Third Era, on weather control, led to the permanent creation of massive storm clouds that still cover the school, the city, the harbor, and the surrounding country for about twenty miles. The torrential rain and lightning has not ceased.

For this reason, Arosquey was shut down in the middle of the Third Era, and Rheyes is now called the City of Storms or the City of Rain. Because of this, Rheyes used to be much larger, but about a third of the populace moved away (largely the middle class, leading to a large wealth disparity today in Rheyes). Arosquey is organized radially, like a clock. The hidden 'Thirteenth' Hall is accessible only by flying to the top of the high center dome, and entering a secret door. The Thirteenth Hall has not been plundered like the rest of Arosquey, and contains a number of dangerous guardians and weird devices (e.g., the Black Quienae Snowglobe of Oolvaunt (see Appendix 2.1.1)).

Secret Biological Experiments: Just south of Rheyes are several villages. One of them, Ghent, is currently the site of Alchemist Guild agricultural research involving cattle treated with semi-magical steroids and potions to increase their size and fertility. Lately the Ghent experiments have been successful, and a few immense steers have been raised. These studies have been kept quiet to prevent interference by the Duurans- unfortunately, the huge cattle are irresistible to the wolves of the area, who managed to take one down. From eating the meat, these wolves are also beginning to grow large and vigorous.

The Alchemists are also conducting botanical experiments, working to improve the Zeaven Friendship drugs the Slavers use for conditioning and slave training. Production of the hallucinogenic Widdershin mushroom, an important component in Slaver-Alchemist mind control compounds, has thus been increased. Growth of altered Widdershins mushrooms has escaped the Alchemists' greenhouse, though, to the despair of Harold Riley (5th level human, 2nd Circle Hedge, 1st Circle Hermetic), the Alchemist in charge of the project. A nearby unicorn has started grazing on them, causing the unicorn to go insane with rage.

The Wreck of the Mooran Pride: Four days east of Rheyes, along the coast, lies the wreck of the Mooran Pride, a ship from Machontin blown off coast and into the rocks by the Arosquey storms. On board the Pride was Gauntremos Loran, an ambassador from Vamooris bringing news to the Navigators and Surveyors about the impending destruction of Machontin by the minotaurs. Loran's courtier bag is still on-board the ship, containing these encrypted documents along with Loran's spellbook (2nd Circle Hermetic). He also had a well-made Vamooran rapier (non-magically +1 to-hit). The bag was jostled, though, and Loran's defense set off an illusion of a lanky fir bolg giant called the Red Man. The Red Man has so far kept the ship free from wildlife and bandits, but four giant crabs have taken the hulk as their new abode, and three crewmen, horribly drowned, arose as zombies.

Tarchartus (tah-CART-us)

Small village, home of Ms. Amanda Dawson.

Population: 268; 95% human, 4% orc, 1% misc. (1 demon with Ridlee, 2 other demons).

Resources: poor, low magical and technological levels; agriculture and husbandry, trade, clothmaking.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Typhon.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by Princess Allandra of Rheyas, led Mayor Jon Karden (4th level human), militia of 25.

Another of Khaedor's many serene mountain villages. Tarchartus has a few hundred inhabitants, mainly ex-soldiers turned farmers and ranchers. It is a community spread over a broad expanse of land, mostly within three valleys and along the streams therein. Tarchartus is historically important as the birthplace of the witch Amanda Dawson, beloved of the Arcanos and mother of the original Aprill. The Dawson family cottage is now home to Terrence Ridlee, a priest of Typhon (12th level human, 6th Circle Faith), and his manservant Cardiff (a shape-changed charudemon). Ridlee, far from the plottings of the rest of his kind, patiently awaits for signs of Amanda's return. He is visited on occasion by Adlai Andrakkar, another Typhonae (11th level human, 4th Circle Hermetic, 4th Circle Faith). Andrakkar has a sick sense of humor and comes by mainly to keep an eye on Ridlee. The two men are not friends, but former adventuring companions, and concerned about the

heresies conducted at Aea Convent in the swamps of Myrinae. Neither is a major religious figure here in the community; Ridlee mainly keeps to himself, while Andrakkar travels across Twylos on Church business. Amanda's house is in a small woods outside of the village itself. The current residents of Tarchartus are unlikely to know its precise whereabouts, but a Local Knowledge proficiency check of 12 or higher will reveal its location.

She Was Just a Quiet Village Girl: Amanda Dawson was a shy, bookish girl. She was sent to a Museum School in Vasqueray, ending up on a Bone Trade expedition out of Gorgos, where Ridlee first met her. Her ship destroyed by the Leviathan, she washed ashore on Lunais and found it strangely disquieting and familiar. Changed by her experience there, she traveled across Twylos, being killed by Duurans in the Ered Wastes and revived by the magic of Umslamy. She fled to Napres to escape the influence of the Typhonae, and disappeared with the help of Aramach Vox Thrauxes in 199 T.E. Ridlee thinks she is possessed by, or perhaps the reincarnation of, Lady Muriel, and continues to hope that someday she will return.



Tzalvas (ZAL-vas)

Major city and home of Slavers Guild.

Population: 42,000; 74% human, 21% orc, 1% dwarf, 1% reptilian, 3% misc. (including demons, faeries, ogres, ratkin, undead).

Resources: wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, stonework, fishing, shipbuilding, agriculture and husbandry, metalworking, library, military academy.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Typhon, Ixian, Aguierre, Xeres.

Guilds: Slavers, Navigators, Alchemists, Surveyors.

Government: strict; oligarchical control by the Slavers Guild, led by Guildmaster Mikel Darbo (9th level human), well-trained army and navy of 3,000.

Tzalvas is a gigantic, nasty city. Tzalvas initially was built as a port between the Irendi houses and Vasqueray. The city is mostly an enormous sprawl, with little supporting farmland, and a large, stinking wharf. Half of the city reeks of brine. Tzalvas was once prosperous, but Orcish and Ogre factions ("under the Durve", as they say) have taken mine after mine out of the hands of the Tzalvan people. Tzalvas is home city to the Guild of Slavers, who formally rule the city, and informally control much of southern Khaedor and the Vehrlands. For several decades, the Slavers' Guild would 'conscript' the destitute of Tzalvas and cart them off, either to the North or to Vasqueray. In 185 T.E., for the first two weeks of March, the beggar mobs rallied under Zerine the Younger and sacked the city. The Slavers marshaled lots of help, rounded up all the homeless at a nearby ranch (the Biene Stockyards), and killed them all. This has since been known as the Biensstock Massacre, and it pretty much gave control of Tzalvas to the Slavers. In years since, the Guild has learned how to manage and does so quite well; partially due to this experience, the Guild is less about acquisition and training of slaves as it is about the management of people and countryside.

Guildmaster Mikel Darbo is the charming head of the Slavers Guild. Of the 40,000 or so citizens of Tzalvas, a significant fraction (around 10%) are Guildsmen. Tzalvas is a center for international trade, and has a number of inns, including the Kind Siren.

The Slave Conditioning Lab: Stygensport is apparently a small fishing village about half a day east from Tzalvas along the coast. Staffed entirely by Guildsmen, it is actually the main entry point for slaves, used to avoid the hassles associated with transporting many prisoners and slaves in and out of a major city. Large underground tunnels from Stygens head for a couple miles into the mountains, to Obroch Slave City. Obroch, named for the metallic demon carvings that adorn its massive citadel gates, is the center of the unpleasant side of the Guild of Slavers business. It is the main location for intense slave conditioning, brainwashing, and lobotomy, and is pioneering some experimental practices in both permanent and reversible mind control. The Obroch Conditioning Tanks (sarcastically called Barrowsreich by some of its staff, in reference to the high body count now coming out of the Conditioning Tanks) are headed by Griminien Orbach (12th level human, 6th Circle Hermetic) of the College of Surgeons, trained at Luksharrow. Orbach has learned of the Aea Convent program, and secretly obtained one of the missing Aprills. Using Optician techniques, he has implanted some of his spells in the girl, effectively turning her into his living spellbook. He has diverted Slaver and Surgeon funding for surgical research into spell creation, disguising his research as surgical procedures upon the poor girl.

Mammon's Point: Just outside of Tzalvas, on top a small cliff jutting out into the sea, is one of the largest formal temples of Typhon, called Mareznock, or Mammon's Point. Mammon's Point is an exquisite marble tower, 160 feet tall, designed by architect Tellian Aires at no small expense to the Church. There are five levels, each organized around a central circular hall, representing the five keys of Typhon. Tellian's daughter Jessica constructed magical glass murals for each

hall; the icons and images seem to move across the glass telling allegorical stories of the Typhonic mythos. The first floor mural depicts a young boy and girl in a lush garden, being tutored by a tall, robed, wolf-headed man. The second mural depicts a young woman, wealthy but apparently bored, pacing back and forth in her unused bedroom; occasionally she sits to write or look wistfully out her window, where the branches of a tree in winter can be seen. The third mural depicts a giant tree atop a hill, surrounded by corpses. The fourth mural is of a small hut, draped in violet light; outside is a small garden tended to by a kindly-seeming skeletal figure. Two moons hang low in the sky against a backdrop of mountains. Finally, the top floor has no mural, but rather is ringed with a giant mirror.

Unsbrecht Keep

Large fortress and home of Knights of Aguierre.

Population: 3,400; 84% human, 16% orc.

Resources: wealthy, high magical and technological levels; mining (few precious metals, some heavy metals), metalworking, stonework, agriculture and husbandry, trade, library, military academy.

Religion: Aguierre, Ixian, Thainist.

Guilds: Slavers, Surveyors.

Government: strict; militaristic-theocratic control by the Knights of Aguierre, led by Lady Josslin Devrairie (12th level human), well-trained army of 580.

The home city of the Knights of Aguierre, Unsbrecht is where Caradoc the Antiarch was stoned to death as a slave. The Unsgaard is the Knights' huge iron citadel, built into the cliff where Caradoc was killed and reborn. It is here where the Libram Rexus is kept, the holy book of the Paladins. A garrison of 80 Knights and 500 soldiers are stationed here, supported by Unsborg, a town around Ungor Lake.

Arbickle Gates and the Lord of Stone: Master Arbickle Gates is manservant to the House of Bantersbye, an old Taran family that moved south early into the Second Fall, and survived due to a prosperous trade in antiquities. Bantersbye Manor is located in the crags above Tzalvas, somewhat isolated and several hours out of town. Like many others in Tzalvas, Arbickle is looking for adventurers.

He has good money to pay (5 gc), for recovery of a special item lost in the wilds north of town along the Zhellan Traderoad, "Nael's Fleshrod". Seems that his Lord Bantersbye has been petrified, due to an unfortunate encounter with a cursed scroll obtained on one of His Lordship's Questing Adventures. The Fleshrod can be had, sure; after freeing the Arcanos Illiesse, it was discarded, its major role in the Second Fall done and said, my friends. Of course, all is not well in Bantersbye Manor- the Lord himself, stone, stands at the head of the table, still conscious and receptive to things around him, including the lusty encounters his wife Lady Bantersbye has with her nephew Gurnis; sometimes around or even on his Poor Lordship. Master Gates cannot stand this treachery, will pay his heroes honestly for fetching the working Fleshrod, and perhaps afterwards the heroes can obtain more work tracking down and fetching Lady and Nephew as well.

General Steam: General Steam is a squat tin golem with a tea kettle for a head. He is employed by the haubit antiquities dealer Cyrus Lim, and can often be seen running errands about Tzalvas. The golem's work is hazardous; however the criminal establishment finds value in Cyrus' trade, and confers upon him a rare form of protection. In addition, a wand of Lightning Bolt dangles on a chain from Steam's waist, and he is an exceptionally fast draw.

Zalen Vale

Landmark (oracular dragon lair).

The Zalen Vale is about a day or so south of Rheyes along the main trade route of the Zhellan Road. It used to contain the village of Zalen, back in the First Era; during the Purge of the Antiarch it was destroyed, and a monument was built to Hraan Jaspers, a soldier under Caradoc the Antiarch who was born in Zalen. The obelisk and an old windmill are the only structures left in the Vale.

To the south of the Vale is a dense forest. Just off a branch of the Traderoad, a little-used path, is a slender waterfall that pours out of a hole in the rock cliff face. In the pool it forms is a statue of a woman and a statue of a young man stands off to the side. A path cut into the stone leads up to a cave next to the waterfall, and within the cave, down another flight of stairs, is the lair of the Stonedrake (treat as a wyrm dragon, except the breath weapon is a cloud of dust that petrifies those who fail the Physical Resistance check). A ring of statues are past victims of the Stonedrake's anger. The Drake is considered oracular, and is visited by those who have heard of its wisdom in search of answers. This is because the Drake gains the knowledge of its petrified victims. Usually apathetic or benign, if enraged by stupid or persistent questions, it will not hesitate to attack. The Drake is quite old, and by chance one of its first victims was an Arcanodaemon, Madriganii Illiesse (mah-drih-GA-nee ee-LEESE). That statue is missing, however, although a mark on the stone indicates where one statue used to be. In 200 T.E., when the Halifax Brothers of Brandmoor acquired Nael's Fleshrod, they snuck into the Stonedrake's Lair and let loose Arcanos Illiesse, who proceeded to Rhaxen in search of Amanda Dawson. The Stonedrake is furious about the theft of its statue, but dares not leave its precious lair.

Zhellan Traderoad

Region and landmark (main road); mountainous, with some northern plains and forests, and some southern marshes.

Common encounters: bears, brigands, miners, ogres, orcs, performers, Slavers, traders, hunters, wolves.

Rare encounters: giants, griffons, harpies, imps, lindworms, Surveyors, trolls, wyvern.

The Traderoad is the famous route that links northern and southern Twylos. It runs from Rheyes at the northern end down to Tzalvas in the south, with most of Khaedor centered around the Traderoad in-between. The Traderoad had been in place since the start of the Second Era, but the Surveyors Guild has considerably improved it and help organize defenses and periodic roadhouses, to break up and keep caravan safe along the long trek through the mountains. Bordermarch defends the most dangerous part of the Traderoad from the giant clans that sporadically attack humanoid travelers. From Rheyes, it takes a caravan about a month to make it all the way down to Tzalvas and the warm southern ocean.

News from the Hills: An ogre named Bronson periodically travels up and down the Zhellan Traderoad, bringing news and mail from the 'south' or the 'north'. He wears a large iron strongbox wrapped in chains around his neck, and accepts donations for his courier and news services. Bronson, usually just called 'the ogre' by locals, has a sort of celebrity in the lower class taverns where he delivers his news.

Nycene (NIE-seen)

Twylos' largest island, Nycene became the home of the Church of Ixus when they were exiled from Irendor around 1000 F.E. Most of Nycene is desert and wasteland, and thus only one city, Praxis, has been built on the island. The island remains the center of Ixian faith, and the most devout Ixians attempt a pilgrimage to Nycene once in their lives. Because of Nycene's inhospitability, it is relatively free from monsters; it

is mostly free of flora and fauna in general, except for some hardy specimens like cacti, drakes, and large sea birds.

Nycene does not generally make a good starting location for a campaign in Twylos, although it could be a launching-point or end-destination for a game about, or against, the Ixians, respectively.

Praxis

Large village. Original settlement of the Ixians.

Population: 2,800; 86% human, 12% orc, 1% reptilian, 1% misc. (including demons, dwarves, goblins, ogres).

Resources: wealthy, high magical and technological levels; shipbuilding, fishing, mining (some precious and heavy metals), trade, metalworking, stoneworking, some agriculture and husbandry, woodworking, clothmaking, art, military academy.

Religion: Ixian, Thainist.

Guilds: none.

Government: oppressive; theocratic control by the Church of Ixus, led by Brother Jang Yates (15th level human, 7th Circle Faith), well-trained army and navy of 600.

The only real city on all of Nycene, Praxis serves basically as just a harbor for the Church of Ixus. This is the destination for all sorts of people- clergymen, intellectuals, and fanatics. The only non-Ixus/Ixian related shrine on all of Nycene can be found here, the modest Thainist chapel of Hope Less. In 53 T.E., the famous historian and Museum Scholar Vladmir Ozmandian was killed in Praxis by demons that attacked him in bed. Although the Church of Ixus threatened to kill him if he laid foot on hallowed Nycene, they claim it was his own personal demons that killed him, as they predicted- and that it was simply the price such a 'godless skeptic' must pay, coming to the Holy Land.

The Lighthouse of Prandor Vux: The Lighthouse is a pair of enormous bronze forearms and fists (similar to Stalagrahd in Saethos), rising 100' out of the sea. The Lighthouse flanks the entrance to the Praxis harbor. It is lit with Ixian flame spells each night, igniting special crystals in the interior of each palm, causing each hand to glow and the top of the knuckles to burn with a golden flame.

Sun Keep

Large cathedral and home of Church of Ixus.

Population: 815; 92% human, 7% orc, 1% misc. (6 demons and 2 giants).

Resources: extremely wealthy, very high magical and technological levels; metalworking, library, magical and military academy.

Religion: Ixian.

Guilds: none.

Government: oppressive; theocratic control by the Church of Ixus, led by the Sun King (1st level human, 1st Circle Faith, 20 presence), well-trained army of 500.

A magnificent gold-hued palace, that glows in the southern sun. Difficult or impossible for non-clergy of Ixus to enter, as this is their main church, on an outcropping overlooking Axan (which they claim is the center of Ixus here on Twylos). A pair of large Bronze Golems stand guard outside the main gate, which is the only entrance to the Sun Keep. The only time these Golems have moved was when Rogan DuLaine returned from Rhaxen, clearly insane; the Golems pulped him before he could step foot within the Keep and defile the Church further. Within the immense temple on the main floor is the Book of Ixus, the holy book of the Church.

The Sun King: The spiritual head of the Church of Ixus is the Sun King. He is a beautiful, golden-haired boy of about 10 years of age. Rituals

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

of the Clergy sorcerers keep the Sun King ageless and forever childlike, as the current Sun King is actually a Queyan slave, 342 years old. The Horologist Ochs Dorv (18th level human, 8th Circle Hermetic, 1st Circle Faith) is responsible for the Sun King's eternal youth via annual casting of the hideous Steal Youth spell.

The Axan Caldera: Sun Keep sits at the brink of the Axan Caldera, the massive remnants of an exploded volcano. A giant lake of lava bubbles at the bottom, and pools of hot mud dot the surrounding earth. Axan, meaning "death" in Irendi, is home to an ancient mud wyrm as well as 40 salamanders.

Orethedron (ore-THED-ren)

The second largest of Twylos' islands, Orethedron is isolated in the southern seas. Orethedron has no civilization or inhabitants, and was not known to the humanoid races of Twylos until the Third Era, when the Vausse Academy's World Map spell revealed its presence and location. Little else was revealed, as Orethedron is intrinsically shielded from Hermetic magic. Orethedron was the base of the Archons, a race of strange and powerful beings that warred with the Arcanos over the fate of the humanoids. Eventually, all the Archons on Twylos were destroyed by the Arcanos, before the Arcanos themselves were banished from this dimension.

Orethedron is a vast wasteland. A rocky coast, most of which is sheer cliff wall, makes it difficult to approach by ship. Teleportation and Gating are also almost always ineffective, as Hermetic and Hedge magic fails 99% of the time here, and Faith and Ritual magic only have a 50% chance of being successful. Despite its large size, there is surprisingly little of interest on Orethedron. Orethedron would not make a good starting location for a campaign.

Mogrev Point (MO-grev)

Landmark (beach). Site of the only expedition to Orethedron.

Mogrev was the landing site for the Kayan Pride, the expedition ship sent from Cyndiquist to check out this newly-discovered landmass. Mogrev is at the far western edge of the island. The ship never made it back, but one of the mages on board, a Museum Scholar named Andross Outumn, was able to teleport back to the Bludszech Library a single sheet of paper. It was a page from his spellbook containing the Sense Magic spell (usually the first page in any Hermetic magician's book). On it, in Outumn's handwriting was a broken description of some of the things he supposedly witnessed on Orethedron. He claims to have spoken with a huge metallic head in a cavern, after his expedition was slaughtered by a horde of daemons. After some initial difficulty, the head began to speak bad Queyan and asked him why he had come to Orethedron. It is this passage from which the island takes its name. He finally mentions the presence of a red sun and four horns, and doodles a little bit at the bottom of the page.

Oedron (OH-dron)

Landmark (underground base); very high difficulty (levels 14+). Final retreat of the Archons.

Far below the flats of Orethedron, sealed beneath meters of rock, remain the corridors of the Archons that the magic of the Arcanos could not penetrate. These are the metal halls of Oedron, a radial set of passages and empty rooms. Oedron is fully shielded from all forms of magic; casting anything here is completely ineffective, and magical devices are also rendered inert. Several of the Archons' constructs (such as the metal head described by Outumn) still exist as custodians of Oedron, and communicate rapidly with each other by an odd form

of telepathy and an audible set of clicks and buzzes (the Oedric machine tongue). The Archons may have been destroyed, but in a central chamber they encoded a message, warning against the powers of the Arcanos, and a few of their devices can be found in three holding cells.

Saethos (SAY-thows)

Saethos is the largest desert of Twylos. Initially called the Saethan Empire, it was once full of the Sathar, the reptilians. Their trade towns and caravans filled the desert until the Vehrlands war against the humans of the north led to a slow end to the Sathars' reign. The Vehrlands war, actually a thousand year on-again, off-again set of skirmishes and major battles, was first triggered by the murder of the Sathar dragon-king by Verlained mercenaries in 231 S.E., although the humans of Llesendor denied their involvement. This war also spread east from the Vehrlands into Khaedor, where age-old land feuds between the Vehrlanders and the Zhellans broke out into war. Finally, at the end of the Second Era, the Sathar were horribly crushed and the resources of their once-great state completely exhausted. The Vehrlands Covenant was signed, defining the modern borders of Khaedor, the Zhellve, and the Vehrlands, leaving the sands of Saethos to the reptilians. The Sathar are now a peaceful mercantile race, dealing frequently with other races and the Vehrlands cities, but quite private in their personal lives and preferring to keep to their own kind. Rather than organized in a single kingdom across all of Saethos, the Sathar live and work in different trade Clans, not dissimilar from the merchant Houses of old Irendor.

Saethos would be a good starting location for a campaign based more on the strange religious cults of the desert, or far removed from the machinations of the Northern and Eastern factions. Adventurers might be agents employed by the Bone Trade, or might constitute a street gang trying to survive in the slums of Vussar.

Gossar (GOSS-ar)

Major city.

Population: 39,000; 48% reptilian, 35% human, 14% orc, 3% misc. (including demons, dwarves, khulek, ogres, ratkin, undead).

Resources: wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, fishing, shipbuilding, agriculture and husbandry, metalworking, stoneworking, woodworking, clothmaking, mining (some precious and heavy metals), military academy.

Religion: Sathar, Ixian, Thainist, Duuran, Aguiere, Typhon, Xeres.

Guilds: Slavers, Navigators, Alchemists, Surveyors.

Government: strict; theocratic-oligarchical control by Clan Subek, led by Hlethgavi (14th level reptilian, 6th Circle Hermetic), trained army and navy of 1,200.

The original capital of the Saethan Empire. Gossar is a huge, international port for trade between Tarach, the Vehrlands, Vasqueray, Nycene, and the East- pivotal for any ship making the great journey from the East to the West through the Gulf of Queys. Many of the impressive stone palaces and temples of the Saethan Empire still stand, although with how international and inter-racial Gossar has become, many of these old buildings have taken on a new purpose. Gossar is run by the Sathar of Clan Subek, headed by Hlethgavi, a powerful sorcerer of the Suvan Azule. The heart of Gossar is Anatopis, a walled city within Gossar itself. Anatopis is the center of wealth and trade in Gossar, built around a beautiful oasis and small expanse of dunes.

Rhauxen (RAO-zen)

Landmark (sacred crystal mountain). Location of the lost mage academy sent backwards in time.

Rhaxen is the famed Glass Mountain of Saethos. This is somewhat of a misnomer, as Rhaxen is really formed of thick glassy crystal of unusual hues, in some places cloudy white, green, or blue. Miles in size, the Church of Ixus claim that this mass is really the fallen body of Rhaxus, son of Ixus, come to enlighten Twylos. The Sathar think otherwise, that the mountain is theirs to use- the crystal substance is as hard as stone, and useful for artistic and engineering purposes. On 500 S.E. (the first of the second month, a holy day of the Church), a blazing comet streaked through the sky and impacted in the desert- for hundreds of miles in radius, the sky glowed for days. The high priest Rogan DuLaine, later called the Mad (for his "corruption" by two priests of Xeres who were his advisors) claimed this event was prophesied in the Book of Ixus, and journeyed into Saethos to find it. When he did, he declared it "preordained holy ground, not to be disturbed" to the dismay of the Sathars, worsening their war with the Vehrlenders. A small sect of crazed Ixians follows the testament of DuLaine. They are the *Cult of Rhaxus*, and their symbol is an oddly-shaped glass pyramid. They have officially been declared heretics by the Church of Ixus, and are believed by the Ixians to be corrupted by the madness of Xeres. Members of the cult claim that the writings of Rogan DuLaine within the Book of Ixus state that Rhaxus is the son of Ix, fallen from the heavens to await awakening and lead mankind to Ix. They believe that the revelations of DuLaine, not the practices of the Church or the Order, are the true path to Ix.

The truth about Rhaxen is somewhat more bizarre. In fact, buried deep within the crystal mountain is the missing Vausse Academy, sent backwards in time by a magical disaster. In 200 T.E., an Arcanodaemon appeared at a part of Rhaxen buried under feet of sand. It blasted a hole in the crystal and penetrated a set of complex magical wards before being banished by a team of rogue Ixians and Durans who foresaw its arrival. All of the Durans, and almost all of the Ixians died, but the survivors extracted a baby girl from the ruins, and took her to Aea Convent for study and cloning. Much of the Vausse Academy ruins remain unlooted.

Stalagrahd (STAH-lo-grawd)

Landmark (buried statue). Buried god or slave.

Stalagrahd is just a huge, ancient sandstone sculpture of a large fist and forearm, in total about 70 feet tall and 20 feet around. Shortly before the Vehrlands War in 200 S.E. there were a small group of Sathar and human cultists who calling themselves the Stalagravans- they believed this monument was their god, Stalos, builder of the world, now sleeping within the deep desert. They lasted one generation before being slain at the start of the war by Sathar fanatics. It is actually a petrified colossus (see Appendix 2.1.2), a triple-sized but dull-witted titan that the titans raised to help them in their construction of Tharkenge. Some of the titans, seeking to escape, fled with this thing to the middle of Saethos, where they were tracked down and destroyed by their demon masters. The colossus was left buried in the sands, partially as a joke but also as a warning to other slaves who might desire their freedom.

Syeth (SYE-eth)

Small shrine and home of the Suvan Azule. Lair of the comatose dragon-god kept alive by machines.

Population: 68; 88% reptilian, 12% khulek.

Resources: wealthy, very high magical and technological levels; trade, art, library.

Religion: Sathar.

Guilds: none.

Government: strict; theocratic control by the Suvan Azule, led by Master Su Vetch (16th level reptilian, 5th Circle Ritual, 5th Circle Hedge, 3rd Circle Faith), militia of 16.

Syeth is the main temple of the Suvan Azule, and lair of the old dragon gods of Saethos. It is considered an honor to be asked to Syeth as a member of the inner circle of the Suvan Azule, but appointments to the temple are for life; leaving the temple once a member is punishable by death. This is because the high priests hold a great secret, known only to them and the head of Clan Subek, Hlethgavi. Ayrrhannos Izain is the sole Dragon King left in Saethos. Originally five in number (although some sources claim just two or three), including Izain's mate and their brood, the other dragons were slain by Gideon Narhamnes and Isadore Queynoth and their cohorts in 231 S.E., precipitating the Vehrlands War. Unlike all the other faiths of Twylos, in which the gods are somewhat abstract and never visited, seen, or directly communicated with, the god of the Suvan Azule is mortal and embodied in the great wyrm here in Syeth. With the death of his family, Izain went temporarily berserk before lapsing into a stupor. He is now quite old, and the Suvan Azule recognizes that there are no more dragon gods coming after him. Thus they have taken great pains to keep Izain alive indefinitely. Izain is hidden within the depths of the shrine, guarded by six highly-trained khulek assassins and a hydra, in addition to the Suvan priests. The dragon-god is comatose, kept alive by a complex apparatus consisting of many machines, tubes, and pumps, feeding the dragon a mixture of magical and chemical nutrients, prepared by the Suvan Azule masters. Meanwhile, agents of the Suvan Azule scour Twylos looking for a potential mate for their ancient, catatonic god.

Vhog

Landmark (underground hive). Lair of the Sathar insect god.

Vhog is another holy site within Saethos. It is a small oasis above a huge underground reservoir, which is the lair for hundreds of gigantic insects. Vhog itself is this reservoir and the catacombs that surround it, infested with webs and hives. At the heart of Vhog lies a huge cocoon about the size of a building. This is K'Teuva, which some Sathar (called the Spawn of K'teuva, or the Teuvites/Tovites) claim is their sleeping goddess, who has "slept" since the dawn of time, who someday soon will awaken and devour the world in her ravenous hunger. The Church of Typhon covertly keeps a priest in the oasis above, disguised as an Ixian, seeking to verify the cult's apocalyptic claims.

Vussar (VUE-sar)

Major city, slumtown.

Population: 31,600; 62% human, 23% reptilian, 12% orc, 3% misc. (including demons, doppelgangers, khulek, ogres, ratkin, undead).

Resources: poor, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, agriculture and husbandry, metalworking, stonework, mining (some precious and heavy metals), woodworking, salvage, library, magical and military academy.

Religion: Ixian, Thainist, Sathar, Duran, Typhon, Aguierré, Xeres.

Guilds: Slavers, Surveyors, Alchemists.

Government: relaxed but occasionally oppressive; monarchical control by the Lords of Vussar, led by Dr. Tal Ochzanian (11th level human, 4th Circle Hedge), army of 700.

Vussar was once one of Twylos' greatest cities, co-owned by the Sathar and Old Khaedor. During the Vehrlands War, though, Vussar was the first to go, ripped apart by civil war. Since then, it has struggled to recover its past greatness, although ruins of such remain in the sands, and now stands in the shadows of both Gossar and Llesendor. The Vussar Academy, an institution of alchemists and application-based

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

mages, is one such monument. It is still in operation, but much smaller than during its peak. Presently, Vussar is more famous as the home of the Vussail Archaeological Company, a subsidiary of the Bone Trade based out of Mask.

Junktown: Cryban-Loth is the pair of conjoined slum districts that comprises almost half of Vussar. The large walled Junkyards of Cryban-Loth have been accumulating trash and wreckage for centuries, and are guarded by Tom Unger (4th level human), his three sons and 12-man work crew (1-2nd level, humans, orcs, and reptilians), and five vicious wardogs (as wolves). Members of local gangs and urchins sometimes try to sneak into the Junkyards to hunt for discarded weapons, trinkets, or raw materials.

Desert Friends: The reptilian Slath Vessik (3rd level reptilian, 1st Circle Hermetic) is a typical Sathar merchant, although he has left behind the safety of Clan Vessos for the opportunities of Vussar. Slath has a cart of oddities bought from the desert khulek, and keeps as a pet Kaisu Gabbani, a kind of hopping desert mouse that collects water from the flowers of small Otoru cacti. The gabbani rodents are solitary, and cultivate these cacti in their gardens. The Vussail call these gardens Lamchu, the word for friendship (or, more literally, 'desert friends'). Kaisu Gabbani is named for the gabbani mouse of a Sathar brood story, about a mouse tricked by the friendly-seeming scorpion Lam Dieks into playing a game of tag, which ends in Kaisu Gabbani's death by stinging. The Sathar consider this a parable for their relations with the other humanoid races of Twylos: friendly enough, but treacherous and deadly; i.e., 'lamchu'.

The Khulek Tribes: Two clans of khulek (Vekz, containing 53 khulek; and their rivals the Frezzek, containing 41 khulek) live in the sands beyond Vussar. Keeping to themselves, the khulek would not hesitate to attack small groups of travelers or merchants, but they are mainly robbers, not murderers. The khulek were once a slave race of the Sathar. The collapse of the Sathar Empire in the Second Era caused many of the khulek to flee into the wilds of the deep desert. There is some variation in their attitude to their former masters and the other humanoid races of Saethos, ranging from neutrality to violent hatred. It is quite rare, but not unheard of, that some of the khulek venture to border villages and even occasionally into Vussar itself for trade, or perhaps stranger purposes.

Vyuss (VOOSE)

Small village.

Population: 124; 80% reptilian, 12% human, 6% orc, 2% misc. (2 khulek).

Resources: poor, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, fishing, some agriculture and husbandry.

Religion: Sathar.

Guilds: Surveyors, Slavers, Alchemists.

Government: strict; oligarchic control by Clan Hastur, led by Master Ha Izulian (7th level reptilian), militia of 20.

An oasis at Thr'andrise, the large lake at one of the sources of the Savaen River, Vyuss is a small outpost for the Sathar who journey into the deep desert towards Vhog and Rhaxen. It was also the site of a famous Sathar mage school, the Orb of Andrise. The Orb was so-named for its large blue-glass dome, and is buried in the sands several miles from Vyuss.

Tarach (TAH-rock)

Tarach has become a world power within the Third Era, due mainly to two things- a strong economy, and the loss of power from the older nations of Twylos. It was first settled by Irendi colonists and expatriates,

turning from a wilderness frontier into a modern nation during the fall of Irendor. It is divided into two provinces- Tharose and Verlaine- and a third region, Southern Tarach, loosely under control of Tharose.

The current King of Tarach is Maraxam Belvaunt, crowned regent three years ago. Belvaunt is the first non-noble to ever rule Tarach, coming to power after a particularly bloody coup now called The Black Rose Rebellion (as the palace of the King of Tarach is called Avenaigh, the Palace of Roses). The Rebellion was led by Belvaunt and lieutenants loyal to him, against the, in their claims, lazy and debauched Aaron Mendhelose, the previous King, whose assassination marked the end of the Rebellion and the end of the Mendhelose dynasty (consisting of eight previous kings: Iraac, Iraac the Younger, Ydrain, Christian, Ellendhore, Christian II, Christian III, and Aaron). Mendhelose and his coterie were given to extravagance, a situation aggravated by the coming of the Church of Typhon who swayed King Aaron and kept him from his duties.

Tarach is the spiritual successor to Irendor, in terms of governmental control. Tarach is organized in a typical feudal system, with local governments and nobles serving the Belvaunt throne. Taxes are levied both nationally and locally; Tharose is more expensive but is considerably better managed and has a well-organized army, as opposed to the small semi-independent militias of Verlaine.

Tharose and Tarach tend to be indistinguishable, and Tharose is the older name for the Irendi colony. Tharose is more urban, compared to rural Verlaine. However, the main difference is that Tharose was mostly settled by Irendor, while the Verlainen tend to be Vehlenders in origin. Differences in attitude, dialect, aesthetics, and philosophy continue to this day.

Due to the relative young age of Tarach society, and the extent of civilization here today, Tarach is a good starting location for new adventurers.

Aernig's Hollow

Small village.

Population: 218; 87% human, 13% orc.

Resources: poor, moderate magical and technological levels; woodworking, trade, agriculture.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Mayor Archibald Konig (3rd level human), militia of 30.

A quiet village near Rooksroost forest, the Hollow was settled in the early days of Tharosen colonization, when it was previously called Vhenzvud (VENS-wood). The people of the Hollow raise vegetables and spices, and cull trees for the shipyards of eastern Tarach.

In the mid-Second Era, the magician Aernig Hortenz, a master of the Rooksroost school, discovered the terrible diabolism of the other headmasters. He came to Vhenzvud, organized a group of soldiers, and prepared to attack Rooksroost. Just upon entering the forest outside of his modest home at the outskirts of the village, Master Renseller of Rooksroost ambushed Aernig. Renseller was defeated, but cursed him and his men to remain rooted to the ground for 100 years. Too far to cry for help, Aernig cast a powerful spell which transformed himself and his legion into oak trees, hoping to one day be discovered and returned to flesh after the century had passed. Aernig's note to this effect, left on the ground before him, was devoured by rooks, and the truth behind the Hollow has been lost. The town was gradually renamed to Aernig's Hollow after the disappearance of its beloved, eccentric magician. Aernig (13th level human, 5th Circle Ritual, 5th Circle Hedge) remains to this day in stasis as a tree, along with his 40 men (4th level humans).

Ambrose

Small city.

Population: 800; 92% human, 8% orc.

Resources: wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; woodworking, agriculture, clothmaking, fishing, trade.

Religion: Duuran, Thainist.

Guilds: Surveyors.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Duke Kristoff Markholdt (5th level human), well-trained militia of 55.

A slow-paced city nestled against the Pherell Woods. Basically just a large village, Ambrose supports itself through agriculture and foresting. It is controlled by the Duke Kristoff Markholdt and the Duchess Irena DuMay Markholdt (6th level human), who live outside of town in aristocratic stagnation in the old Dunharrow Hall. Ambrose is built around a stream-fed pond, called the Rosen Shallows. Both the Thainae and the Church of Spring have a strong following, and the Vox Duur have a small holding within the Pherell itself.

Avenaigh Palace (AVE-en-nay)

Large castle and capital of Tarach.

Population: 1,100; 87% human, 12% orc, 1% misc. (including faeries, ogres).

Resources: extremely wealthy, low magical and moderate technological levels; trade, agriculture, stonework, library, military academy.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Aguirre, Ixian, Typhon.

Guilds: none.

Government: strict; militaristic-monarchical control by King Maraxam Belvaunt (12th level human), well-trained army of 390.

Also called the Rose Palace (and the Palace of Roses), the Palace formerly was the home of the royal Mendhelose family, but is now the abode of the new Lord of Tarach, King Maraxam Belvaunt. Built at the top of the Graydiene (GRAY-dee-en) Falls, the Palace commands a beautiful view over the Tharosen countryside for miles. The design of Avenaigh is allegedly similar (or the same as) the design of Thorneskeep in Vasqueray, although Avenaigh was built first. Construction was begun in 690 S.E. and finished in 718 S.E., and consists of two main structures, the Inner Keep and the Outer Keep. The Outer Keep is fashioned into several petal-like layers, and the Inner Keep looks like a squat cross, with each of the four arms representing the four principles that the Tharosen lords wanted the new nation of Tarach to espouse: life, passion, knowledge, and love.

Maraxam Belvaunt was a popular mercenary captain working for the Surveyors in Fayde Ehlling when loethane the Red-Handed murdered Duchess Morgaine. Belvaunt's parents were close to the Morgaines, and he was disturbed by the incident. Turning to the Thainists for guidance, he came under the sway of Karen (5th level human, 2nd Circle Faith) and Mercretius Lazlo (6th level human, 3rd Circle Faith), an older married couple. The Lazlos are actually priests of Typhon, working for Oberon Frost in Turth. Gradually, the Lazlos convinced Belvaunt that Fayde Ehlling had become a debacle, and that it was time to seize the throne of Tarach. They helped him re-invent himself and raise a large army, including several notorious Ehlling assassins. Belvaunt retains the Lazlos as two of his most trusted advisors, unaware of their true faith and loyalty. Oberon Frost was responsible for the exaggerated corruption of Aaron Mendhelose, who in his naivety was helpless against the machinations of the Mother Church.

Bourgansbaine (BOR-gans-bane)

Large village and landmark (Shadowsfall library).

Population: 750; 91% human, 9% orc.

Resources: fairly wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, woodworking, agriculture, stonework, fishing, library.

Religion: Thainist, Ixian, Duuran.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; loose monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Mayor Hugh Reynolds (3rd level human), militia of 40.

Bourgansbaine is a sleepy, doomed village. It is known for two things: its wine and its library. Bourgansbaine has long been run by a mayor, currently Mayor Reynolds, and the Bourgansbaine Vinter's Association.



The Shadowsfall Library: The library, Shadowsfall Tower, houses an extensive collection of books and historical records from the colonization and founding of Tarach. Staffed by about a dozen Thainists and members of the Order of Ixian, the Tower was formerly the Bourgansbaine Archives, but was recently renamed Shadowsfall. The famous playwright Tabitha Morgan wrote a piece called "A Shadow's Fall", designing the frontispiece herself: a woodcut of a slightly crooked tower, with a smaller subtower jutting up off of the main tower itself. An earthquake caused the Archives to lean a bit, and newer renovations to the upper observation level made the tower appear similar to Morgan's illustration, supposedly hence the change in the name. Her play is prophetic, though, of the coming destruction of the library and most of the town itself. A gentleman named Maedar Arangul (6th level human, 2nd Circle Hermetic), a Museum Scholar from Rauthos, is soon to arrive to conduct some research on the old House Tharose. The unsuspecting Arangul happens to be an avatar of Nergal, the Gray Man Abraxas, and with the innocent help of Assistant Librarian Megan Grimes (2nd level human), will discover clues to his true identity, provoking his transformation. Overnight, the tower will be swarmed with demons and much of the outlying town destroyed. Afterwards, Shadowsfall Tower will be sealed, becoming the home of several obscene monsters. Note that the power level can increase steeply from level to level: the Game Master is encouraged to let the player characters gradually explore the tower over many game sessions, leaving and coming back as need be in order to survive.

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

The Entrance (level 1): The entrance to the tower will be guarded by a malebranche demon, tethered to a gnarled post by a large iron chain. The first and largest floor was formerly the Lobby and Main Collections. A grand staircase winds up to the second, third, and fourth floors aboveground. It is possible to bypass the second or third floors if desired. A smaller staircase descends to the first underlevel below. A team of 16 gremlins, led by Gremlin Tom (5th level gremlin, 3rd Circle Hermetic), will have moved all of the books to the floor above for their master's feast. Gremlin Tom is sick of his master's yelling and beatings, but eager to dine on humanoid flesh himself. He's got a Net of Ensnaing (see Appendix 2.1.1) which he himself made from some of the Lady of Whispers's threads.

The Feast of Books (level 2): The second floor was the Kitchens and contained living quarters for some of the staff. A dumbwaiter in the kitchens services the third, fourth, and fifth upper levels, as well as the first, second, and fourth underlevels. In a disgusting dining room, Master Flauxinas the obese T'suggha demon (see Appendix 2.1.2) dines on pies and custards made from the books of the library. Few if any of the books remain, and Master Flauxinas and his imps will continue to grow hungrier. He is served by the former chef of Shadowsfall Library, Chef Huxton Merriweather (5th level human, 3rd Circle Ritual), now insane and himself ravenous. The infernal magics of the Tower have provided the Chef with Ritual Magic, a collection of poisons and potions, and the enchanted Dagger of Lies (see Appendix 2.1.1). Chef Merriweather has eaten the two smallest of his slaves, but the other three slaves (each 3rd level human) have gone berserk and wait in ambush in a pantry, armed with cleavers.

The Lady of Whispers (level 3): The third floor was titled the Upper Stacks, and contained more specialized books and scrolls. Almost all the texts will have been sent downstairs for Master Flauxinas by the three demons that first will reside here, only to be devoured by the Lady of Whispers (triple-size giant black widow spider) and her babies: three giant black widows and eight giant spitting spiders.

The Archives (level 4): The fourth floor was the Archives, containing maps, records, and a few old objects. From the Archives, the top floor may be accessed by a small service ladder. This level will be the home for Librarian Ernst Xillian (4th level cacodemon), now a demon who seeks to keep the remaining records free from Flauxinas's kitchen.

The Wife of Abraxas (level 5): The top floor contains the Observatory, and consists only of two rooms: the observatory itself and a small side tower, a separate structure that was built as a later addition onto the main tower. The observation deck is a large domed chamber, now containing only a small window. Three flawless lenses are held in iron cases, along with a treatise on astronomical and horological magic that contains notes on several powerful spells. Also displayed under a glass jar is Tabitha's Music Box (see Appendix 2.1.1). The side chamber is Head Librarian Grimes' personal library, containing keys for the third and fourth underlevels as well as some personal effects, including the stone ventricles of the Heart of Abraxas stashed in a cotton shirt. While relaxing here, Arangul's wife discovers his infidelity before his transformation; her corpse hangs from the rafters, and at her feet are the ashes of a note. Left here as guardians are two conjuring eyes (see Appendix 2.1.2).

Undead Staff (underlevel 1): The first underlevel also contained living quarters, for the less important staff. A small staircase winds down to the second, third, and fourth underlevels; using this staircase, the second and/or third underlevels may also be bypassed to reach the fourth level. Many of the Librarians will be killed in their sleep, and lurk here as undead slaves of their god below (a total of two spectres, ten zombies, and a shambling bone pile (as a triple strength and size skeleton).

The Fungus Garden (underlevel 2): The second underlevel held several workshops, including the mushroom and fungus garden of Librarian Rosslyn Grimes. Grimes's gardens will be horribly altered by the advent of Abraxas.

The Crystal Mage (underlevel 3): The third underlevel was called The Vaults, and held a few objects of considerable historical importance to the Librarians and the old Tharosen family members. The entire level is sealed off, and now covered in beautiful glass and strange crystal, similar in appearance to the substance of Rhauxen. The level has been remolded into the Crystal Labyrinth, the abode of the alien Crystal Mage (see Appendix 2.1.2). It keeps as pets two giant Glass Scorpions whose stingers petrify their victims into glass statues, and is accompanied by a Glass Man (treat as a Stone Golem as the 7th Circle Hermetic spell). The Glass Man wields a Glass Sword and wears Glass Plate armor (see Appendix 2.1.1). An extra Glass Sword in an ornate crystal scabbard can be found here, along with a Prismatic Wand (5 charges, casts Phantasmagoria) and three beautiful glass flowers. The Crystal Mage's spellbook is also in a side chamber, consisting of a set of four prisms with soft lights floating above them.

The Furnaces (underlevel 4): The fourth underlevel contains a massive experimental furnace that Librarian Konstantin Huygens (5th level zombie) was working on for the Head Librarian, Kanith Grimes. Entrance to this level is also locked. Konstantin will become little more than a zombie slave, feeding the hungry, now animated and malicious furnace.

Abraxas (underlevel 5): The fifth underlevel is not part of the original Shadowsfall Tower, but was carved out by the servants of the Gray Man. Former Head Librarian Kanith Grimes (13th level human, 6th Circle Faith) is now the high priest of Abraxas, trying to placate his master, who alternates between near-catatonic loathing and manic rage. Grimes wields the Mace of Darklens, an unholy weapon of Abraxas (see Appendix 2.1.1). Abraxas (see Appendix 2.1.2) and his undead servants here can be destroyed, but the body of the Gray Man continually regenerates unless his Heart is re-formed and destroyed with an enchanted weapon. In the throne room of Abraxas, besides the Gray Man himself and Kanith, are six wraiths, six spectres, two lichs (one 5th Circle Hermetic, one 5th Circle Ritual), and a disgusting blood pudding (as black ooze).

The Stone Heart (underlevel 6): The sixth and deepest level is also a new addition, and consists of a tiny chamber past a large cavern. Its entrance on the fifth underlevel is hidden under a flagstone in a short corridor past the throne of Abraxas. In the smaller room, Arangul's ashes and stone atria of the Heart of Abraxas have been placed by Kanith into a wooden box. The remains of Meg Grimes are also here, along with a golden locket Arangul will have given her. Inside are the dried petals of a rose. The larger outer chamber is full of bones, the remains of the rest of the Shadowsfall staff and people of Bourgangsaine. From this chamber of bones, skeletons (a total of 50 at all times) will continually arise to fill the room and bar access to the crypt beyond.

The Conclave: At the Game Master's option, at any time after Maedar Arangul enters the tower and becomes Abraxas, another adventuring group will attempt to explore it. They are the Conclave, based out of Turth. Originally they are six in number: Dyson Gibbs (14th level human, 6th Circle Hermetic), Cyrena Voulanger (12th level human, 5th Circle Faith), Tyndal Randgrove (9th level human), his sister Tarian (8th level human, 4th Circle Hedge), Mags Gray (8th level orc), and Hector Ransumn (9th level human). Gibbs was formerly a student of Garrison Bones', and owns the Staff of Xendor's Wrath (see Appendix 2.1.1). Hector has two magic swords, the Golgothan White Blade and the Blade of Shadows (see Appendix 2.1.1). The Game Master can assume that other creatures not listed above previously lived in the tower, but were destroyed by the Conclave. They will have made it, mostly, down to the bottom, where Abraxas and his minions will kill them. Only Hector escaped, and now drinks himself drunk each night in Fayde Ehling. Tari is the only other survivor, but she has been captured by Gremlin Tom's net. Gremlin Tom is trying to negotiate with Master Flauxinas and the Lady of Whispers for her, but is getting pretty hungry himself. Gibbs and Voulanger are possibly to become lichs under Abraxas' and Kanith's control. Hector and Tari might serve as useful allies for parties exploring the Shadowsfall Tower.

The Ambrose Clinic: Just out of Bourgangsbaïne proper, on the other side of the village from the Shadowsfall tower, is a Thainist-run asylum for those touched by Xeres. The Ambrose Clinic is less a hospital than it is a retirement community. Individuals, beyond the ordinary help of the Thainists, are sent here to for care by Mother Karen and her devoted staff of 11. En route to the Ambrose Clinic is the Circus of Muroch Ookurum (MU-ruk h-KOO-rum), a traveling Circus of Piedmont that the player characters might meet before they arrive in Bourgangsbaïne. In addition to the usual odd lot of traveling carnies, the Circus has a madhouse on display, containing seven 'exhibits': the conjoined twins Simon and Simone (mouths of Xeres), the mad dentist Urvin Montross (believes teeth to be a cancer and has removed them all), Wretched Peter (believes he is not mad and has been wrongfully locked-up; will plead tearfully for characters to release him), Blind Ivan (blinded himself after seeing demons everywhere; a side-effect of long-term Zeaven abuse), Princess Jezebel (a 'faerie princess' with tattered paper-and-wire wings), Quillian Quade (the four-armed boy), and the Sybil of Wax (fortune-telling witch who works with candle wax). The Circus will arrive at the Clinic just before Arangul comes to Bourgangsbaïne. Much like the library, the Clinic will also be hideously transformed by the advent of Abraxas. The former madhouse will become the obscene lair of the members of Ookurum's Circus. The Clinic might serve as a mid-level side adventure for characters taking a break from exploration of the Shadowsfall library.

The Lobby (floor 1): Magical gloom fills most of the transformed Clinic. It is pitch black within; non-magical light sources are cut by 90% and magical light is cut by 67% in terms of illumination radius. The walls of the lobby are wet with a runny yellow liquid (harmless). Down the hall is the elevator shaft to the upper halls of the Clinic. In a side office, Ookurum lies on his back over a desk, his body and face beaten to a bloody pulp. Teeth are everywhere, having been all removed forcefully and clumsily from his mouth. The Lower Elevator Key can be found in the desk under Ookurum's body.

The Elevator: The rickety elevator rises up four levels, but requires a key to operate. The Lower Key allows it to move between floors 1 and 2, the Upper Key allows it to move between floors 1, 3, and 4, and the Cellar Key allows it to descend to the cellar. Attempts to access the higher levels through the concealed ceiling panel (Perception check of 10 to notice) will be opposed by Quillian Quade (as gorilla, but with four attacks instead of two). Quillian has a little nest in a ledge off the elevator shaft. He uses a Chameleon Cloak as a blanket.

The Office of Dr. Montross (floor 2): The walls are covered with faded, cracked wallpaper with a floral design. Faint screams can be heard from an office down the hall, but will end as the characters approach. Inside the waiting room is a large painting of a mouth, wide open and grinning, full of cavities and saliva. The Doctor himself (8th level human) waits in the operating room, crouched behind a toppled cabinet- he will lunge on top of the first character to enter, wielding a bloody set of pliers, and attempt to extract his victim's teeth. He will summon his assistants, four female bugbears, after a few rounds of his patient's struggles. Doctor Montross has the Upper Elevator Key and a collection of teeth, including two golden teeth each worth 100 sc, and a Tooth of Protection (1 point of absorption, not currently being used due to the Doctor's fear of teeth).

Faery Land (floor 3): Mold, mushrooms, and thick grass cover the walls and floor. The air is thick and musty, and filled with mist. Frolicking here in an orgiastic, demented state are five elves, four dark elves, four pixies, and three sprites. The Queen of May (7th level sidhe, 3rd Circle Ritual) and the King of September (6th level sidhe, 3rd Circle Hedge) attend Princess Jezebel (8th level human, 3rd Circle Faith). They will be hostile to those who disrupt their sick garden party. The Queen wields an enchanted trident (+1 to-hit and damage) and carries the Cellar Key. The King carries a golden pistol, three doses of gunpowder, and three golden bullets (each +2 to damage). If attacked in melee, he will resort to using his silver letter opener (as dagger). Jezebel is mostly unaware of what is going on around her, even in combat, mainly grinning and drooling. She will randomly cast spells with equally random targets.

The Waxworks (floor 4): Everything here is covered in a thick but runny tallow. Patrolling this level are eight wax dummies (as flesh golems). The wax dummies will continually reform every hour or so and attempt to take the crude likeness of anyone who enters the level. In a back office, the Sybil of Wax has been transformed into a huge, obese pile of oozing, seeping flesh (treat as a black ooze combined with a banshee). The Sybil will not be initially hostile to those who approach her, but neither will she help the characters fend off her wax dummy spawn (who form from her drippings). The Sybil will gladly give cryptic, and occasionally wrong, information to curious characters, especially as pertains to the Relicent Chapel and the Shadowsfall Tower. She sits on a pillow, underneath which is another copy of the Cellar Key and a pair of pearl earrings worth 300 sc.

Hell (cellar): Old, gore-encrusted chains hang from the ceiling, and rusted pipes drip and hiss steam. Blind Ivan was right- demons are everywhere in Twylos. The cellar of the Ambrose Clinic, full of small cells, restraining devices, and surgical equipment, is now home to ten manes demons, three malebranche demons, one succubus, and one sphexidemon. The sphexis, Liszt the Kind, uses a magical frost trident in combat (+1 to-hit and damage from cold). Veronimica the succubus wears magical Glasses of Insight (as the 2nd Circle Faith spell, granting a +1 bonus). Three of the manes are being shown by one of the malebranche how to flay skin, using long pieces of Ivan's back flesh to bind a set of four horrible books (being penned by Veronimica in blood and other fluids). Veronimica, being a writer, will flee rather than fight, finding any combat to be a rude interruption of her work. Ivan himself (5th level human) is completely mad and essentially useless. Wretched Peter (9th level human, 4th Circle Hermetic) is a friend of Liszt's, and has free run of Hell. If he recognizes intruders, e.g., from visiting him at the Circus, he might aid the characters if they extended sympathy to him or tried to free him before. Otherwise, he believes the cellars are in fact Hell, and he will happily aid his demon friends, trying to capture, torture, or kill the player characters.

The Relicent Chapel (the Ether): The Chapel exists in the Ether, apart from the rest of the Clinic. Portals to it may occasionally appear within the Clinic, but will close and disappear just as the characters get close. Inventive players might find any of several ways to prevent the portal from closing (such as use of Tabitha's Music Box to temporarily dispel its magic, or horological means to slow its closure), or gain access to the Chapel by other means. The Chapel is a dimly-lit shrine, suspended in the Ethereal void, where Simon (9th level human, 4th Circle Faith) and Simone (9th level human, 4th Circle Faith) hold court. They are attended by two strategoi archons and two basileae archons, each dressed in pale pink. Simon and Simone appear and talk exactly the same. In the Chapel, they are as gods and behave according to their own logic. The twins may deign to help characters who enter their demesne, or seek to obliterate them for some perceived impertinence. If the twins are destroyed, the Chapel will disintegrate into the Ether, and all within (excepting any surviving archons) will be teleported together somewhere randomly in Twylos. Within the Chapel on the altar are one of each color of Incense of Silken Dreams, and "On Suicide", one of the Books of Amagian the Younger.

Covenach (CUH-ve-nock)

Large village.

Population: 1,200; 89% human, 11% orc.

Resources: fairly wealthy, low magical and moderate technological levels; trade, woodworking, agriculture and husbandry, clothmaking.

Religion: Duuran, Thainist.

Guilds: Surveyors.

Government: relaxed; loose monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Mayor Kael Arneson (6th level human), militia of 60.

Found at the northern tip of the great Willowood, Covenach pays lip service to the King of Tarach, negotiates trade with both Taran and Vehren organizations, and manages to do pretty well for itself. It keeps itself small and safe despite occasional ventures by merchant

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

companies to expand it, and occasional attacks by the strange things that skulk out of the Willows.

Fayde Ehlling (FADE eh-ling)

Major city. Center of civil unrest in Tarach.

Population: 66,000; 92% human, 7% orc, 1% misc. (including demons, doppelgangers, dwarves, faeries, goblins, ogres).

Resources: modestly wealthy, high magical and technological levels; mining (some precious and heavy metals), stonecraft, metalworking, woodworking, trade, fishing, agriculture and husbandry, art, library, magical and military academy.

Religion: Duuran, Aguierre, Thainist, Ixian, Typhon, Xeres.

Guilds: Slavers, Surveyors, Alchemists, Navigators.

Government: oppressive; militaristic-monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Adrian Evensarch (7th level human, 3rd Circle Hermetic), well-trained army and navy of 3,300.

Tarach's second largest city, Fayde Ehlling was once ruled by the Duchess Asantha Morgaine and the royal Morgaine family. It once fostered a prosperous artistic community under her patronage- her villa near the center of town was called the Marble Palace due to the plethora of statuary she kept inside. That was until 203 T.E. On a rainy November day, a priest of Aguierre named loethane (later titled "the Red-Handed") publicly accused the Duchess of being a Bloodmaid of Breyana and part of a Church of Winter coterie that controlled the city. He then stormed his way through her mansion, slaughtering all the guardsmen, chasing her through the halls and out into the street where he crushed her skull with a cobblestone before being killed himself by the combined efforts of (reports vary on the exact numbers) eight to twenty city guards.

The Shattered Glass: Since then, the Ehlling hasn't been the same. The city was in full revolt for a number of years, until the new King Belvaunt helped broker peace, in part due to Belvaunt's former connections with Fayde Ehlling. Avenaigh has instituted a new governor, Lord Evensarch, and the city is now heavily patrolled by a contingent of the Tharosen army. However, factions of the Church of Aguierre have tried at least twice in the past few years to take control of the city, acting in conjunction with a local rebellion group called the Shattered Glass. While Fayde Ehlling now seems like a normal town from day to day, according to the Church of Aguierre, the town itself is practically a shrine to the demon goddess Breyana.

Fayde Ehlling is the center for arms manufacture in Tarach. The Black Rose Rebellion benefited greatly from the lax oversight and regulations of the Ehlling arms trade, and has since tried to crack down and control the production of weapons by the famous smithies of the town. One of these, Margrove Steel (run by the Margrove family), is attempting to go underground to support the Shattered Glass against Evensarch and the Belvaunts.

Khiriss (KEER-iss)

Region; swamp.

Common encounters: centipedes, gnoles, goblins, rats, snakes.

Rare encounters: banshee, bunyip, crocodiles, faeries, grindylow, hunters, hydra, ooze, shuggoth, sylph, trolls, undead, will o' the wisp.

Khiriss is the large swamp dividing Tharose and Verlaine, home to many dangerous creatures. While the humanoid races have found ways to inhabit almost the rest of Twylos, Khiriss remains uncivilized. Communities on the edge of the marshes would stay away from Khiriss, except that many rare herbs and medicinal plants can be found within. As these plants get collected, it has been necessary for the Alchemists Guild and local apothecaries to search deeper into the fens to find unpicked and virgin specimens.

Mask

Small city. Home of the Bone Trade, built into the pines.

Population: 3,300; 85% human, 9% orc, 6% misc. (including demons, doppelgangers, ratkin, reptilians, undead).

Resources: fairly wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, woodworking, agriculture, metalworking, clothmaking, art, stonecraft, fishing, library.

Religion: Duuran, Thainist, Ixian, Typhon, Aguierre, Xeres.

Guilds: Alchemists, Slavers, Surveyors.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Mayor Jacobin Naes-Belvaunt (4th level human), and oligarchical control by the Ravensburg Mercantile Association, led by Garrison Bones (16th level human, 8th Circle Hermetic, 1st Circle Ritual), army of 250.

Mask is a more of a large village than a proper city, built around and up into the giant trees that form Durkwood. Mask is run by a corrupt merchant council that manages the city by bribe money and threat of violence. Lord Belvaunt's young brother-in-law Jacobian has been sent to Mask to oversee the council, but is in over his head, and has begun to succumb to avarice and debauchery himself. Mask is famous for fine woodcraft and glassblowing, boasting a large Optics Guild and the trade center of Ravensburg. Near the Hall is a perfumery and spice shop, The Painted Rose, run by three rakshasa who run one of Mask's crime syndicates.

The woods outside Mask, and even the streets at night, are not altogether safe. Outside, a tribe of 84 gnole hunters searches for easy prey with the help of two feral Duuran allies. Within Mask, in addition to several gangs and roving cutpurses, six mylings emerge from the remnants of a burnt-out orphanage, seeking revenge in the black alleys of Mask.

The Bone Trade: Mask is where the Society for the Advancement of Archaeology began, now better known as the Bone Trade. While the largest Bone Trade office is in Vussar, many of the Society's more unusual findings and people call Mask home, due to Mask's relative seclusion. The Bone Trade is an international organization devoted to historical documentation and exploration, particularly of ruins, battlegrounds, cemeteries, and other strange locations. The informal name of the Archaeologists comes from their particular fascination with ancient wars, technology, and crypts (in essence, they are mostly grave-robbers), in addition to the self-styled necromantic leanings of some of the members. It's difficult to know how much necromancy the Society actually uses or espouses, but a few of the more visible members of the Bone Trade certainly play it up- shaved heads, black robes, and undead workmen. This is largely affected, as the Bone Trade is firstly a financial organization. The Bone Trade is well-funded due to their commercial interests. They sell findings and devices to interested parties, including eccentric old aristocrats and members of the School of Names, and also use their discoveries to invent or recreate old weapons, machines, other technological devices, and magical items and spells. In addition to flagrant necromantic showmanship, members often flaunt their personal wealth; a Bone Trader might proudly wear a gaudy ancient golden ring salvaged- or stolen- from a tomb. Some members of the Bone Trade keep as pet small red worms called Reduvius, leech-like animals that feed on blood. The saliva of Reduvius is numbing; this has led to production and marketing of a compound called the Adjuvant of Reduvius as a pain-killer.

The head of the Bone Trade is Garrison Hyule, who goes by the moniker Garrison Bones. Bones was once a powerful and charismatic necromancer who helped lead the Bone Trade into their current position of wealth and prestige. Now, Bones is an old lush, remaining within his mansion in a drunken stupor, and mostly irrelevant and ignorant of the operations of the Trade. He acts as a figurehead leader for the Ravensburg merchants who have long ruled Mask.

Nies (NIYS)

Small village. Village invaded by doppelgangers.

Population: 173; 100% doppelganger.

Resources: fairly wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; woodworking, agriculture and husbandry, clothmaking, art, fishing, trade, library.

Religion: Xeres, Duuran, Thainist.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; loose monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Mayor Dolorous Haze (10th level human doppelganger, 4th Circle Faith), militia of 12.

Nies is a peaceful village like many others scattered across Tarach. What sets Nies apart from other Tharosen villages is the horrible truth about its inhabitants. Nies, over the years, has been completely taken over by doppelgangers. Not a single citizen left is a real person; rather, everyone has slowly been murdered and substituted by an exact, mind-reading, otherworldly double. Aside from that, life proceeds as normal as in any village. The doppelgangers are happy to entertain guests in the local inn and provide goods and services, but woe to them who try to settle down. That aside, Nies is a nice place to visit. One of the interesting features of Nies is an old mill, now converted into a small theatre and chapel of Rhiannon; the waterwheel drives a large organ to produce odd music.

Tabitha Morgan's Dollhouse: A primary reason why the doppelgangers have flocked to Nies over the years is unknown to any of them. Ms. Tabitha Morgan, is (or was, before she was displaced by her doppelganger) a distant relative of the infamous Morgan of the Thousand Maws, a powerful priest of Xeres who subverted Oolmsdome at the end of the First Era. Ms. Morgan has collected a number of curios given to her as tokens of appreciation for her writing. One of these is an elaborate dollhouse. The dollhouse contains a miniature library and a ship-in-a-bottle, within a cabin of which is a strange relic- The Book of Numbers (Appendix 2.1.1). This Book, like a few others lost across Twylos, is tainted by Xeres and tends to attract servants of the Mad God to them. The magic of this book is undetectable by normal means, and is clearly only obtainable by magical shrinking and entering the dollhouse and, to an even smaller size, the ship-in-a-bottle. The ship also contains a number of unusual creations, for both ill and good, including an alluring siren and a set of deadly automata. The book will revert to normal size when removed from the dollhouse.

A Shadow's Fall: In the dollhouse library are tiny copies of the original Ms. Morgan's greatest works, including A Shadow's Fall. This is a play in four acts (Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter), about Sebastian Ashe, a stranger who comes to the village of Sheltensborg. Ashe the drifter decides to settle in Sheltensborg during Spring, and falls in love with two women, the blonde Jessica Dalgeng and the brunette Tabitha Morgan. During Summer, Ashe becomes a councilman in the town, and due to his persuasiveness and charisma, is a candidate for town alderman. He moves in with Miss Morgan but secretly pursues Miss Dalgeng. In Autumn, his arrogance is overwhelming, and as alderman, lives a life of hedonistic luxury. He leaves Miss Morgan for Miss Dalgeng and neglects the duties to the town, gazing frequently in a large mirror in his manor past which can be seen a shadowy figure. At the end of Autumn, both women expose his embezzling, leaving Ashe and Sheltensborg. In his madness, Ashe kills the four other councilmen and burns the evidence of his crimes. In the weird final act, Winter, the Shadow King and his Court creep out of the mirror and into Sheltensborg, taking over the town as their own. In Ms. Morgan's storage shed behind her house, a collection of trash and papers contains the strange discarded epilogue to "A Shadow's Fall", the Song of the Bone-grinder. A stout man, the only actor, cleans the streets of Sheltensborg, collecting the bodies of the dead and tossing them into a grotesque machine while delivering a rambling, sing-song monologue on the virtues and luxuries of modern living.



Rooksroost

Large village and landmark (lost mage academy).

Population: 1,800; 92% human, 8% orc.

Resources: fairly wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; woodworking, mining (few heavy metals), agriculture and husbandry, metalworking, trade, library.

Religion: Duuran.

Guilds: none.

Government: strict; loose monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Baron Shellbourne (5th level human) and Captain Ariel Ingres (8th level human), militia of 200.

Rooksroost refers to three different places: a large forest; a village at the edge of the trees; and a lost Hermetic school deep within the woods. The villagers of Rooksroost are heavily Duuran-influenced, being xenophobic, superstitious, and skeptical of Hermetic magic use. Rooksroost is governed by the Baron Shellbourne and his militia. Visitors from the Vehrlands or the rest of Tarach are rare, and will usually be questioned by the militia captain Ariel Ingres, niece of the old Baron and only surviving heir.

The Rooksroost Mage Academy: The woods are dark and wild, and the villagers do not venture there as it is easy to get lost. Few things live in the woods, although there is a huge flock of rooks, the large ravens from which the village and forest take their names. These rooks are highly intelligent, speak in broken tongue most of the languages of Twylos, and tend to hate intruders into their woods. The largest among them, an old female, alone knows the words to speak that part the mists revealing the Rooksroost Hermetic Academy ("neverill amorvan daq'itan"). The school of Rooksroost disappeared into the Ether at the end of the Second Era, and all inside are now dead. The Rooks were the familiars and pets of these mages, kept in a rookery at the top of the school. Shadows and magical wards still fill the school, and in a hidden conference room in the bottom are the slain corpses of the former heads of Rooksroost. Powerful magicians, they were slaughtered by Abigail Preschon, the leader of the Handmaidens. Her own remains lay in the middle of the room, killed by a bound cherubic angel that still is compelled to defend this room. In her skeletal hand is her weapon, the Axan Morn (see Appendix 2.1.1). If the ghostly remains of the lords of Rooksroost are defeated, and the cherub destroyed and her sword approached, her spirit, now a wraith, will arise and punish the unworthy. She will ask three questions: Who are you? For what end was the Axan forged? And why must this be so?



Diamond Blue: At the periphery of Rooksroost Forest, about three days north of the village, is Diamond Blue, the City of Imps. Within the treetops, 44 imps (30 lesser and 14 greater) have constructed a village of their own. There they manufacture odd knick-knacks and shoes, which they are hoping to soon trade with the Rooksroost villagers in exchange for their favorite delicacy, the flesh of babies. They are quite serious about their endeavors and will be friendly to visiting travelers. Councilman Lozen (6th level imp, 3rd Circle Hedge), foremost among the imps, oversees this community.

Rothaine (ROW-thane)

Small city.

Population: 4,500; 94% human, 5% orc, 1% dwarf.

Resources: wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, woodworking, agriculture and husbandry, stonework, mining (copper), fishing, library.

Religion: Thainist, Ixian, Duuran.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Duke Yansecht Ruthien (5th level human), army of 400.

Rothaine is ruled by the old Duke Yansecht Ruthien (YAN-sect RUE-thee-in). The Ruthien family has been ruling Rothaine for a long time; they're an old Valan family, a branch of the Great House Tharach that was exiled from Irendor during the Fall of Irendor around 0 S.E. The usurpation of the Avenaigh throne by Belvaunt has greatly increased the tension in this once-relaxed village. Ruthien is on diplomatic terms with the new king, but Ruthien's ambassador to the throne Mr. Ganterby Giles (3rd level human, 1st Circle Hedge) has heard rumors of an upcoming assassination attempt. Giles has heard correctly, but it is not the Duke himself who is the target. Agents of Oberon Frost, the priest of Typhon behind the Black Rose Rebellion, plan to assassinate the Duke's advisor (and in private, his mistress) Lady Charlotte Daumier

(DAW-me-ay; 4th level human, 1st Circle Faith). The Lady Charlotte is a Thainist as well as a priestess of the Church of Spring in Rothaine, the House of Lightall. Her assassins, four Verlainen mercenaries headed by Charles Nox (4th level human), have been working as lumberjacks for the last two months in a camp near town. They plan to frame her as a priestess of Breyana after killing her. To aid them in their mission, Frost has given to the assassins Valhonna's Shame (see Appendix 2.1.1), wielded by Nox. Nox knows it is highly likely that Frost's agents will attempt to kill him also after the assassination is complete, but has many contacts in Fayde Ehlling who will help him try to escape.

Complicating Rothaine's problems are the gnoles, living in the woods beyond the village lands. Normally, the gnoles keep to themselves, held in check by the Duurans and Church of Spring. The sudden death of the Duuran elder in the area has reduced the Duuran influence on the gnoles, who will soon be preying on the Rothaine woodsmen.

The Cult of the Lotus: Ignorant of Rothaine's other problems is Moloch Streng (2nd level human, 1st Circle Hermetic). Streng's real name is Bartholomew Nivens, newly arrived from Rheyas, eventually in hopes of journeying to Rooksroost. Streng is quite arrogant and believes he has the potential to be a great magician. While making a preliminary investigation of the woods, 'Streng' stumbled across two gnoles out scouting, and has managed to keep casting Friends spells successfully on both of them for the past week. His new (and dangerously temporary) allies have told him about a shrine hidden in a cave in the forest about half a day from town. The shrine, previously undisturbed by the superstitious gnoles, was built in the mid-Second Era by a group of Duurans who called themselves the Cult of the Spider, now deceased. Streng has spent two days investigating the shrine of the Spider Cult, and believes correctly that it was a front for a different group. However, he mistakenly believes he has found the lost mage academy of Rooksroost. In fact, the shrine was home to a small group of Duuran Naturalists who revered the magical properties of Twylos'

lotus plant. This group, the Cult of the Lotus, left behind a preserved Lotus Seed (-5 on the roll for type grown) in the inner sanctum of their temple, but it is guarded by a green man (as the 4th Circle Ritual spell of the same name). The entrance to the inner sanctum, through the false Spider Cult shrine, is protected by a golden spider (as giant tarantula).

Turth

Major city and home of Navigators Guild. Largest city of Twylos.

Population: 110,000; 90% human, 9% orc, 1% misc. (including dwarves, faeries, goblins, ogres, reptilians).

Resources: very wealthy, moderate magical and high technological levels; trade, woodworking, agriculture and husbandry, shipbuilding, metalworking, fishing, clothmaking, art, libraries, magical and military academies.

Religion: Thainist, Ixian, Duuran, Aguierre, Typhon, Xeres.

Guilds: Navigators, Slavers, Surveyors, Alchemists.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by Lord Belvaunt, led by Duke Yansecht Ruthien (5th level human), army and navy of 5,000.

Turth is the largest and most successful city of Twylos today, numbering over one hundred thousand in population. This reflects its youth, vigor, and prime trading location between the bountiful fields of Tarach and the metals of Armech. Turth is quite wealthy in parts, and is approximately twenty miles on a side. The northern portion of the city proper is divided into two 'quarters'- the Rose Quarter and the Gold Quarter. The Rose Quarter is mainly residential, while the Gold Quarter is more commercial. Almost all of Twylos' faiths find temples, churches, or shrines in Turth. There are three main temples to Kithain, and a lot of smaller, more private Thainist shrines; there are two large temples to Zhol and Nergal; the Church of Spring runs a few small chapels (and the Vox Durr make a showing there, as well as outside of town); and followers of Ixian, Aguierre, and Xeres are all present. The main temple of Zhol, called Ormuura, is under the strong leadership of the Mother Arwena Vorgayne (9th level human, 5th Circle Faith) who has a history of affiliation with the Handmaidens from Murdyne. Among the dozens of inns in town are The Carbuncle's Jewel, The Millstone (a bar frequented by orcs), and The Ye Olde Inne, an establishment run by James "Jimmy" T. Swill III (5th level human), made famous due to its attempted destruction by the psychotic magician Fess. Fess's grave, an orange tree next to a small marker, now lies next to the Olde Inne.

The Surgeons of Luksharrow: Each of the four Guilds maintains a large chapterhouse in Turth. Their profitable dealings have allowed them to finance construction of a new university, called Luksharrow. Some of the Alchemists employed at Luksharrow have recently formed their own internal research group called the College of Surgeons. The Surgeons engage in anatomical and physiological research, and the symbol of the College is a hand with five fingers spread. Luksharrow also contains the temple of Typhon in Turth. Rather new, it has started to attract a large following especially among the students of Luksharrow. The acting head of Luksharrow's Typhonae is Mother Rebecca Sunday (9th level human, 5th Circle Faith), a regal Valan woman from the eponymous village. Among the priests is Oberon Frost (13th level human, 6th Circle Faith, 3rd Circle Hermetic) from the Mother Church of Gyre. Incognito, Frost helped organize the Black Rose Rebellion, although Mother Sunday and most of the other Turth Typhonae have no knowledge of this.

The Tradetongue Project: Luksharrow is also the site for an academic project attempting to create a new, simple language. This language, Guildspeak or Tradetongue, is a blend of simple Taran and Valan words, including some hand gestures that are represented by lines in the written version. Dr. Thomas Anopheles (10th level human, 3rd Circle Hedge), an Alchemist, Thainist, and visible member of the Church of Typhon, is in charge of the language design. The Guilds' eventual goal

is to set up a system of public education with Tradetongue as a foundation. In addition to fostering international communication and trade, some members of the Guild secretly hope to control information using Tradetongue. With the new language in place, most commoners and tradesmen will be less likely to learn Valan, Zhellan, or Irendi, thus preventing them from reading books in these languages. The Guilds are planning construction of a printing press to disseminate their own edited versions of historical and technical works.

Jon Ruckles' Gang: Turth, the surrounding countryside, and the outlying villages are more-or-less safe for travelers; most of the danger comes from fellow travelers (highwaymen and brigands) than from rampant beasts. The Gray Hills, though, were once home to early Duurans, and recently a group of dwarven herdsmen and women accidentally discovered an ancient Duuran laboratory several years ago. In the course of their quiet explorations, their leader, Jon Ruckles (2nd level dwarf werejackal), obtained the ability to turn into animal form (in reality, he was poisoned and is now a lycanthrope). Further exploration drove the dwarves mad; they are now somewhat feral, based out of the old laboratory, and have a host of animal servants at their disposal. Low in supplies and in number, they have begun to make raids to acquire food, goods, and breeding partners. Ruckles and his pack have also come into conflict with a village of 20 bugbears several days of travel from Turth.

An Empty Cottage: 15 miles south of Turth, a small cottage decays in the middle of an abandoned apple orchard. The windows are boarded, but the door is open. Aside from the usual cabin furnishings, there is a large dressing mirror in the cellar. In the breast pocket of a skeleton reclined on a sofa, there can be found a ticket stub that reads: "Welcome to Hello: Admit One: Terms: B & V - non-refundable - non-returnable. Please excuse our dust! -Zelba & Co.", as well as the following map:



Loose Lion: A traveling circus has been brought to town by Jimmy Swill to entertain the patrons of The Ye Olde Inne. Unfortunately, some drunken thieves who frequent the Olde Inne stole the keys to the lion cage to tease it, and accidentally let it free. The lion mauled the thieves and escaped into the wilds at night. Swill and the circus owners are understandably eager to find the lion and return it, hopefully alive and uninjured, to the circus. Simultaneously, three bugbear trappers led by Murz Kurdel (2nd level bugbear) have tracked it to its cave, but have not yet decided whether it would be better as a pet or as meat. They will not be favorably inclined towards others interfering with their

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

plans, but might be talked into working together to capture it, with a large enough threat or bribe.

Voon

Landmark (ancient ruin).

The island of Voon is now uninhabited, and is the source of some local superstition. Apparently during the First Era, Voon once held a great city (which is now in ruins and completely overgrown). Near the city is a small tower of basalt, approximately 100 feet tall- this is called the Black Ziggurat by the first explorers to Voon. The Black Ziggurat was the former holding location of the Egg of Voon, a strange relic believed to have resurrection abilities within a large radius of its activation, and obsessively sought by members of the Bone Trade.

Vamooris (vah-MOOR-ihs)

Vamooris is a desolate mountainous island at the northern reaches of Twylos. Similar to Oredhedron, Vamooris was discovered in the Third Era by the Navigators Guild after their commission of the Vausse Academy's world map. Volcanoes and glaciers make this an inhospitable place, which is home to the savage Minotaurs. Tharosen and Armechian settlers have tried to survive here, but have continually fought a losing battle against the powerful and seemingly limitless Minotaurs. The Minotaurs have finally struck the winning blow, destroying the two humanoid settlements of Machontin and Stoneskeep. Armech and Tarach, along with the Guilds, are considering using Vamooris as a prison island, to ship undesirables and debtors out of their hands.

Vamooris would be a tough choice for beginning characters, who would find the Minotaurs and the native beasts difficult to escape. Characters might be sent as prisoners, left to their own devices in the ruins of Machontin, or might be Slavers sent to deliver supplies to the survivors, only to be shipwrecked by a storm.

Machontin (mah-CONT-in)

Ruined city. Taran-Valan colony destroyed by the minotaurs.

Population: 99; 74% human, 21% orc, 4% dwarf, 1% ogre.

Resources: very poor, low magical and technological levels; fishing, salvage.

Religion: Duuran, Ixian, Thainist.

Guilds: none.

Government: none; led by Journeyman Bertram Cusp (11th level half-orc, 4th Circle Hedge), militia of 80.

Machontin is a port town, and was the only true city on the island. In past weeks, however, a surge of minotaur barbarians, along with two trained wyverns, have finally decimated the city's defenses, and Machontin has finally fallen. Their harbor destroyed, the hearty survivors of Machontin have taken refuge in the rubble and caverns underneath, attempting to hide their presence from the minotaurs, and find some way to survive, escape, or strike back.

Stoneskeep

Landmark (ancient citadel). Prisons of the minotaurs.

Not to be confused with the citadel of the Handmaidens at Murdyne (itself called Stonekeep), this is a tall granite fortress built above the Angers Gorge. When the humanoid settlers of Machontin first arrived at the start of the Third Era, they found Vamooris strangely devoid of life, and Stoneskeep already standing. An elaborate and immense

castle, it was clearly designed for things much larger than the humans, who did not suspect that the minotaurs were dormant in the crypts below. The activity of the settlers disrupted the holding fields on the minotaurs, releasing them to cleanse their homeland of the weaker, unprepared invaders.

The Ice Wyrms: About a week's travel into the northern mountains from Stoneskeep leads to the enormous glacial peaks that flank the upper latitudes of Vamooris. Herein is the lair of Anestheles Sicuriac (ah-NES-tah-leeze suh-CURE-ee-ack), an ancient Ice Wyrms. Currently asleep and partially frozen into the ice, the Minotaurs revere it as a sort of god, and have sacrificed several of their humanoid captives to its majesty. Sicuriac, if awakened, could care less about the Minotaur devotion and will be quite hungry for live food.

Vasqueray (vas-ker-RAY)

The island-nation of Vasqueray consists of two large islands- Cyndiquist Isle and Deimos, and a collection of smaller islands such as Vexin Ley, Vexin Mhon, Montross, and the Tears of Brielle. Collectively, these islands and the nation they form are sometimes referred to informally as the Queys (KAYS). Vasqueray was once a rich dynasty, rivaling the wealth of the former Empire of Irendor, although coming into its own in the century after Irendor's decline. The story of Vasqueray parallels that of Irendor on a smaller scale. The ruling class, a rather inbred aristocracy called the 'Sea-Kings', came to an end a few centuries ago, officially dying off with the death of Lord Ixondr (ix-ON-der) and Lady Muriel. Vasqueray has since floundered in its once-great glory, succumbing to a sort of isolated debauchery, although remains a beautiful sub-tropical location seeped in a rich artistic and culinary tradition.

Vasqueray would be a good location for adventurers of all skill levels. A campaign begun in Vasqueray has the advantages of being out of the way of the rest of the world, and because Vasqueray is a set of islands, the GM can limit access and control the progress of the game. For example, player characters might begin as well-treated slaves working to bury bodies within the Morningtide Tombs. Characters also might start as slaves, freemen, or Apprentice Guildsmen working on a Navigator ship sent to investigate reports of piracy in Oolvaunt.

Cyndiquist (SIN-deh-kist)

Major city and capital of Vasqueray.

Population: 41,000; 85% human, 8% orc, 5% reptilian, 2% misc. (including demons, dwarves, faeries, jinn, undead).

Resources: wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, fishing, shipbuilding, woodworking, clothmaking, art, agriculture and husbandry, mining (some precious metals), metalworking, libraries, military and magical academy.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Ixian, Aguierre, Typhon, Xeres.

Guilds: Navigators, Alchemists, Slavers, Surveyors.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by Lady Zhillian Queynoth Venesia (KAY-noth VEN-see-ah, 8th level half-sidhe), army and navy of 900.

Large capital city of the once-powerful Kingdom of Vasqueray, Cyndiquist still has a lot of old money, but in the Third Era Cyndiquist became decadent and lazy. It is home to the school of Queyliene (kay-LEEN), a magician's college with ties to the Guild of Navigators. Also present are two shrines to Rhiannon, the Hall of Joy and Vielense (vee-LENS; "Quiet"), several churches to Kithain, and many expensive boutiques. The architecture of Cyndiquist is distinctive, featuring a lot of white, and large, low buildings with many windows. The Guildhall of the Navigators, Valous, is an exceptional example of Second Era Cyndan construction.

The Zieth Cour: The Zieth Cour was a private school for Hermetic training that covertly supported the Guild of Thorns and the deposition of Ixondr. Ixondr drove them from Cyndiquist, where the surviving members relocated to Rheyas, only to quickly disband and join Arosquey. The Cour, housed underneath a broad villa, is now empty.

The Floating Island of Grabbane: In the waters out of Cyndiquist, there have been reports of a small island not on the Guild maps. However, these reports differ in terms of the whereabouts of the island. These ships have spotted the Floating Island of Grabbane, actually the remnants of a large submersible vessel created in the first days of the Sea Kings. Approximately 100 meters in diameter, the now unmanned vessel floats aimlessly through the seas.

Gorgos

Major city. A floating city of small islands and boathouses.

Population: 21,000; 81% human, 14% orc, 2% reptilian, 3% misc. (including demons, dwarves, faeries, jinn, ratkin, undead).

Resources: very wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, fishing, shipbuilding, woodworking, art, some agriculture, mining (few precious and heavy metals), metalworking, clothmaking, stonework, fishing, libraries, magical and military academies.

Religion: Ixian, Typhon, Thainist, Duuran, Aguirre, Xeres.

Guilds: Navigators, Alchemists, Slavers.

Government: strict; monarchical control by Lady Venesia, governed by Heinrich Vuillard (9th level orc, 2nd Circle Faith), army and navy of 400.

Gorgos is a somewhat xenophobic city spanning numerous small islands, connected by bridges and an extensive network of small harbor boats. Gorgos is on the largest island, Olgos, of the Tears of Brielle, a southern archipelago at the outskirts of Vasqueray. Gorgos is very rich and many of the old families of Vasqueray still have island estates here in the Tears. The eccentricity that Queyans are known for is quite apparent in Gorgos- strange foods, architecture, and manners of affect can all be observed on the public islands, not to mention that most Gorgothians seem somewhat paranoid and prefer to keep to themselves, especially if they own or live on the numerous private islands or boathouses.

The Prison Ships: A fleet of decommissioned Ixian vessels floats in the Gorgos harbor. These ships are Zar-Chankor, the prison ships of Gorgos. Land in Gorgos is too precious to be wasted on prisoners, generally debtors and petty criminals. Unusually, Zar-Chankor is managed entirely by the Ixians without Slaver help. There are twelve ships in all, ranging in size from one to three masts, that can collectively hold several hundred prisoners, although generally several dozen prisoners are interred here at any given time.

Velanieh: Recently the Church of Typhon has financed the construction of a large amphitheatre for plays and musical performances. Both the theatre and its island take their name from the original title of Thomeskeep- Velanieh (veh-la-NIE). Velanieh has attracted a lot of major talent from Vasqueray, Gyre, and parts east.

The Dustmen of Piccolo: One of the wealthier islands, open for commerce to the public, is called Orbane. Orbane maintains a relationship with a smaller, closed island draped in mist, called Piccolo. Once per week, the deranged and misshapen inhabitants of Piccolo come to clean the streets of Orbane; in exchange, the people of Orbane often leave money or gifts near their rubbish bins, marked with an asterisk, which is the symbol of these custodians, called the Dustmen or the Guild of Dust (but sometimes erroneously called the Guild of Rust). This includes the small Guild of Optics group that works on Orbane, and reverently offers several good-quality lenses, mirrors, and metal tools to the Dustmen on a regular basis. This is a long-

standing tradition, now regarded with superstition among the Orbanesfolk; the island shuts down and they do not go out at night, believing that if they do, the folk of Piccolo will steal them away and make them a Dustman. The Dustmen and townsfolk of Piccolo take their work seriously, and spend their days pouring over their trash and junk to make goods and strange implements. They claim to revere a rust-colored spider goddess, which lives beneath the shrine into which they throw most of their collected junk. In fact, this goddess is an old Ixian machine called a scrivener (see Appendix 2.1.2)- a giant, multi-armed construct designed to help copy manuscripts and do menial labor, which now spends its time building an ornate web of crystal, metal, and debris for some unknown purpose.

Black Alice: A pirate known as Black Alice has become a sort of local hero. Alice, whose real name is Nadya Alice Rasthavin (6th level human), recently raided and sunk an Ixian patrol ship in the waters around Olgos Island. Rasthavin is originally from Bevan, where she acquired her ship The Southern Cross from its now-deceased previous owner, Zachheus Halfhand. Alice has a small crew of 14 (0th to 3rd level humans and orcs), quite loyal to her, and she duped the Ixians into thinking her ship was a Black Ship of Zhol. The Ixian Governor Heinrich Vuillard wishes to have her tried and executed on charges of piracy and heresy.

The Weather Station: One of the smaller outer islands is the old private estate of the Gorgos Meteorological Institute (GMI). The GMI, a short-lived and forgotten group of mages from the early days of the Sea Kings, attempted to predict and influence weather patterns in the seas around Gorgos, both as an aid for shipping, and as a defense mechanism in case of naval attack. In the course of their investigations, they discovered an Aeryn Stormking, a strange lightning beast (treat as fire elemental) that fried their equipment and killed them all. The Stormking is imprisoned in a furnace-like contraption that powers the magical machinery of the GMI. Successful Arcane Knowledge and Engineering checks (target numbers of 13) will both be required to get the machinery operational again; the GMI should be considered a giant magical artifact that can cast Alter Weather, Rain, Storm, and Wind once per week apiece. In the bowels of the GMI, a pair of scriveners (see Appendix 2.1.2) guard the Gorgosian Cloudmachine, sealed within a 6" lead box, magically warded, which renders its abilities ineffective while inside.

Lunais (loon-AY)

Landmark (hidden manor of Lady Muriel).

Three small islands, Dawn, Dusk, and Lunais, form an isosceles triangle far out to sea, off of the Navigators' maps. These were the private estates of Lady Muriel, where she retreated when Lord Ixondr began to go mad. Her manor on the largest of the three islands, Lunais, still stands, covered in ivy. In the deep waters around Lunais lives the second and older of Twylos' Krakens, the great Leviathan. Its appearance is heralded by storms and water twisters, and it has wrecked many ships sailing into these parts. On the islands themselves live feral Reptilians, hostile to those that turn up on the shores. The ancestors of these creatures were stranded at the start of the Vehrlands War by the Leviathan's attack, and today they barely communicate in all but savage hisses. They have not dared to enter Muriel's house, and are fearful of it.

Inside the manor is an eclectic collection of rooms and wards. Near the top, in Muriel's bedroom, are a number of simple possessions, but also the remains of her personal library. On a single shelf are a Tome of Understanding, the Scroll of Vriian (see Appendix 2.1.1), an illustrated children's story ("Timmorn and the Apple Tree") and the Book of Nightmares (see Appendix 2.1.1).

Timmorn and the Apple Tree: This is a short fable about a blind boy, living happily with his parents. Relaxing under an apple tree one day in late summer, the goddess Timmorn (also called Tamara in Armech and Tarach) happens to be wandering through the grove. Seeing the blind boy, she grants him the gift of sight, pulls an apple off of the tree and leaves, munching on the fruit. The boy, excited by his new ability, runs through the orchard, marveling at all the things to see. He passes by one of the farmhands far off, whom he waves to. The man waves, but seems sullen and distracted. When the boy returns home for dinner, he hears his parents greet him happily, but sees the looks of horror and disgust on their faces; they cannot bear to look at their son. Confused, he keeps silent about his vision, and finishes his dinner. Upon preparing for bed, the story concludes with the boy chancing across his mother's large mirror, and sees his reflection for the first time. He is hideously deformed, ugly and monstrous. The Church of Silence, disciples of Timmorn/Tamara, believed that their goddess took pity on the stupid humanoid races created by the other gods (namely, Vorn, Rhiannon/Breyana, Kithain, and Zhol). She granted them sentience, knowledge, and self-awareness, but at the cost of realizing the awful world that surrounds them.

The Hall of Mirrors: Within the basement, down a circular staircase and past a marble hall with black and white tiles is the Hall of Mirrors. The Hall contains 13 large (12' by 5') mirrors against the walls, each covered by a heavy white cloth, and in the middle is a rectangular pool of still water. Each mirror is a gate to a specific location, as indicated by the Book of Mirrors (see Appendix 2.1.1) attached by a small golden chain to a podium near the entrance. An inkwell, now dry, also sits on the podium. Use of special magical ink made with Mirror Oil (Appendix 2.1.1) allows inscriptions within the Book, which consists of a single metal page and 13 numbered lines. Writing the name of a location on a line opens a permanent gate there. Currently, ten of the lines are used while three lines are still empty. Of those ten, four are still operational, while the other six are scratched or burnt out, with the corresponding mirrors now dark gray and non-reflective. This includes the central seventh mirror at the back of the room, which was the portal Muriel used to escape Twylos into the Dream Realm created by the Book of Dreams (Appendix 2.1.1), the final volume of the Books of Xeres, granting the reader the power to alter reality at their whim. In her Dream Realm, this Book is her only comfort, however illusory.

Oolvaunt

Large village. Built within the huge statues and ruins of Vasqueray's once-glorious capital of the arts.

Population: 5,300; 71% human, 10% orc, 9% reptilian, 5% ratkin, 5% misc. (includes demons, doppelgangers, faeries, jinn, undead).

Resources: fairly poor, moderate magical and technological levels; art, clothmaking, trade, woodworking, metalworking, fishing, salvage, agriculture and husbandry, stonework, library.

Religion: Thainist, Typhon, Duuran, Xeres, Ixian.

Guilds: Alchemists, Navigators.

Government: chaotic; monarchical control by Lady Venesia, and oligarchical control by Mouths to Feed led by Mr. Faustinus Orbb (7th level ratkin), militia and navy of 115.

A small ruined city, once prosperous centuries ago under Vasqueray's old Sea King dynasty, until the Guild of Thorns infiltrated the government. The Guild of Thorns was supposedly based out of Oolvaunt- a mysterious group of illusionists and necromancers. Once gorgeous, Oolvaunt is still full of giant statues and old gardens; these monuments are now overgrown and decayed, but have become homes and storefronts. One such place is The Mandrill, a bar set inside a colossal, now leaning statue of one of the old Kings. The upper floors are in the hollowed-out stone remains, and where parts of the statue have collapsed, these are now passages and windows. The bar is located underground, reinforced with wood. The bar takes its name

from the mandrills that live inside- partially-domesticated, partially-feral primates that lurk overhead, glaring at customers but generally staying well out of reach. Oolvaunt is run by a loose collection of merchants, called the Mouths to Feed, who are based out of a giant stone head from a massive fallen statue. They are kept well-bribed by thuggish gangs, some of whom still claim heritage to Guild of Thorns anarchists. Oolvaunt is just on the edge of the Valley of Thorns, and on the rare clear day, the spires of Thorneskeep can barely be seen from some of the higher steeples and statues in town.

The King of Rats: In the sprawls and sewers beneath Oolvaunt, beyond the domains and cellars of the thieves, lives Ren the Rat King. The King of Rats is about the size of a small dog, with a human face, and he is quite intelligent if a bit of a creep. Ren is currently inconsolable, his precious Crown having been stolen by agents of Lord Ormas and his Slime God, who live at the very bottom of Oolvaunt's ancient pits. Ormas (6th level human, 3rd Circle Ritual, 1st Circle Faith) is a priest of Xeres. He has offered Ren's Crown (see Appendix 2.1.1) as a gift to a sentient, filth-covered giant octopus, the God of Slime. He is served by a horde of 24 giant rats, a yellow ooze and 4 thieves (each 4th level ratkin). Even though Ren already possesses most of his Crown's abilities himself (the abilities to speak with and charm ratkind), he still covets it and appreciates its modest presence enhancement. He will gladly trade it for his Cylene Snowglobe (see Appendix 2.1.1), his only comfort since he lost his Crown.

The Tears of Brielle

Region and landmark (seaside tombs); archipelago.

Common encounters: brigands, gypsies, performers, traders, hunters, snakes, wolves.

Rare encounters: bears, crocodiles, hydra, large cats, octopus, spiders, sharks, undead.

An archipelago at the southern end of Vasqueray, the Tears consist of five main islands far from the rest of the world: Olgos, Lucrenzia, Verbanc, Sellac, and Morningstide. The Tears are named for the daughter of one of the first Handmaidens, distraught over the death of the rest of her family and her mother's decision to take up arms. Olgos contains the largest of the Tears' cities, Gorgos, and essentially keeps the rest of the Tears on the map. Lucrenzia contains a large village, Lukros, known for its visual arts. Verbanc and Sellac are quiet fishing communities that provide mackerel, sea bass, and delicacies made from sunfish and urchins.

The Morningstide Tombs: Morningstide, at the far end of the island chain, is the smallest of the main islands and considerably different than the others. Morningstide is shaped like a crescent, and is connected by a long bridge to another island, Brehve, that contains the settlement of Bevan at the northern end. Morningstide is known for its complex set of tombs at the far southern end. The Morningstide Tombs, first discovered by Sebastian Mordech, is a large system of cliffside caverns which seem to date from the earliest days of the First Era. The caves were initially used by the first Duurans as burial grounds for heretics and demons, not wanting to defile the corpses, but to get them as far from themselves as possible. The early Vox Duur called this place Barrowsreich. In later years, it has come to be used by the Thainists and Ixians as a mass cemetery for the diseased and insane. The Tombs is managed by a small Thainist outpost, led by Sister Miriam Andallay (3rd level human, 2nd Circle Faith), her man Hrothgar (2nd level human), and her acolytes Brother Tar (0th level human, 1st Circle Faith) and Sister Lara (2nd level human, 1st Circle Faith). Apprentice Slaver Jamis Bled (2nd level human) watches over the slave workers, including Tomasz Fink (0th level human) and Paedra Marsis (1st level human).

The Bone Trade has plans for exploration within Morningstide. However, currently en route to the island is Xaran Moors (3rd level human, 2nd Circle Hermetic), an ex-Museum Scholar who chanced

upon the Bone Trade's plotting. Moors is disguised as an Ixian named Rupert Smalls. Smalls/Moors is accompanied by Sister Larissa (2nd level human, 1st Circle Faith), member of the Church of Winter and secretly Typhonae. They seek an artifact called the Deimos Palantir, which they wrongly suspect will be found in the Tombs.

The Bevi Cards: The Bevi were a group of wandering craftsmen and scholars, who eventually settled in what is now called Bevan. Early practitioners of proto-Hedge and Ritual magic, collections of cards known as Bevi Decks can still be bought in Bevan. These were used in fortune telling and casting Ritual magic spells, and the Bevi deck has 13 cards for each of the four suits (Blood or Tears, Spiders or Shards, Brambles or Thorns, Gears or Needles; the alternate names were used by a different set of Bevan families), akin to the Spheres of Ritual magic (Blood, Dreams, Gaea, Stitch), that later became the normal deck of cards used throughout Twylos (Hearts, Diamonds, Spades, and Clubs).

Thorneskeep

Landmark (ruined palace of Ixondr). Former palace of Vasqueray, now a testament to Ixondr's lust and madness.

Thorneskeep, once known as Velanieh, is a beautiful castle, tucked into the fog-filled Valley of Thorns. It is the demesne of Lord Ixondr, the last member of the Sea Kings Dynasty, believed to be dead by the rest of Vasqueray. Velanieh was built in 1153 S.E., modeled after Avenaigh in Tarach.

At one time, Velanieh was the pinnacle of Queyan architecture and artistry, and was home to balls, ambassadors, and all manners of court intrigue. Velanieh has gone dark and is regarded with superstition and fear by the Queyans. All windows and doors are sealed, save for one small portal at the base of the Outer Keep.

The Matter of Vasqueray: The story of Ixondr and Muriel is well-known throughout Vasqueray. At the end of the Sea King dynasty during the advent of the Third Era, Lord Valstav Ixondr Markovitch and his sister Lady Muriel Kallanday were the only members of the ruling family left. While most tellings of the story state that Muriel was Ixondr's sister, it is more likely that she was his cousin, half-sister, or possibly a more distant relative. 'Sister' is used here with some Queyan poetic license. The 'Matter' of Vasqueray, rather than describing the legendary origins of the Sea Kingdoms, now generally refers instead to their fall (which seems to be considerably more interesting to contemporary Queyans).

Ixondr was quite outgoing and threw extravagant parties, while his sister was a recluse, and spent most of her time on the island of Lunais. Lord Ixondr became fascinated with his strange younger sister, but Muriel retreated both from his increasingly direct advances and from Vasqueray as a whole, losing herself in her studies of Hermetic magic. While Ixondr and Muriel paid less and less attention to ruling their ancestral kingdom, the Guild of Thorns plotted against them, finally driving Ixondr mad. As Ixondr attempted to force himself upon Muriel, she resisted him one last time and fled, hiding her island of Lunais from discovery, and forcing Ixondr to retreat to Velanieh. Unable to find Muriel, the remnants of Ixondr's sanity crumbled, and contact was lost with both of them. The roses of Velanieh turned to thorns, the palace windows darkened, and Muriel disappeared from Twylos completely.

The Valley of Thorns: Before entering Thorneskeep, one must first make their way through the maze of thorns and brambles surrounding the castle. The Valley is a labyrinth, literally, of giant thorn bushes and brambles, surrounding Ixondr's once-glorious citadel. The brambles surround the castle for a radius of six miles, and sometimes shift at random. Getting to Thorneskeep through the maze requires a character to make a Mental Resistance check with a target number of 18. One check can be made per day, but woe to those caught in the Valley at night. Lurking in the maze are three barghests, a pack of four hellhounds, and six shadows which emerge in the darkness. A wyvern will attack anyone who tries to fly above the maze, at any time of day.

The Outer Keep: The Outer Keep of Thorneskeep is just a empty, decrepit ruin. All doors are bricked over, although the mortar over one small side door is chipped and can easily be removed. This portal opens into a small passageway that leads to the Inner Keep.

The Inner Keep: The main hall is flanked by eight statues, each of a tall, beautiful, but melancholy woman (Muriel), and dominated by a large faded fresco of the same woman clutching a bouquet of flowers. A long staircase leads up- halfway to the top is a landing containing a statue of a tall man, the head of which was broken off long ago and is missing. At the top is a magnificent ballroom, tiled with black and white marble. Along the left wall is a mural depicting a large, fantastic garden next to a mansion. In the garden is the tall man depicted in the statue, whose head is defaced in the mural. He gestures to a crowd of people surrounding him. Alone, in a room in the top of the manor is the woman depicted in the eight statues. The right wall has another mural, this time depicting this ballroom. The people from the garden are here, some of whom are dancing, others talking. At the far end are the man and woman (the man again defaced). The man is gesturing to the woman, but her head is down and she looks away. One of the sole inhabitants of this lonely place is here, Ixondr's valet Dresden Kooms (a crazed basileae archon dressed in a tattered suit). The ballroom opens into the base of the Inner Tower, the domain of Ixondr himself. Off of the Inner Tower are the four wings of the Inner Keep. While previously modeled on Avenaigh's principles of life, passion, knowledge, and love, they have since been corrupted into representing death, despair, violence, and hate.

The Inner Tower is staffed by Ixondr's butler Mr. Armitage (a common demon). Armitage appears as a large black ape-demon, although he is stuffed with wool. Armitage will not initially be hostile, but will welcome guests and show them to their quarters within Despair. If injured or left for dead, he will spend a night stitching himself back together.

Death: The family's quarters are found on the upper floors, including a few private libraries (now mainly empty) and a conservatory for displaying artwork. The familial tombs are located in the basement. As in other such locations, the Game Master should feel free to expand and elaborate upon these locations as necessary.

Despair: Despair contains three floors of expansive guest quarters. As in the rest of Thorneskeep, there are no windows. Anyone who spends even a single night in Despair begins to grow increasingly tired. After every four hours thereafter spent in Thorneskeep, characters must make a Mental Resistance check. The target number starts at 1, but increases by 1 every time. If failed, the character passes out for another four hours.

Violence: Ixondr's workshop is on the top floor, and his laboratories found in the basement. Once the laboratories have been entered, Knowledge checks in Thorneskeep become increasingly difficult, receiving a cumulative modifier of -1 for every 8 hours spent within the castle. Most of the labs are just a mess of burned wood and paper and broken glass. In the back of one of the labs, under a heavy drop cloth, is the Essence Distiller (see Appendix I).

Hate: In the back of the wine cellar is the third and last member of the family, Ixondr's half-cousin Graccus Markovitch (5th level zombified human). Graccus is pinned to the wine cellar wall with an enchanted dagger (+1 to-hit and damage) through his throat, and is still technically alive, due to the cursed Amulet of Lozzo (see Appendix I) he wears around his neck. Graccus cannot speak, even if the dagger is removed.

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Lord Ixondr and the Hall of Faces: Lord Ixondr (20th level quasi-human, 8th Circle Hermetic, 20 intellect, 20 presence) still lives in Thorneskeep, stalking its halls in his stark red robes. He wears an unadorned facemask, a now-non-magical Mask of Disguise, to cover his head, completely featureless except for a thin-lipped mouth and eye holes. Ixondr speaks in a slow whisper, with infrequent moments of complete rage. Ixondr's quarters are magically sealed. He keeps a collection of bodies in his closet, as his real body rotted away long ago. Ixondr is trapped within Thorneskeep, as all of these bodies have been cursed by the Guild of Thorns to stay within the palace. Thus Ixondr is obsessed with obtaining a newer body, even at the expense of most of his magical power. Ixondr might come out to greet guests, to make pleasant albeit weird conversation with them, and assess whether any of them might be useful as a new body. Ixondr will be especially interested to talk with artists and their ilk, but in terms of a suitable body, Ixondr needs someone with Hermetic magic (preferably a human male).

It will take Ixondr four hours to complete the ritual to transfer himself into his new body. The victim gains one Circle of Hermetic magic, one point to both intellect and presence, and one grade in each of Extra-planar Knowledge, Hermetic Dweomercraft, and Arcane Knowledge. However, they lose three points of endurance and will have a tendency to be affected by madness (as the 5th Circle Faith spell). Whenever they make a knowledge proficiency check or cast a spell, they must also make a Mental Resistance check (6 + grade or Circle of spell) or undergo the effects of madness for 1d100 rounds.

Both Muriel and Ixondr were interested in mirrors, and paid a group of scientists and magicians a large sum to build elaborate optical devices for them. This group would become the Guild of Optics, and several of their numbers were involved in the Guild of Thorns as well. Initially the Guild was based on the island of Ornav off of Oolvaunt, but after an accident destroyed their laboratory, the Guild moved to Cyndiquist to construct Ixondr's and Muriel's mirrors. Muriel would take her mirrors to Lunais, but Ixondr had his installed in the entrance hall of his sealed personal quarters. There are four large scrying mirrors placed within the room. Treating a mirror with Mirror Oil opens a one-way portal to that location. The mirrors are Transport Mirrors (as Mirrors of Kithain), and depict Zalen Vale, Ornav, Cyndiquist, and Thenzor Deep (although the Game Master may choose different locations if desired).



due to the trade lines that the Covenant established. The people of the Vehrlands (Vehrlenders) tend to be quite house-proud and patriotic of their homelands and lineage. Unlike the large nation of Tarach, or the loose trade confederacies of Saethos or Khaedor, the Vehrlands is divided amongst several large and independent city-states.

The Vehrlands makes an excellent starting location for a new campaign, and adventures can be spun off into any of the neighboring states to the north, east, or south. Beginning characters might be young Duurans from Vesbridge or Handmaidens from Murdyne exploring their religious background, or members of the local Slaver-run town guard in sleepy Ulmsdeep, about to escort Kaila to her wedding, or propositioned by Meeks and Huxley for a trip back to dark Zolace.

Couverton

Large city.

Population: 19,000; 85% human, 14% orc, 1% misc. (including dwarves, faeries, goblins, ogres, ratkin).

Resources: modestly wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; woodworking, trade, agriculture and husbandry, clothmaking, fishing, metalworking, library.

Religion: Duuran, Thainist, Ixian.

Guilds: Surveyors, Slavers.

Government: strict; monarchical control by Lord Gregor Vonnochs (10th level human), army of 700.

Settled by explorers from Tharose, Couverton is the most Tarachian of the Vehrlands cities. It is quite large, but limited from growing further by the swamps at its northern perimeter. Gregor Vonnochs is the lord of Couverton, and his advisors have recently put a bounty on the goblin tribes that live in the northern swamps (derisively called 'swampies' by the men of Couverton).

Thrave Nil: The hobgoblin wizard Thrave Nil (6th level hobgoblin, 2nd Circle Hermetic, 1st Circle Ritual) lives with a small community of 4 goblins in the swamps near the Stoneaxe Mills, a granary in the village of Blengrave a day from town. These goblins have in the past had peaceful dealings with the millers, and do not suspect that mercenaries will soon be coming for their heads.

Llesendor (ELL-sen-dor)

Large city.

Population: 36,000; 79% human, 17% orc, 2% reptilian, 1% dwarf, 1% misc. (including faeries, ogres, ratkin).

The Vehrlands (VARE-lands)

The Vehrlands is a large expanse of hilly plains, steppes, forests, and farmland that lies between Khaedor to the east, Saethos to the south, and Tarach to the north. The heterogeneity of the Vehrlender population reflects the influences and colonization from all three sources. The Vehrlands was the location of a long series of battles between these three nations, and among itself, that spanned a millennium; collectively called the Vehrlands War, it defined the Second Era and ended with the Vehrlands Covenant, which declared armistice. The Vehrlands then quickly turned from a battle-scorched wasteland into a prosperous and successful collection of communities

Resources: fairly wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, agriculture and husbandry, woodworking, mining (few precious and heavy metals), metalworking, stonecraft, art, library.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Ixian, Aguierre, Typhon.

Guilds: Surveyors, Slavers, Alchemists.

Government: relaxed; monarchical control by Lady Ashleigh Verona (9th level human, 3rd Circle Faith), well-trained army of 900.

Once the largest city in all of Khaedor or the Vehrlands, Llesendor is a product of the Great War from the Second Era. It was at Llesendor that the final truce was signed (thus starting the Third Era)- the Vehrlend Covenant, which divided up the borders between Khaedor, the Vehrlands, and Saethos that hold to this day, and re-instituted trade between the three nations. Llesendor became and then exceeded what Vesbridge once was- the hub of international trade in western Twylos, as during the First Era and much of the Second, trading was still on a local or neighbor-to-neighbor basis in these parts. Llesendor's size and fame has diminished with the rise of Tzalvas and Vussar, and the resurgence of Rheyas.

The Manticore of Llesendor: An expedition of Surveyors has come to an untimely end due to the presence of a Manticore. This far-ranging beast flew off with Journeyman Grisham, and slaughtered the other Journeyman (Talis Elizabeth) and Apprentices who attempted to come to his rescue. Their corpses, plus the remains of several pack animals and wild cattle litter the Manticore's cave. The creature is now resting, recovering from its wounds inflicted by Journeyman Elizabeth, as she wielded a potent magical blade, Ninvaliir Acidtongue (see Appendix 2.1.1), now tossed aside in the back of the lair.

Murdyne (MUR-deen)

Small fortress. Home of the Handmaidens.

Population: 450; 90% human, 5% orc, 5% misc. (including demons, faeries, undead).

Resources: fairly wealthy, high magical and technological levels; metalworking, stonecraft, mining (few heavy metals), agriculture and husbandry, fishing, woodworking, fishing, library, military academy.

Religion: Thainist.

Guilds: none.

Government: strict; militaristic-theocratic control by the Handmaidens, led by Mother Sarah Bennet (12th level human, 6th Circle Faith), well-trained army of 400.

Also called Stonekeep, Murdyne is the stronghold of the Handmaidens, the warrior-nuns of Kithain and Brides of Zhol. The Handmaidens are a female sub-sect of Thainists devoted to stopping wars by the rather heavy-handed tactic of killing all participants on both sides. Murdyne itself is a moderately-sized farming community with lots of diversity, due to the Handmaidens' propensity of depositing male children there, sired internationally as part of their selective breeding program. A solid, practically featureless stone fortress sits on a cliff near the coast; it is there the Handmaidens call home, training relentlessly. Geographically and spiritually, the Handmaidens are caught between the seemingly-endless wars between the Vox Duur (who favor the use of Hermetic and Ritual magic) and the Church of Ixus (who believe such magic to be alien and corrupting).

Love, Hope, and Charity: Mother Sarah is the acting head of Murdyne. She is a peaceful woman, but uses a triad of bloodthirsty Handmaidens to achieve her ends: Sisters Love (8th level human, 1st Circle Faith), Hope (9th level half-demon, 2nd Circle Faith), and Charity (8th level human, 4th Circle Ritual). Sister Hope is half-demon, her Handmaiden mother raped by an Oubrodaemon. Because of this, Hope's hair is steel wire, her skin is hard, and her blood and veins are black. Hope wields Balron Deathblade, one of the Swords of the Antiarch (see Appendix 2.1.1). Sarah is acting head, because the

Handmaiden that should be Mother, Sister Joy (9th level human, 3rd Circle Faith), has gone missing. Joy is the blood-daughter of the former Grandmother of Stonekeep, Abigail Preschon. She seeks the location of the Axan Morn, another one of the legendary swords of the Antiarch of Aguierre, as she believes correctly that the nearby Vehrlands Duurans are Breyanic (i.e., infernalists) and seek to oust the Handmaidens from their citadel. Joy is trying to decipher a riddle she received at Timmorn's Well:

*Ashes from the smoldered flame
Hair-a-brow, damned mourning dame
Broken feather, blackened jay
Murder's shade turns light of day*

*Naked skin of ashen fir
The maiden's tears will comfort her
To free yourself from falling far
Drink the milk of morning star*



Piedmont

Landmark (ruined resort island and leper colony).

Piedmont itself is a small island just off of the Vehrlen coast. Previously, it was owned by a few wealthy families (either Irendi, or Taran with Irendi ties) who used it as a getaway from the wars and revolts that plagued Irendor at the start of the Fall. Four great manor houses still stand across the island, sealed off long ago. The manor houses are titled 'Gauntre', 'Vlashiele', 'Taurus', and 'Alaheim', and each is magically sealed in a different manner. Several centuries ago around 300 S.E., Handmaidens from Murdeyne set it up as a leper colony, and shipped as many of Tarach's undesirables there as they could. After a few decades, the town of Piedmont, under "direction" of the Mouth of Xeres, got up and began to travel around the Vehrlands as the Traveling Circus of Piedmont. At first amusing, and then revolting, the circus traveled north, making it as far as Fayde Ehling before finally being finished off. Since then, the island has been uninhabited,

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

thought of as a terrible place to be. A 'Circus of Piedmont' is an old name for any traveling group of freaks, acrobats, clerics, and thieves that doesn't stay put for too long and puts on performances for the public. To differentiate them from ordinary circuses, a Circus of Piedmont is generally stranger, sicker, and more dangerous than its mundane counterpart. Vladimir Ozmandian wrote that he believed that there's one Circus active at any given time on Twylos, although his student denied this.

House Vlashiele: Vlashiele is completely sealed, and the windows and doors are barred. Vlashiele is home to three monstrous wights that appear as 10' humans with oversized heads. These are the Sange Brothers, Thomas, Michael, and Ignaeus, and they will welcome guests to come and dine with them. Entrance (and exit, although that will not happen) is strictly by permission of the Brothers only (save for powerful magic such as the Change spell), and must be obtained by knocking politely at their front door. It is completely dark in the mansion, and sources of illumination, including magical light, will not work. The Brothers possess a candelabra and a lantern that do seem to function though, and cast awful shadows around the rooms. All the furniture in Vlashiele is covered by dust cloths. Vlashiele contains a number of sliding and one-way doors that the Brothers will try to use to separate groups of characters who enter their home. Dinner will be one member of the party, if possible; otherwise, it will be sickly-tasting wine, dust and rot, of which the Brothers will gleefully partake. Also in the house is the ghost of Angelene, sister to the Sange Brothers. Angelene's murdered corpse lies preserved in a wine cask, and she will try to have characters who enter Vlashiele give her a proper burial and take revenge on her brothers. The Brothers will continue to regenerate, returning even from the most grievous injuries, until Angelene's ghost

has been freed, at which point she will help destroy the Brothers for good. Vlashiele contains a small collection of art objects, including a fat ceramic T'sughha demon. Inside the demon statue is one of the Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday (see Appendix 2.1.1).

House Gauntre: Gauntre is inhabited by a ghostly librarian, Mr. Abraham (10th level spectre, 4th Circle Hermetic), and his associate, the large wolf-demon Grendel (common demon), who wears an ill-fitting old suit. They are congenial, although Grendel does not speak. Similar to Vlashiele, entrance can be obtained only by knocking. Guests will be greeted cordially albeit abruptly, by Grendel, and greeted by Mr. Abraham. Gauntre was almost entirely looted long ago, except for a library upstairs that is the charge of these two guardians. A small collection of books (around six or so) under glass is all that remains, along with the skeletal corpses- and equipment- of three previous would-be thieves. Three of these books are notable: an original manuscript of Rogan DuLaine's "Gardens of Zil" (a deranged play written by the mad Ixian); a terrible book about demon summoning called *The Infernale*, and a magical tome titled *The Book of Bad Dreams* (see Appendix 2.1.1). Set up near the window is a chessboard; Abraham and Grendel are in the midst of a game of recursive chess. Abraham is happy to explain if asked- games are played to conclusion, but instead of starting anew, the loser takes back the losing move, and the game continues. Once all last losing moves have been played, the loser takes back two moves, and so on. They have been playing for quite a while, and Abraham will modestly confess to 'being ahead' (having won all the sub-games so far). At this, Grendel will grumble and consider the board. In a side room, the corpse of Abraham can be found lying on a simple cot, wearing a Ring of Protection from Charm.

Gardens of Zil: "Gardens of Zil" is a short play in three acts that was written by Rogan DuLaine, the Mad Priest of Ixus, when he was wandering Saethos searching for Rhauxen.

Act I: As the curtains open, there is a stone manor house on one side, cut away in places so that much of the interior is visible to the audience. Outside is a garden, featuring tall tropical plants. There are several statues in the garden, among them one of a man and one of a large fist. Two children, plainly dressed, a boy and a girl, run into the garden, laughing. The gardener Xochian is the first to appear, a huge man with a pair of giant shears, and tells them to leave: "These gardens are not for children."

The play continues with an introduction of the protagonist, Xenous Auerbach, the elderly patriarch of the noble Auerbach family. He was not the founder, but he was the one that led the house to greatness. Now it has only one rival, House Moon, with which it wars incessantly. Xenous sits down at the base of the statue of himself, which shows him as a proud young man. He begins to talk about himself, his life, the wars, and the mercantile business he headed. He notices that he is sitting under the magnificent statue of his former self, seems disgusted with it, spits, and moves to the statue of the fist. He talks about how, now that he's grown older, his statue no longer resembles him. It is now a statue of his son, who bears his same name, and is making the same mistakes, still feuding with House Moon. He fears his son will lead the house to destruction, and must be stopped.

Meanwhile, during this lengthy soliloquy, things have been going on inside the house. The younger Xenous meets his fiancé, his cousin Lady Verbena. Lady Verbena is an artist, sketches the younger Xenous, another addition to the numerous portraits and paintings throughout the house. Old Xenous, brooding about his son, has decided that he must stop him: his son must be assassinated. Old Xenous plots in the garden with Ludmeg, the captain of the guard. Old Xenous leaves the means to him, let it be some accident or incident, preferably without suffering. Ludmeg hesitates, but he admires and respects old Xenous, so he accedes. Throughout the play, gardener Xochian has been constantly trimming the plants, which appear to be rapidly growing throughout the course of the performance. Xochian constantly mutters, a low drone in the background. Likewise, for the first part of the play, servants tend to mill around behind the back of old Xenous Auerbach.

Act II: Young Xenous gets into an argument with his half-brother Martin, a lieutenant in the guard, who questions the virtue of Lady Verbena. The men go outside to the gardens to fight. (The combat is intended to be real in the staging of the play, with healers standing by off-stage.) Martin slashes young Xenous in the stomach, then drives a killing blow into his neck. Young Xenous falls to the ground and drops his sword; nearby, Lady Verbena falls to the ground crying. Old Xenous is in the house when this happens, but Ludmeg is watching. Ludmeg goes into the house, and finds Butler Anaclise cleaning in a side room. He tells the butler what happened. Old Xenous overhears this, and in a rage, he grasps the nearest heavy object, a candlestick or a statuette, and bashes Ludmeg in the head, and keeps hitting him after he's fallen, until we hear the sound of the skull crack. Then he seizes Ludmeg's sword and kills Anaclise for having witnessed this.

Act III: Xenous is now ranting non-stop, and continues to do so for the duration of the play. With the son dead, the old man mad, the other members of the house go into exile. House Moon will be able to claim victory. Xenous comes out of the house and orders gardener Xochian to dig graves in the gardens, and they bury the three bodies: young Xenous, Ludmeg, Anaclise. Old Xenous then apologizes to Xochian and kills him for having been a witness. By himself he digs a fourth grave and buries the gardener. He goes back to the statue of the fist and continues his monologue. He talks about the futility of action: by trying to save his house, he has instead destroyed it. Now unattended, the gardens begin to grow out of control, eventually filling the stage.



He seems not to know that there is another witness. Lady Verbena, since the death of her betrothed, has gone into seclusion in her tower. She has witnessed the burials. She claims to see visions of her own death at the hands of her uncle. She talks about going down to soothe his madness and rage. At this point both actors are speaking simultaneously, and it becomes harder to make out the words. They are the only two characters left; the other surviving members of House Auerbach have fled. As Verbena begins to speak, Xenous watches as the two children from the beginning return to the gardens, only to be devoured by the plants. It isn't long before the words themselves start to sound like nonsense, words from no recognizable language. The play ends with Xenous noticing Lady Verbena ranting to herself. He picks up the garden shears and stalks purposefully into the house.

"Gardens of Zil" is well-known throughout Twylos, and later editions and copies are not impossible to find elsewhere. Major libraries should possess a copy with 80% chance, while smaller libraries have only a 10% chance.

Port Haras

Small village. Once a port town, now without water.

Population: 56; 86% human, 14% orc.

Resources: poor, low magical and technological levels; some agriculture and husbandry, woodworking, clothmaking, some shipbuilding.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; democratic control, led by Innkeeper Theodore (5th level human), militia of 10.

In the midst of the Vehrlands steppe, Port Haras was once a fishing village of around 400 people on the edge of the bountiful Lake Alharas. In 401 S.E., a Sathar legion attacked Fort Varshe, about 30 miles from Haras. The Sathar unleashed several salamanders through a tunnel and began to burn the wood-fortified stronghold, but Varshe's

Duuran magician Braelin Xees summoned the waters of Alharas to put out the flames. His potent ritual was interfered with by Sathar archers in its final moments, and the miscast spell brought the entire lake over the fort, which obliterated the Sathar army and most of Varshe itself.

Haras is thus a port without any water, save a few small wells providing potable water for the villagers. Over the years, most of Haras has left and the buildings gone to ruin, but the many of the 56 remaining inhabitants have moved into the five stout fishing boats left stranded in the dry harbor, one of which is now a boarding house, and another serves as a tavern and general store. The tall masts and ships make for a strange site in the middle of the Vehrlands plains.

The Buried Lich: The ruins of Varshe have long been overgrown. The waters triggered a massive mudslide onto the Sathar camp, and the cracked earthen hill still stands next to the southern gate. Buried under

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

feet of now-hardened dirt and plant life is the Sathar sorcerer, now a lich, Threxen Vaes (5th Circle Hermetic) and four zombie salamanders. Encrusted and essentially entombed in the earth, Highlord Vaes will be understandably furious but somewhat relieved if somehow set free. Vaes wears an Amulet of the Burning Sun (see Appendix 2.1.1).

Ulmsdeep

Large village and landmark (lighthouse).

Population: 1,600; 90% human, 10% orc.

Resources: modestly wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; fishing, trade, woodworking, agriculture, shipbuilding, library.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Ixian.

Guilds: Slavers, Surveyors, Navigators, Alchemists.

Government: strict; monarchical control by Mayor Hubert VIII (T'suggha demon) and oligarchical control by the Slavers Guild, led by Journeyman Obhram Mendelene (6th level human), militia and navy of 30.

Ulmsdeep is a village harboring a terrible secret. The waters of Ulmsdeep are unusually rich in sea-life. In part due to warm ocean currents, but also because three centuries ago, a mighty kraken lived in a cavernous grotto near the modern harbor location of Ulmsdeep, and cultivated and summoned a host of aquatic creatures to serve it and feed it. The Duurans defeated it; unfortunately, a large population of merrow captured some of the kraken's surviving spawn. Recently, the sole survivor of the breeding colony escaped, and the young kraken has taken up residency in the same grotto as its ancestor.

Ulmsdeep is currently experiencing a boom, then, in seafood harvesting: octopus, shark, and fish of all varieties are local specialties, exported across the Vehrlands. Francis "Frank" Burton (3rd level), a local pirate, is currently wanted for plundering a few fishing vessels. Ulmsdeep itself is a modest-sized village, governed by Mayor Hubert VIII from his manor in Ulmsborg Keep, a larger walled city a day's travel inland from the Deep. Like most other cities in the Vehrlands, there is a loose arrangement with the Slavers Guild for management, protection, and taxation. Living here and patrolling Ulmsdeep village out of Aramstide Guildhall are Journeyman Obhram, his Apprentices Inago Ores (3rd level human), Lazlo Vrusk (7th level human), and Dominick Irtheth (2nd level human), and his Novices Bertil (1st level human) and Brenna (2nd level). Brenna owns Queyn's Timepiece. It was an heirloom from her mother which she keeps hidden, even though she does not know its power or even that it is magical, as it is kept unwound. Obhram is a widower. His daughter, Kaila Mendelene (2nd level human) is due to be sent to the Keep to marry the Mayor, whom she has not seen since before his transformation.

The Guild has had to fill in more than is normally comfortable for them, in this case because recently the Mayor has retired from the public eye. This is because he has been cursed by his half-sister, Sister Aprill du Maxinay (6th level human clone, 2nd Circle Faith, 2nd Circle Ritual). The Mayor appears to have been polymorphed into the form an immensely fat, disgusting froglike T'suggha demon (see Appendix 2.1.2). To cover his stench he wears an expensive flowery perfume; it effectively prevents the ill-effects of the T'suggha stench cloud, but still smells awful. Sister Aprill is a Duuran and a priestess of Breyana who lives in ice caves a few days' north of town with her ogre henchman, Tennyson (4th level ogre), who periodically brings giant ice blocks down to the village. She also has a polar bear companion, Urus Orman. In fact, though, neither Mayor Hubert nor Sister Aprill are what they seem; the Mayor is actually an insane demon who believes himself the Mayor, while Sister Aprill is the last of the few surviving, escaped Aprill clones from the Ixians' failed Aea Project. The Mayor's usual retainers have resigned, and he is now served by an eclectic collection of thugs (Christopher St. John, 4th level human; Balthazar Buchs, 4th level orc;

Captain Lars Volger, 3rd level human) and sycophants (Mr. Hendrey Grannich, 1st level human; Elga Seyan, 0th level human).

The standard of Ulmsdeep is a pair of lighthouses on a cliff, with an octopus at the bottom. Ulmsdeep is locally known for its two lighthouses- one in town, and the other on a small rock out at sea. This further lighthouse contains a secret door, leading to an elevator shaft going down. Below the lighthouse is an old Duuran undersea observatory, the Ulmsdeep Subsea Station. It is in two parts: the first section is directly below the lighthouse, while the second section is more distal, across the sea floor, separated by an incredible glass hallway. Guarding this hallway is a large, bored charudemon, Ezekiel. The Subsea Station has not been disturbed in many long years; Ezekiel is happy to talk about it with interested parties, but woe to them who try to enter the hallway- Ezekiel is charged with preventing all access.

The merrow city is built up from the seafloor about thirty miles off the coast. The merrow worship, and are the thralls of, a gigantic jellyfish they call the Jade Goddess (treat as a quadruple-sized water elemental, with extra attacks that provoke resistance checks vs. her fatal poison). Low doses of her toxin induce colorful hallucinations, which have been integrated into the merrows' odd religious worship of this thing.

The Vehrlands Ocean Road

Region and landmark (road); plains, some hills, mountains, and forests. Long, lazy traderoad through the Vehrlands.

Common encounters: brigands, gypsies, hunters, miners, ogres, snakes, Surveyors, Slavers, traders, wolves.

Rare encounters: bears, Duurans, giants, harpies, large cats, lindworms, spiders, undead, wild horses.

The Vehrlands plains form a huge agricultural region and trading zone for most of western Twylos. Winding its way roughly east-west is one of the Surveyors Guild's main contributions, the Ocean Road. It was originally named after its chief architect, Guildmaster Iosham of Rheyas; it was this road that led to Iosham's eventual role as Guildmaster for the entire Surveyors Guild. However, most of the people involved in its construction and use misspoke and called it the 'Ocean Road', because of its destination at the western edge of the main Twylos continent. The Ocean Road is safer and less-traveled than the Zhellan Traderoad, and for that reason there are fewer guards and roadhouses posted along it. It is also considerably longer in size, as there are many smaller trails that connect the widely-spread cities to the north and south of the main road.

Vesbridge

Major city.

Population: 34,000; 84% human, 9% orc, 5% reptilian, 2% misc (including dwarves, faeries, ogres, ratkin).

Resources: fairly wealthy, moderate magical and technological levels; trade, agriculture and husbandry, woodworking, metalworking, mining (few precious and heavy metals), stonecraft, art, library.

Religion: Thainist, Ixian, Aguierré, Duuran, Typhon.

Guilds: Slavers, Surveyors, Alchemists.

Government: strict; monarchic control by the Duchess Khellen Zurmeier (9th level human), army of 1,100.

So-called for the massive armored bridge that connects the southern Vehrlands to the north and to Tarach. Vesbridge has a rich and bloody history during the Vehrlands War; as it was the main site for both Taran and Saethan reinforcements, and the Sathar captured it a total of three times, completely destroying it on the third occasion. Vesbridge is now a hotbed of activity for the Bone Trade, due partially to its convenient location on the route between Mask and Vussar, but also

because of the vast numbers of impromptu graves and battlefields surrounding Vesbridge. Vesbridge is another one of the Vehrland's quasi-city-states, ruled by the Duchess Khellen Zurmeier.

The Castellan of Woodsmith Hall: In the middle of the plains, ten days from Vesbridge and six miles off the road, a small keep stands from the early days of the Vehrlands War. Called Woodsmith Hall, its previous lord, the eccentric and inventive Lord Stencil, left it in haste when the Great War first broke out. Still tending to the Hall is the Castellan, a spindly wooden automaton (as a Lesser Golem).

Zolace

Landmark (Duran laboratory and ancient tomb). Surreal domain of Petrarch, greatest of the Duran hierophants.

The Durans were among the first to come to the Vehrlands. In the First Era, when the schisms in the Vox Duur began to occur, the Duran Hierophant Petrarch was one of the main instigators in the philosophical split between the Durans and the Church of Winter.

While the Vox Duur believed that Hermetic magic was infernal, heretical, and corrupting, the Church of Winter saw it as a tool for understanding the world of Twylos. Petrarch and his followers, called the Naturalists, took a middle view, and thought that Hermetic magic was a dangerous gift, but one that should be carefully and controllably explored, to divine just why the Arcanos had left it behind. They believed strongly in the recurrent Voran Cycle Twylos, based on three governing principles: sympathy (self-similarity and repetition of forms), antipathy (the natural opposition of the elements and predator-prey relations), and entropy (that all things change, fade, and die).

Ostracized and in fear of his life, Petrarch fled to the Vehrlands and constructed a complex underground abode, Zolace. He and the Naturalists would travel across the entire reaches of Twylos, collecting and cataloguing the diverse species of plants, animals, stones, monsters, and magic. After Petrarch's death, the Naturalists left Zolace and fled into the wilds, where some of them mated with wolves to spawn the race of Gnoles. Zolace is unknown to most of Twylos, its entrance carefully hidden amongst stone crags in the middle of nowhere.

Zolace: Zolace is a large series of underground chambers. It is found at the far western edge of Twylos, approximately equidistant from Ulmsdeep, Mask, and Murdyne. It remains one of Twylos' greatest secrets, and contains an untapped wealth of information in its archives. Its security was ensured by Petrarch, who came to learn not only about the Arcanos masters of the Cult of Winter, but also the Archons. His revelations led to paranoia, causing him to seal and secret away Zolace, to protect his findings from abuse by the unworthy. Within Zolace are several regions: the Botanical Gardens, the Prisons, the Archives, the Steamworks, and the Zoological Quarantine. These different areas are protected by many of the druids' wards and creatures, and several monstrous specimens remain in stasis in the Quarantine. Zolace also contains Petrarch's masterwork, "The Bestiary", a large tome that contains a description and in some cases, true names, of many species of Twylos.

Meeks and Huxley: Only three times has Zolace been disturbed after it was sealed: once during the Vehrlands War, by four renegade soldiers still imprisoned by one of its traps, and twice by members of the Bone Trade. The same individuals entered it twice: the sorcerer Parsifal Meeks (7th level human, 3rd Circle Hermetic, 1st Circle Faith), the enchanter Glenn Huxley (5th level human, 2nd Circle Hedge), and Brenna Vaust (5th level human). They accidentally detonated one of Petrarch's worst traps, the Horological Recurrence, causing them to be teleported randomly in time, in their case backwards a few years. After finding each other again, they returned to Zolace in 200 T.E., only to set off the same ward and be sent forward to 211 T.E. Now, Meeks and Huxley are about to finally meet again, their brains somewhat addled by the eldritch spell. Neither knows where Miss Brenna might be, but are eager to return to Zolace, possibly assisted by some naïve mercenaries. Meeks and Huxley have no idea what they came across, and each has a different theory: Huxley thinks this is a solipsistic dream world, while Meeks believes he is dead and in the Gray Lands; they have thus become somewhat jaded, confused, and amoral. Their interest now is twofold: the mysteries of Zolace, and also to find their lost friend Brenna.

The Knights of Petrarch: While Meeks and Huxley did not thoroughly explore Zolace, they did manage to make it into the Zolace Steamworks. The Steamworks was one of Petrarch's last constructions before he died and fled to the Dream Realms of his Crypt. Meeks and Huxley accidentally activated it on their first visit, and since 200 T.E., the Steamworks has been constructing one Knight of Petrarch every year. The Knights are Iron Golems that exist to destroy the agents of the Arcanos and Archons. They appear as man-sized suits of full plate armor, wielding dangerous weapons, and have begun to scour Twylos. Generally traveling and acting alone, various Knights are in search of Meeks and Huxley and the Aprill clones of Aea Convent. The Knights continue to be produced by the arcane machines of the Steamworks, which are themselves guarded by two such constructs, one on the ground floor and one above, carrying a metal crossbow. Charged to guard the Steamworks, these guardians will not leave the room in pursuit of intruders.

The Cottage of Sleep: In a far corner of the halls of Zolace lies a small chamber containing a magical transport mirror. This portal is sealed, and can only be opened by a Gate spell or treatment with special Mirror Oil (see Appendix I), not to be found in the rest of Zolace. (Thus characters wishing to proceed further will need to procure this Oil in some way; it is up to the Game Master to decide when and where to provide this substance.) This mirror goes to the same ethereal cottage as in Maerswinter, and was used by the Naturalists for their exploration of Thenzor, and to spy on the evils of Zoran. This strange, quiet place is the entry point to the Crypt of Petrarch, who is a somewhat bored and deranged lich of utmost power, hidden away from Twylos, the Arcanos, and the Archons in a small pocket dimension. The cottage compels those within it to sleep; Mental Resistance checks, at increasingly more difficult target numbers (10, 11, 12, ...) must be made hourly to remain awake here. The cottage is a small, three-level house, floating suspended within the Ethereal void. On the first floor is a closet, where those who travel from Zolace emerge from, as well as an antechamber and a modest kitchen. Upstairs are two bedrooms, and downstairs is an empty cellar. There is a 1% cumulative chance per hour that the charudemon watchman Baruchus will return to cook uninvited guests in his kitchen. Covered up by drywall is a small brick passageway that leads to another mirror. This mirror, like most of the transport mirrors of Twylos and Petrarch's Crypt, also requires Mirror Oil to be applied to it to cause it to open.

Petrarch's Crypt: Travel through the mirror gate deposits those who enter it in one arm of a larger passageway, more grand, and tiled with black and white marble. The hall forms an elongated cross, with a door at each end. The door that leads back to the cottage has a simple wooden frame. The door in the left arm is made of solid steel; around the door are engravings of weapons and scenes of battle, steam leaks from the doorframe, and sounds of machines can be heard behind it. This door leads to the Age of Rust. The door in the right arm is made of opaque, shiny crystal, and an ominous blue glow can faintly be seen at the cracks. This door leads to the Age of Glass. Each door of these three doors is cracked open the smallest amount. Beside each door is a pair of lamps, shining softly. The hall extends down further than the others. At the end is the fourth door, of fine dark wood, engraved with vines and roses, leading to Petrarch's Tomb.

Lining the hall are what seems to be six paintings, each covered with a black cloth. The first painting is an extreme close-up of a grinning, feminine

mouth. Teeth are bared. The second painting is of a young woman and two men, one dressed as a stereotypical wizard, one as a court jester. They are sitting around a small table in a cabin, playing cards with a Bevi deck. The third painting is a close-up of a hand. Male, somewhat veiny and wrinkled. It's clutching a knife by the blade, so that the edge has cut into two of the fingertips and two lines of blood run down the canvas. The fourth painting depicts the same three figures, but on a stage in a dark theatre. Apparently a magic trick is about to be performed, as there is a large gaudy cabinet in the middle of the stage. The girl is watching in delight as the jester is being shackled into the cabinet by the older magician. The fifth painting seems to be the aftermath of the fourth painting. The girl has opened the cabinet prematurely, and has a look of shock and horror on her face. Gore pours out of the re-arranged cabinet. The magician holds his head in his hands. The sixth painting is a huge close-up of a dark, bloodshot eye, wide and staring.

The Curious Folio: At the beginning of this hall to the right is a lectern on which sits a folio, open to a gold-leaf page. The folio consists of four gilt plates. Each pair of pages is laid out in the same manner: an elaborate color drawing on the left, and some illuminated text on the right. The first three pages of text are quatrains, the last page is a sonnet.

PAGE 1

The image: The iron door in the hall. Standing next to the door is a jester or juggler, a man in an outrageous outfit. Tasseled hat, holding three knives of different sizes, apparently ready to juggle them. Long thin face, long nose, beady eyes, and a somewhat menacing, intense gaze. In script above the picture, it reads: "Bartleby Ravenous IV".

The text:

*When avarice has failed, when the object lesson's lost
When time's past long for pretty givings, for-getting pentecost
When all around is ashes fading, crumbled into Rust
That's when I'll take the final piece, purloin away your trust.*

PAGE 2

The image: The glass door. Next to the door is a young woman in a simple, unadorned peasant dress. Long blond hair, mostly uncombed. Her gaze is directed upwards towards three large moths or butterflies fluttering just above her head. In script above the picture, it reads: "Sarah DeVauNET".

The text:

*I trusted you to take my heart, to take me by the hand
To show me things before unseen and things grotesque and grand
But these images refracted and these panes now shards of Glass
My hand and heart retracted and my love has come to pass.*

PAGE 3

The image: The wooden door. Standing tall next to it is an older man, perhaps in his 40s or 50s, clearly dressed as a wizard. Rune-covered robes and pointy hat, spectacles. A stage magician's cabinet can be seen off to one side, on it rests a skull and one of the wizard's hands. The script reads: "Arcades Shavaat".

The text:

*No love within these quiet walls, nor home nor hearth do beat
No child's song has chill'd for long; for stillness we entreat
From silence, violence, passions high and now only to Sleep
Not home nor hearth, greed's masquerade; not cottage but a keep.*

PAGE 4

The image: The door at the end of the hall, fine wood covered in ivy, roses, and thorns. Around the edge of the sword can be seen a chain.

The text:

*Greetings to one so brave or foolish to come into this space
Around you, calm and nothingness, or maybe waste and desolation
Ruined dreams of what once was in another time and place
Depicting much but meaning little as begets my fascination.
"Enough!" You cry. "And show yourself! Your coward's hands and face!"
"None of this transparent! None of this my destination!"
Oblivious your cries to me. Your dreams and nightmares base.
For this is naught but just a tomb, my final abrogation.*

*Though something more, alas, unwell, that escaped this cold demesne
Hewed of steel and hope and hate, created for a muse
Or perhaps not, perhaps I knew, just death my lady friend.
Rain, then; and rain again, and rain and rot and rain
No longer mine, nor his, nor hers- "Enough!" you cry "Of clues!"
So it's come to this, it always does, from beginning to The End.*

The Age of Rust: The Age of Rust is a pocket dimension which appears as a giant, ruined factory, full of partially built constructs and rusted implements of war. It is a huge enclosed chamber, several miles across, and filled with piles of metal junk. Two bronze golems wielding magical scimitars (+1 to-hit and damage) immediately attack anyone who enters. Deeper inside are four giant brass scorpions that are also hostile. Within the chamber are three buildings made of brick and steel: a chapel, a theatre, and a foundry. In the chapel is a smashed-open and empty glass coffin. Within the coffin is the Song of Sarah DeVauNET (see Appendix I). The theatre contains a broken organ, a large harp, and a curtained stage, on which sleeps a clockwork wyrm

(as smok dragon) guarding a locked iron trunk. Inside is the Seal of the Archons. The foundry contains the Steel Smith who, if cleaned up and activated, is quite good at crafting and augmenting enchanted weapons.

The Age of Glass: This pocket dimension seems to be a small village in the mountains, bathed in the violet light of an enormous sun and two radiant moons. There are four buildings here, made of flimsy wood, plaster, and glass: a teahouse (containing four lovely glass flowers), the glassworks (where the Crystal Mage of Shadowfall manufactured his defenses; this building contains another Glass Man who will attack, along with an enchanted Glass Shield (see Appendix I) and 10 Glass Arrows (see Appendix I)), a laboratory (with the recipe and components necessary to make five more doses of Mirror Oil, as well as several other potions), and a tower (guarded by two conjuring eyes and four paintings that individually cast 5th Circle Hermetic, Hedge, Faith, or Ritual magic; the tower contains an annotated copy of Ozmandian's Histories and Theologies obtained Horologically, a Glass Spear (see Appendix I), some sketches and lovenotes to an unnamed woman, and the Seal of the Arcanos). Next to the teahouse is a small garden of a few snapdragons that Petrarch infrequently cultivates. In the middle of the square outside are four Crystal Soldiers (treat as iron golems) that attack anyone but Petrarch.

The Garden of Thorns: Petrarch's tomb is an unreal and lush garden. It cannot be opened unless both the Seals of the Archon and the Arcanos have been destroyed. Petrarch himself can usually be found here (26th level lich, 8th Circle Hermetic, 8th Circle Faith, 5th Circle Ritual, 20 intellect, 20 presence). He carries his Bloodlord Staff (see Appendix I) as a sentimental reminder of his Duran days, the Ring of the Void, and a Static Egg (see Appendix I). Petrarch has spied Muriel in her Dream Realm but believes her to be his lost love Sarah DeVaunet, or maybe even Lady Kithain, making him wonder if he is Vorn himself (he is not). He will not be hostile to visitors who have made it thus far, but will attempt to persuade them to stay with him here in his Tomb, free from the clutches and domination by the Arcanos and the Archons, one of which he absolutely believes has returned to Twylos. Rather, he suggests destruction of the portals which led here from Zolace, and a life of quiet reflection in his garden.



Appendix 2.1.1: Special Items of Twylos

This is a listing of magical items, artifacts, and relics specific to the world of Twylos.

Armor

Glass Armor: Glass Armor was forged in the pocket dimension of the Age of Glass. It is not true glass, but made of a flexible crystalline substance similar to that found at Rhaxen. Glass Armor (usually shields and plate armor) absorbs an extra 2 points per attack. (Note that unlike Glass Weapons, Glass Armor is not destroyed upon the first successful blow.)

Artifacts

The Amulet of Lozzo: This is an Amulet of Sustenance which allows the bearer to survive without food or water. It cannot be removed once worn short of an Exorcism spell or similar Benefaction. The bearer continues to age but will not die of natural causes. The Amulet's true magic, however, is in the dreams it imparts. If the wearer is a magic-

user, the imp Lozzo will appear in their dreams, and act as a research assistant, granting a +2 on appropriate Knowledge skill checks that might be ruminated on overnight. Lozzo is helpful and obsequious, but somewhat creepy. Over several months or years, Lozzo will gradually prepare his master or mistress for a dream meeting with his true master, Astor Vox Lorranaus, a lich that lives in a shadowy gallery, full of covered paintings and unwritten books, lost within the Dream Realms. The Amulet of Lozzo is worn by Graccus Markovitch in the cellars of Thorneskeep.

Arcadian Spell Engine: This is a greenish-steel metallic belt that confers Hermetic magic abilities upon the wearer, at the cost of their memories. It takes one full night for this process to occur, during which the wearer loses all previous disciplines and proficiencies. In the morning, the user gains Hermetic Magic and 1st-6th Circle disciplines. It also increases intellect by 1 (max. 20, or raises it to 8 if originally 6 or lower), and reduces presence by 2. As the Engine implants part of itself directly in the wearer's lower spine, it cannot be removed without killing its host. Removal generally destroys the magic of the device as well. The Engines were built by the Arcanos in the time before the First Era to give their servants Hermetic abilities. There are only a few (two or three) such devices left intact on Twylos.

The Book of Bad Dreams: This unusual and unique tome is divided into six chapters, each of which cause the reader to fall asleep and enter a horrific nightmare world: unless a certain action is taken and others avoided, the reader gets no rest that night and wakes fatigued (no spells or health points returned, and all attributes are -1 for the day). Initially, before dreaming, players should be told the chapter titles and nothing else. Upon dreaming during the first night, very little information should be imparted, and the player character should be given a single chance to formulate their action or actions. Chapters begin the same night after night, and repeated readings and different actions may reveal more about the workings, mechanisms, and options available with each strange nightmare world. Success in the chapter, however, grants a permanent +1 to an associated attribute score or bonus skill points (that do not count towards the character's level advancement). Each chapter can be solved but once before it loses its magical abilities.

Chapter 1, "The Good Son": You are a child, afraid and sent to your room. Today is the day that your father is taken by the Mystics for treason. Locked in your windowless room, with only a trunk of properly folded clothes, the sadness is overwhelming. Your mother, deceased, left behind her closet and her mirror. With your father taken away, the

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

other villagers give up trying to fight against the high taxes and flee, leaving you desperately alone. You, however, are a monstrous ogre, and the solution is to run downstairs and kill the Mystic; thus the rest of the Mystics will leave the village behind in fear. Saving the father grants a +1 to strength (max. 20; if strength is already at 20, 5 discipline points are gained instead).

Chapter II, "The Thing Under the Bed": It is a cold, dark night. It lurks under your bed, waiting for you to fall asleep, or try to sneak out to get some water or use the outhouse. But you are so tired and need to sleep. It will eat you, regardless, unless you scream loudly three times for your mother to come with her lantern and scare it away. Escaping being devoured grants a +1 to endurance (max. 20; if endurance is already at 20, 5 discipline points are gained instead).

Chapter III, "Buried Alive": You awake in darkness. You are buried in a coffin deep within the earth, with nothing to help you. Any action results in madness and slow death, save that of trying to wake up from this horrible dream. Successful realization that this is in fact just a dream grants +1 to intellect (max. 20; if intellect is already at 20, 5 discipline points are gained instead).

Chapter IV, "Vs.": It is the end of a long, gloomy day, and you have traveled since dawn in the rain, into the foothills, across barren wastes, finally to reach the cave. Along with a faithful donkey. For months, the ogre Nysthes has been attacking your village; at first, it was stealing livestock, then robbing peasants. But with the assault and murder of Marissa, your beloved cousin- something had to be done. You are neither the oldest, nor strongest, nor bravest. It was simply that you chose the shortest straw last week. Now you stand at Nysthes' lair. The donkey is laden with supplies and implements of destruction. Good thing too, as through the rain and coming darkness, the massive ogre comes out of the cave, brandishing a gigantic club. The donkey is loaded down with a crossbow, a longbow, bolts and arrows, a hatchet, a long knife, a giant two-handed sword, a sling, some rocks, some rope, a morning star, some flaming oil, and a brick. While all that might sound good, the correct action is to run away. +1 to agility (max. 20; if agility is already at 20, 5 discipline points are gained instead).

Chapter V, "Lost in the Woods": You are alone at night, lost in a dark forest, far from home. All around you are horrible beasts, giant six-legged cats stalking you for their antlered masters, waiting for you to misstep. The realization that you are a Duuran, and can transform into a bird, solves that problem. +1 to presence (max. 20; if presence is already at 20, 5 discipline points are gained instead).

Chapter VI, "The Wedding": Why is it that on the brightest of days you always feel your worst? The assassins are coming to your seaside inn room, and they will kill you lest you escape out the window, down the alley, duck into the costume shop and disguise yourself as a demon, head through the sewers to the chapel out of town, go past the demons on the groom's side of the aisle, head to the back room and knock out the guard, escape with your betrothed out from the cellar, and smuggle away together on the ship outside your inn. After all this, and a kiss to convince her you're still the one, +10 discipline points.

Cloak of Teauvilliane: This is luxurious red cloak with an orange scorpion embroidered on the back. It confers a +2 modifier to Dodge, and grants the wearer the ability to Fold Space once per week.

The Cylene Snowglobe: The Snowglobe, a lesser cousin to the Quienae Snowglobes, Paralyzes and Enthralls those who watch it for up to one hour. These abilities are evoked together and can be used once per day. It is currently owned by Ren the Rat King in the sewers beneath Oolvaunt.

Essence Distiller: This is a large contraption of wood, glass, and odd machinery, roughly 10' x 10' x 10'. There is a large funnel, similar to a gramophone, about halfway up on the front side, an iron lever next to it, and a spigot and glass beaker just below. The Essence Distiller manufactures potions, and can be used once per day. Ingredients are fed into the funnel, and after all the ingredients have been placed inside, pulling the lever causes the machine to operate. Shaking, steaming, and grinding, it will produce a potion after several minutes. Exactly what potion is produced is up to the Game Master, but is based off whatever is fed into the machine. For instance, giving the Distiller a bird's wing and a bit of hair might create a Potion of Flight or a Potion of Bird Charming. Given the size, complexity, and delicate nature of the device, it cannot be moved. It resides in the basement laboratories of Thorneskeep.

Net of Ensnaring: A magical net used for capturing and containing a single creature of any shape or size less than 12' tall and 800 lbs. in weight. It magically expands or shrinks to completely cover the creature and hold them motionless. The user must make a normal attack roll (vs. the target's dodge), and if successful, the target is captured. The target may not move or act (but could still use innate spell powers, for example) while in the net, but can attempt a Feat of Strength (target number 18) once per round to escape. The net appears as a shimmering white net made from fine threads.

Portal Boxes: Portal boxes are always created as a pair of identical ornate coffers, typically no more than 1 cubic foot in volume. Due to the powerful enchantment upon the boxes, any item placed within one may be drawn from the other regardless of the distance in-between the two. For example, an apple placed within one portal box could subsequently be retrieved from its twin receptacle, thousands of miles away. Portal Boxes do not duplicate the items placed within them. Once an item is drawn from one box, it cannot be found within either. Due to the function of Portal Boxes, they are commonly found individually, the pair being separated by a substantial distance. One Portal Box must be closed in order to draw an item from the other.

The Quienae Snowglobes: The Quienae (KEY-nay) Snowglobes are powerful divination devices built and used by Emitter Quiene (KEEN), a courtier of the Sea Kings and high-ranking member and spy of the Guild of Thorns. Four in number, each contains a different scene; sometimes, small figures can be seen moving about within the Globes. 1st through 5th Circle Alteration and Divination spells can be cast through the Globes (although this can work two-ways). The magic of the Snowglobes is undetectable by Magic Acuity, Sense Magic, or other normal means of magical detection.

The White Snowglobe: The White Snowglobe depicts a pleasant winter's day in a Torsche garden; it is for sale in the Red Pawn (a back-alley Oolvaunt curio shop), and it gives the owner a +1 to all Knowledge checks. It also provides a general sense of direction of where the other three Snowglobes are located.

The Red Snowglobe: This artifact depicts a cluttered toyshop (Ixondr's workshop in Thorneskeep); it confers an additional four Circles of spells or six Ritual magic spell points to its owner per day, and it is found in a cabinet in a shipwreck off the Oolvaunt coast.

The Violet Snowglobe: The Violet Globe depicts a small, desolate mountain village with two moons in the background (The Age of Glass, of Petrarch's Tomb), and sits on a dusty shelf in the Zolace Botanical Gardens; attacks to its owner invoke an automatic Swan Song.

The Black Snowglobe: This Snowglobe is opaque, filled with black ink, and is linked to Cyndiquist's Zieth Cour; it was deposited in a vault in Arosquey and increases the grade of Silent Casting by two.



Staff of Xendor's Wrath: A long 7' staff of dark wood. The Staff currently has 13 charges and can possess a maximum of 20. For one charge, it can cast Shatter (as the 2nd Circle Hermetic spell). For two charges, it can cast Ice Ray (as the 3rd Circle Hermetic spell). For three charges, it can cast a Lightning Bolt (as the 4th Circle Hermetic spell). Each spell can only be used twice per day. Any time a Hermetic or Hedge spell is cast directly at the wielder, there is a 50% chance the Staff will absorb the spell, causing it to be ineffectual. Spells absorbed in this way recharge the Staff, one charge per Circle of the spell. If the Staff ever increases over 20 charges, or is directly broken, it releases all its energy in a massive blast, as a Firestorm (7th Circle Hermetic spell). The wielder and all within 10' have a 50% of being Disintegrated or 50% chance of being randomly Gated away. The Staff is owned by Dyson Gibbs, although most likely it will be in the possession of Abraxas when Gibbs and his team fail to destroy The Gray Man of Shadowsfall.

Static Egg: An extremely rare device that, when activated, disrupts all forms of magic shielding (such as the Magic Shield spell) within 100 feet for 3d6 rounds. The Egg can be used but once. These items were built by the Arcanos to help their servants against the Archons. There are not more than a handful of them left in existence.

Tabitha's Music Box: A small statuette of a dancing girl with three butterflies or moths above her head, suspended on wires connected to the base. When wound, the Box plays a short, sad tune that disrupts all spellcasting and magical effects (treat as Dispel Magic) for six rounds. This is a copy of the Zolace Music Box, made recently by Tabitha Morgan before her murder. It can be used twice per week in this manner- subsequent windings will only play the music without other effect. The Music Box is currently displayed at the top of the Shadowsfall Tower.

Zolace Music Box: This is identical in appearance and function to Tabitha's Music Box, although Tabitha's version is actually a copy of the Zolace Music Box. When wound, the Box plays a short, sad tune. In addition to the magic disrupting abilities, listening to the tune causes all who hear it to be affected by madness (as the 5th Circle Faith spell). It is also used to open one of the gates to Zolace.

Potions

Mirror Oil: This appears as thin oil with the color of steel, containing sparkling crystals. Mirror Oil is used to treat magical transport mirrors, allowing them to open. These transport mirrors are found throughout Twylos, and usually were built by powerful wizards or priests to give them access to all corners of the world. Inactivated transport mirrors appear a dull, non-reflective gray. Covering them with one dose of Mirror Oil causes them to shimmer and ripple, as though made of liquid. Mirror Oil, like the mirrors it is used to activate, is exceedingly rare. The Alchemists Guild has no knowledge of its recipe, let alone that there is such a thing.

Relics

Amulet of the Burning Sun: These are Ixian creations from the mid-First Era, although they have since been co-opted by Hermetic spellcasters to the Ixians' dismay. These devices add a modifier of +1 to all damage done with flame magic and force Resistance checks to these spells at a -2 penalty.

The Books of Xeres: These books are strange and powerful tomes, that are unadorned and non-descript, save for their title on the spine. Each book is quite different in nature, and they have been lost across all of Twylos. They are six in number, and (in order of power) their titles are: the Book of Black Patterns, the Book of Spheres, the Book of Mirrors, the Book of Numbers, the Book of Nightmares, and the Book of Dreams. The magic of these books is undetectable by normal means- Sense Magic and the like will not reveal them to be enchanted.

The Book of Black Patterns: This book is 99 pages in length, divided into two sections. The first shorter chapter of 33 pages contains the plans for creation of an elaborate loom-like torture device, containing a large number of strings, wires, levers, pulleys, needles, retractors, and razors that are to be assembled together in a complex way. A humanoid is to be placed in a cage-like structure in the center, and the implements of pain placed in specific locations, connected to the wires and string to be manipulated by the rest of the horrific device. These plans are written in Duuran in small, precise handwriting. The remainder of the book contains a set of 66 episodes that appear similar to musical scores, one to a page, that direct the reader to 'play' the device in certain ways to evoke specific patterns of torture and agony in the victim. Construction of the device requires an Engineering skill check with target number 13. Performance of one of the scores inflicts 1d4 points of damage on the victim, and takes a full hour. (The victim and the performer cannot generally be the same individual.) Complete performance of all 66 scores on the same victim in a relatively-uninterrupted period grants a Communion (as the 7th Circle Faith spell Commune) with Xeres, for better or worse. At the Game Master's option, playing of other scores individually or in combination may lead to other magical effects, although in general the Book of Black Patterns has no real utility. A copy and interpretation of the second part of the Book was made in the late First Era. With no title and no text, save for the title in Irendi on the first inner page, it consists simply of 66 drawings of a pair of six-fingered but otherwise human hands. On each page, these hands illustrate a number of string games similar to cat's cradle. The various string maneuvers correspond to the operations of the device. Since this odd copy was made, a number of later copies of this book were made, some still to be found in the older libraries of Twylos. The real Book of Black Patterns is in a pocket dimension of the Blood Realms, in the possession of the late Franz Dominer of Ayles.

The Book of Dreams: An item of inestimable power, the Book of Dreams gives the reader the ability to remake reality and create alternate dimensions. It acts as a Change spell, and can be used once per day. Essentially, the reader's language and thoughts become like

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

that of the Arcanos, able to remold the world according solely to one's will. The Book of Dreams is no longer on Twylos, and was taken by Lady Muriel to her Dream Realm so that she might lose herself in the creation of alternate realities.

The Book of Mirrors: Unlike the other books, the Book of Mirrors is connected to a specific place (the Hall of Mirrors in Lunais) and is useless outside of the Hall. It allows a total of 13 inscriptions to be made within it, to permanently open a two-way portal to any other location in Twylos (or, in the last case, to Lady Muriel's Dream Realm). Inscriptions must be made using an ink manufactured from Mirror Oil. In this way, the Transport Mirrors can be operated without further need of the oil. Most of the mirrors are already inscribed, but a few lines remain blank in the book.

The Book of Nightmares: This book contains a collection of horrid stories from Twylos' past. Each time the Book is opened, a different Nightmare is featured. Reading excerpts from the Book imparts the effects of a Revelation Domain Faith magic spell, of any Circle. A random Damnation spell, of the same Circle, comes as a consequence. This Book is found in Lady Muriel's former home on Lunais.

The Book of Numbers: The Book of Numbers is seemingly innocuous, and appears as a faded red-bound book of approximately 200 pages. It is simply a book of infinite pages, with each successive page numbered in series (1,2,3,...). Contemplation of the book has inspired past owners towards poetry, madness, and wonderment, some of which is maintained as scrawled notes from different pens on certain pages, including possibly the inscription of a novel spell or recipe, if the Game Master desires. Almost all of the pages are unmarked though. Opening the book to a random page does just that- the reader opens to a page with a random page number. It is seemingly impossible to turn to the very last page. The Book of Numbers is found tucked away in a miniature library within the ship-in-a-bottle in Tabitha Morgan's Dollhouse.

The Book of Spheres: This book is bound in blue cloth and untitled. It contains 13 pages, each made of thick ivory. Upon each page is a colored circle and a word written in script. Speaking the word while the page is open causes that particular circle to rise off the page and turn into a large, floating sphere of 3' diameter. The sphere can be reached into, and acts as a magical container similar to a Magic Bag. The volume within each sphere is 8' x 8' x 8'. Living things placed within the spheres go into a state of stasis and do not age or rot. It remains floating above the book and disappears back into the pages if the book is closed, the pages turned, or the word is spoken again. While the Game Master should make up suitable words and sphere contents, here is an example listing:

Page 1: Red sphere, "calumny". Inside is a plain wooden box containing 1d100 sc and 1d4 gems each worth 100 sc.

Page 2: Pale blue sphere, "malodorous". Nothing is inside.

Page 3: White sphere, "carnivorous". Nothing is inside.

Page 4: Orange sphere, "insipid". Nothing is inside.

Page 5: Violet sphere, "cloven". Nothing is inside.

Page 6: Green sphere, "antipathy". Inside is a collection of rations, water, and ale (enough to feed six people for two weeks).

Page 7: Blue sphere, "deltos". Nothing is inside.

Page 8: Pale green sphere, "murderous". Inside is a random wand (roll on the Magic Wands table).

Page 9: Yellow sphere, "vicissitude". Inside is a small jewelry box containing 1d10 gc and a bottle of expensive perfume.

Page 10: Black sphere, "perplex". Nothing is inside.

Page 11: Silver sphere, "parlous". Inside is a plain wooden coffin, holding the corpse of a minor Irendi aristocrat from mid-First Era.

Page 12: Pink sphere, "bereft". Nothing is inside.

Page 13: Gold sphere, "abomination". Inside is a large collection of costumes and clothes, mainly for a tall woman.

Crown of the Rat King: This is the crown of Ren the Rat King, stolen from him for the God of Slime beneath Oolvaunt. Ren's Crown confers the ability to Speak with and Charm ratkin, were-rats, and rats of all sizes. It also grants the wearer a +1 adjustment to presence (max. 20) when in darkness.

Doors of Xendor: The massive iron doors to the tombs of the Irendi emperors were cursed by the last of the Ironguard priests, as their last act before they disbanded. The doors are magically sealed, requiring a Feat of Strength (target number 30) to be opened. They are impervious to spells of less than 5th Circle. Any attempt to open them, either magically or by force, results in all four forms of Glyphs of Ruin (Calamity, Fealty, Insanity, and Wrath) to appear before the intruders. This occurs regardless of whether the attempt was successful or not, and the Glyphs will continue to appear for each subsequent attempt. Physical destruction of the doors is also unlikely, as they should be considered to have 100 health points and armor absorption of 10 points; any attack will also trigger the Glyphs' appearance.

Egg of Voon: The Egg of Voon is a large black stone about the size and shape of a rough-hewn ostrich egg. It is completely covered in strange glyphs, similar to the runes of Hermetic magic, but unintelligible. The Egg of Voon was first found on the island of Voon by explorers in the pay of House Tharose, who did not understand its purpose. It was stolen by Master Reeves of the Guild of Optics in the late Second Era, only to be taken from him by a treacherous demon and deposited in the pits of Xociene, where it remains. The Egg acts as a Ritual Magic battery, storing up to 66 spell points for the casting of death magic (e.g., Create Undead or Steal Life), and extends the duration from which creatures can be returned from the dead up to one year per additional spell point expended. Charging the Egg requires an elaborate sacrificial ritual, with one victim per spell point. The Egg of Voon is one of the Jewels of Cardonian Asmoday, taken to Voon by some of Zoran's Order of Nhull disciples.

The Glabrous Antinomy: This is a large golden ring, which grants use of the Conversational Casting discipline. If the wearer already possesses that discipline, the ring grants a +6 modifier on the proficiency check(s) required to use this discipline. The Antinomy is a Typhonic artifact, whose name derives from the 'three antinomies', or philosophical paradoxes, of the Typhoniae scholar Graccus Antony, who struggled with Typhonic theology. The first dealt with men and charm magic: how can someone be charmed, know it, and still act against their nature? The second dealt with demons and summoning magic: are demons and summoned creatures truly here to help? The final antinomy concerned the gods and divination magic: how does divination and prophecy affect the final outcome of an event? And should the Typhoniae sit and wait, content with the prophecy alone, or help push things along themselves?

Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday: Each of the Jewels is a black diamond the size of a man's fist. Easily worth 30,000 sc in non-magical value alone, the jewels, also known as the Zoran Keys or Keystones, are part of the magical Gate in the Zoran Academy at the bottom of Thenzor Deep. The Jewels are essentially indestructible, only able to be destroyed by a powerful magical weapon, and only when placed within the Zoran Gate itself. Whether destruction of the Jewels permanently seals the Gate- or opens it- is unknown. One of the Jewels is better known as the Egg of Voon, although its identity as a Zoran Keystone is largely unrecognized. The Egg is deep in the pits of Xociene. One of the other Jewels is lost within the 9th level of Thenzor Deep, in the tomb of Carcodian Asmoday, one of the masters of the old Order of Nhull. The third Jewel is in a gallery in one of the manor houses on Piedmont.

Realmstones: Realmstones are minor magical trinkets, usually incorporated into jewelry such as rings or amulets. They provide Ritual magic practitioners with one additional spell point each day of a given kind. Bloodstones are deep red and provide +1 Blood spell point, Dreamstones are milky violet and provide +1 Dream spell point, Earthstones are brownish-orange and provide +1 Gaea spell point, and Millstones are polished gray and provide +1 Stitch spell point.

The Song of Sarah DeVaunet: This is a piece of sheet music, containing a short elegy to be sung soprano. Singing the music correctly requires a Performance (singing) check of 20. Once per month, when performed correctly, the Song forces all to hear it to make Mental Resistance checks (target number 19). Those who fail the check are killed; those who succeed are affected as if by a Phrenic Trap (as the 5th Circle Hedge spell), but gain a +8 modifier to all Knowledge checks for the remainder of the day. The performer is immune to the effects of the Song herself. If sung more than once per month, or the Performance check is failed, the singer lapses into depression, unable to act except defensively for 1d10 days.

Spade of Gayla: This is an object sacred to the Order of Zhol and the Church of Nergal. They hold that this spade will be used by Gayla, daughter of Zhol, to bury her family members at the end of the Voran Cycle. It is a long, plain spade, with a 5' wooden handle and a rough iron blade. Anyone buried with it has their soul destroyed- they cannot be resurrected, reincarnated, or return as undead. A Change spell could reverse the effects of the Spade, but a second spell would still be required to bring the subject back from the dead.



Scrolls

The Scroll of Vriian: This ancient text is a scroll of terrible ability. It is unique, with the sole Scroll of Vriian currently found in Lady Muriel's manor on Lunais. The Scroll may only be read once before it teleports

away somewhere far across Twylos. It summons the demon Vriian, which appears as a massive swarm of flying insects, that consumes all in its path (akin to the 4th Circle Faith spell Swarm, but Vriian automatically does damage of 1d10, +1 per caster level, each round, to all inside its radius of 10' per caster level, lasts until all creatures within 100 yards are dead or gone, and cannot be dispelled by any natural or magical means save a Banish spell roll of 11 or higher or similar method).

Wands

Nael's Fleshrod: This is a unique item made by Nael, one of the first major sorcerers of Arosquey. The Fleshrod has the ability to undo Petrification when touched to previously living creatures. If touched to inanimate statues, it will bring them to life as per the 7th Circle Hermetic spell Golem. Each use uses one charge, and 1d4 + 1 charges remain in the Rod. Sterling R. Halifax of Brandmoor possesses the Fleshrod.

Wand of Plenty: The ills of Xeres tend to corrupt enchantments and magical items that it contacts, with these Wands serving as a good example. Originally Duuran Wands of Plant Growth, they were defiled by priests of the Mad God and forever changed. Using a Wand now drains one charge and has a random effect, mimicking the magic of other magic wands. The effect of each wand when used is different every time- roll randomly on the Wand chart to determine what a particular usage does. In general, a Wand of Plenty has 1d20 charges.

Weapons

The Arannasblade: A bastard sword with a colorful nickname, the "Bride of Abraxas". It is +1 to-hit and damage, grants a +1 adjustment to presence (max. 20), and allows the wielder to use through it the Steal Vigor spell (4th Circle Ritual magic) three times per day (i.e., a successful melee attack with the Bride allows automatic use of Steal Vigor). It is wielded by Sister Betca of Venoshua, in Armech.

Blade of Shadows: Several of these short swords were crafted for the assassins of Irendor's First Era. Later, three of them turned up in the hands of the Guild of Thorns. The Blade is +1 to-hit and damage, and grants a +2 bonus to Stealth proficiency checks. The owner also possesses Darkvision (as the 2nd Circle Hedge spell, operating continually).

Bloodlord Staff: A rare and powerful staff given to Duuran Bloodlords. It confers a +3 modifier to-hit, and can hold 10 charges. Each successful hit uses one charge, which will cast Steal Vigor on the target. One charge can be returned to it overnight by expending 20 of the owner's health points in a long ritual; these health points are considered to be lost over the course of the night, and cannot be healed until the next day.

Dagger of Lies: A nefarious weapon from the Blood Realms. This dagger confers a +1 modifier to-hit and damage, and on a natural 19 or 20, injects the victim with a poison that reduces their endurance by 1d6 + 2 on a failed Physical Resistance check (target number 16). One point of lost endurance will come back with each day of bed rest.

Glass Weapons: A variety of weapons were made by an alien smith in Petrarch's Age of Glass. These weapons, generally swords, spears, and arrows, are +3 to-hit, but are destroyed upon their first successful hit. Each weapon inflicts critical hit damage (double the normal damage), and on a natural 20 (or 19-20 if the wielder possesses the Critical Hit discipline), inflicts enhanced critical hit damage (triple the normal damage).

Golgothan White Blade: A longsword that is +2 to-hit and damage. Its owner is cursed to suffer from melancholia and despair, granting a -2 adjustment to their presence attribute. It is owned by Hector Ransum, formerly of the Conclave.

Hammer of Storms: This is a mighty 6' maul. It acts as a Hammer of Thunder (providing a +2 modifier to-hit and can deafen/stun opponents), but has a +4 modifier to damage, and also allows the wielder to Greatstrike with it (or, if the wielder has the Greatstrike discipline, allows Greatstriking up to six times per hour). Additionally, any object hit with it, including shields and armor, must make a resistance check (1d20, target number equal to the amount of damage done) or be Crumbled, as if by the 3rd Circle Hermetic spell.

Mace of Darklens: A unique mace that is made of black iron, and drips what seems to be liquid shadows off the head. It is +2 to-hit and damage, and once per round, casts a Damnation spell of random Circle and nature on its target. Roll 1d8 for the Faith spell Circle and 1d20 for the specific spell, counting the Damnation spells down the list (and repeating again from the top) to determine which spell is applied. (For example, if 5 is rolled for the Circle, and 13 rolled for the spell, the Mace of Darklens inflicts Madness.)

Ninvaliir Acidtongue: The Acidtongue is a unique magical shortsword. It is sentient, but only communicates its abilities and nothing more to its wielder. It offers a +1 modifier to-hit, and continually drips acid when outside of its protective enchanted scabbard. This does an additional 1d4 in damage with every hit, ignoring armor, and on a failed Physical Resistance check (target number 10), the victim continues to take 1 more point of acid damage per round (also ignoring armor) until the acid is washed off or 1d6 rounds have passed. It takes a full round to cleanse the acid, provided suitable materials (e.g., cloth or rags) are available.

The Swords of the Antiarch: Legendary weapons of the lieutenants of Caradoc, the Antiarch of Aguierre. There are seven magical blades in all: Anvullier, Axan Morn, Balron Deathblade, Dravan Tzoul, Gallenstein, Genes Krystochs, and Vyrphanos Pyraday. These are weapons of the utmost power, scattered across Twylos and lost to history. The magic of these swords is undetectable by normal means; Sense Magic and similar spells or abilities will not reveal them to be enchanted. Upon visual inspection of a sword, an Ancient History or Martial Knowledge skill check (target number 10) will determine the blade's true identity. However, several of these swords do have distinguishing characteristics- such as telepathic communication with its wielder- that makes it obvious the sword is enchanted.

Anvullier: (ann-VOO-lee-ay) Also called the Dayblade, this shortsword shines with brilliant white light (as the 1st Circle Faith spell Illuminate) when pulled from its scabbard. It was given to the early Martyrs of Caradoc as a weapon against the undead horrors used by the clergy of Mordred. Anvullier is +1 to-hit and +2 damage against most foes, but when used to attack undead creatures, it becomes +3 to-hit and +4 to damage. Once per day, its wielder may use Repel Undead (as the 4th Circle Faith spell), lasting 13 rounds. The Dayblade is now in the possession of an ablocanth that lairs beneath the Nightfalls.

Axan Morn: The Axan Morn ("Mageslayer" in Irendi) is a longsword that grants a +2 modifier to-hit and to damage, with an additional +1 modifier to damage for every Circle of Hermetic and/or Hedge magic the victim possesses (e.g., if the target has 3rd Circle Hedge and 1st Circle Hermetic, the Axan Morn has a total of +6 to damage with each attack on that target). The blade imparts a continuous Greater Magic Shield (as the 8th Circle Hermetic spell), once per round the wielder can use Dispel Magic (as the 4th Circle Hermetic spell), and twice per day the wielder can use Repel Magic (as the 8th Circle Hermetic spell). The Axan Morn is intelligent, but will only telepathically communicate its

abilities to its wielder. The sword also continually uses Sense Magic and will usually bring this to its wielder's attention, especially if it is powerful Hermetic magic. While otherwise uncommunicative, the wielder of the Axan Morn will gradually come to loathe Hermetic magic and its practitioners. The Axan Morn is found in the inner sanctum of Rooksroost, still in the dead hand of its last owner, the Handmaiden Abigail Preschon.

Balron Deathblade: This weapon appears as an unfinished claymore of rough iron. The Deathblade is +1 to-hit and damage, and is a permanently polymorphed angel of spite. It is uncommunicative with its wielder. In addition to inflicting damage, each successful attack Strikes the victim, as per the 3rd Circle Faith spell Strike (regardless of whether or not the successful hit itself did any damage after armor absorption), but at the end of each round of combat that Balron Deathblade is wielded, regardless of whether or not it scored a successful hit, the wielder loses 1 health point. Direct damage caused by the blade cannot be healed by magic of less than 5th Circle (although damage done by the Strike spell can be healed in this way, and wounds can be healed naturally through rest). If the damage inflicted by the Deathblade amounts to more than 50% of a victim's total health points, and the Deathblade scores the killing blow, the most terrible power of the sword is revealed: the victim is raised anew three round later (as per the 8th Circle Faith magic spell Resurrect, but leaving the victim only one health point), but is converted and becomes a disciple of Aguierre. Sister Hope of the Handmaidens wields the Deathblade, although she has only recently acquired it and does not know about this final power.

Dravan Tzoul: The Dravan Tzoul (DRAW-von ZOOl; literally, "the Hand of Zhol", but also called the Widowmaker) is a broadsword of plain and somewhat worn steel. Once it draws blood, the wielder is cursed to always use the Dravan in combat, which will teleport back to its user if left behind. This curse lasts until the wielder dies. It is highly intelligent, communicating telepathically only with its wielder, but only offering information about its own abilities and the 'wickedness' of other humanoids it encounters. The Dravan Tzoul continuously and automatically Senses Life (as the 2nd Circle Faith spell) and uses Familiarity (as the 4th Circle Faith spell) to determine how wicked it believes various people to be. It keeps most of this knowledge to itself, and it will only describe this quantitatively to its user (e.g., someone may be 'rather wicked', 'very wicked', 'extremely wicked'). Almost everyone will be found to be wicked to some degree, with wickedness generally reflecting the amount of violence and death an individual has caused. Most wicked are those who have been raised from the dead. Against any whom the Dravan deems 'wicked', the sword is +2 to-hit and +3 to damage.

In the rare chance that someone is not wicked ('innocent' in the sword's view, e.g., young children or pure saints), the Dravan is +4 to-hit and damage, and upon killing them, the wielder benefits from a Heal Minor Wounds (1st Circle Faith spell). The sword is neutral in tendency- it does not compel its user to kill anyone, but merely informs them of their status in the eyes of god. The sword does believe that it and its wielder have a responsibility to kill the wicked. Generally speaking, the sword considers its wielder to be extremely wicked, likely due to the high numbers of humanoids they have slain. The Dravan Tzoul is currently in the possession of Laern the Dead, in the village of Ravenna in the wilds of Drohksmere.

Gallenstein: The Gallenstein (GAL-len-steen) is a shortsword of alien white metal. It is +3 to-hit and ignores all armor and hide absorption. The odd metal of the blade poisons the blood of its target: wounds inflicted by the Gallenstein cannot be healed except through magical means. The Gallenstein was secured and forgotten in one of the numerous old warehouses of Thenzor Deep.

Genes Krystochs: The Genes Krystochs (GHEN-ess KRIS-tock), also known as the Wyrmsongue, is a beautiful silver-gilt greatsword. It has a large jeweled hilt set with three large emeralds. Along the course of the blade is the serpentine body and head of a dragon. The Wyrmsongue is +2 to-hit and damage, and while possessed (although not necessarily wielded), the owner has a +1 adjustment to all attribute scores (max. 20). The Wyrmsongue is encased in silk in the City of Spiders.

Vyrrhanos Pyraday: Vyrrhanos Pyraday (ver-RAN-ohs PIER-a-day) is called the Flametongue, as it bursts into blue flame when removed from its scabbard. This bastard sword is made of red- and blue-flecked steel, and completely covered in tiny Hermetic runes. The Flametongue is +2 to-hit and damage, with an additional +1d6 on damage with each attack from the flames. The Flametongue was taken by the giants near Bordermarch, and resides in one of their steadings.

Valhonna's Shame: This blade dates from the beginning of the Second Era. This shortsword has a +1 bonus to-hit and damage, and protects whoever wears or wields it from magical scrying or detection by 1st-4th Circle spells. It was given to Lady Ariale Valhonna of House Valstach by her lover, the magician Serge van Krassos. van Krassos convinced her to murder her husband, heir to the throne at the time. A week after the deed was carried out, Lady Valhonna killed herself with the same sword, which now bears her name. It eventually wound up in the coffers of the Church of Typhon, and is now in the possession of Charles Nox in Rothaine.

The Xerichsblade: This is a two-handed sword dating from the mid-First Era. The Xerichsblade is cursed so that its user must always carry and wield it in battle. Previous owners have all died hideous and violent deaths, usually at the blades of others. It confers a +2 modifier to-hit and damage. Its owner automatically goes last in battle, but throughout the round, the wielder will get one free counterattack at each opponent who attacked them in melee, at the next initiative segment. (For example, if attacked at initiative 6 and 5, the wielder attacks the first opponent at initiative 5, the second at initiative 4, and takes their own action at the end of the round.) If the wielder possesses the Advanced Counterattack discipline, these attacks are all made at an additional +1 modifier to-hit. The Xerichsblade is currently owned by Lord Voran Aramoor of Tivenskeep.

Appendix 2.1.2: Creatures of Twylos

This is a listing of creatures, monsters, and demons specific to Twylos.

Abraxas

Dodge: 14
Health points: 66
Intellect: high
Physical Resist: +10
Mental Resist: +10
Average size: 12' tall, 400 lbs.
Attacks: fist: 2 x 2d6 + 6 and special
To-hit modifier: +10
Hide/armor: 1d4 + 3
Initiative modifier: +6
Movement rate: 210'

Abraxas is The Gray Man, an avatar of Zhol. His advent is loosely prophesied in Tabitha Morgan's play "A Shadow's Fall". A scholar, Maedar Arangul, will be transformed into Abraxas some time after arriving in Bourgangsaine. Abraxas will retain some memories from his former self, particularly about his two former loves, and will remain at the bottom of the Shadowsfall Library, howling in misery.

Abilities: Abraxas is immune to cold, poison, paralysis, disease, mental effects, and spells of the Damnation Domain. Anyone struck by Abraxas, regardless of the amount of damage received, must make a Physical Resistance check of 14 or die. Abraxas will continually regenerate 10 health points each round until his heart is destroyed. Abraxas can cast 33 Circles of Faith magic spells (Damnation Domain only) each day.

Physical description: Abraxas appears as an enormous 12' tall male humanoid, with an enlarged head and hands. His skin is a cold, flat gray. He has thin, lanky limbs, and appears emaciated.

Archon

Dodge: 16
Health points: 80 + 2d10 (90)
Intellect: very high
Physical Resist: +7
Mental Resist: +10
Average size: 6' tall, 150 lbs.
Attacks: fist: 2 x 1d6 + 1 or by weapon
To-hit modifier: +6
Hide/armor: none or by armor
Initiative modifier: +3
Movement rate: 180'

The Archons of Twylos are different from the archons listed in the Game Master's Reference Book. Those latter creatures were a servitor race to the 'true' Archons, who took their masters name and inhabited their cities in the Perditive and Dream Realms when the Archons themselves were destroyed by the Arcanos. The Archons, when they existed, possessed a number of technological devices and weapons, but their main weapon against the Arcanos was their complete immunity to magic. It is likely that, as the Arcanos are the servants and priests of Breyana, the Archons were the servants of Xeres. The statistics of the Archons are given here simply for comparison.

Abilities: Archons are completely immune to all spells and magical effects. Due to their alien physiology, they are also immune to poison, paralysis, disease, and other mental effects. Archons possess all knowledge proficiencies at Grade IV.

Physical description: Archons could take any form they desired due to their sophisticated biological knowledge. They sometimes appeared as disembodied clouds of gas, as angelic humans, or as monstrous tentacle-faced cephalopodic humanoids. Later they tended to appear exactly as Arcanodaemons.

Colossus

Dodge: 15
Health points: 199
Intellect: low
Physical Resist: +20
Mental Resist: +5
Average size: 100' tall, 20,000 lbs.
Attacks: fist: 2 x 1d10 + 16
To-hit modifier: +6
Hide/armor: 1d4
Initiative modifier: -2
Movement rate: 160'

The Colossus is a triple-sized but dull-witted titan. Several Colossi were used by the titans for menial labor, including the construction of Tharkenge. The sole remaining Colossus on Twylos is petrified, buried under the sands of Saethos where it is worshipped as Stalograhd.

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Abilities: The Colossus has no special abilities beyond its capacity to lift large objects and inflict a great deal of damage.

Physical description: The Colossus appears as a stone-gray hairless human male of immense size and muscular build.

Conjuring Eye

Dodge: 30
Health points: 1
Intellect: n/a
Physical Resist: +4
Mental Resist: n/a
Average size: 1" diameter
Attacks: n/a
To-hit modifier: n/a
Hide/armor: none
Initiative modifier: +10
Movement rate: 240'

Conjuring eyes are powerful magical constructs, usually used as guardians. They remain in stasis until their domain is entered, whereupon they begin darting around the room, conjuring a plethora of creatures to deal with the intruders.

Abilities: Conjuring eyes are 90% immune to all magical spells and magical effects. Each round, an eye can conjure a random creature or creatures. These creatures are not truly summoned, however; they are made of magic and will disappear within 24 hours if not destroyed. Their conjuration is random: for each eye, each round roll 1d4: 1: Hermetic, 2: Hedge, 3: Faith, 4: Ritual; then roll either 1d8 (Hermetic or Faith) or 1d4 (Hedge or Ritual) to determine the Circle of conjuration. Choose the creature summoning or creation spell of the appropriate Circle and type of magic; if nothing is applicable, the conjuration fails that round. Due to their small size, they effectively have Stealth Grade II.

Physical description: Conjuring eyes appear as small eyeballs floating in space.

Crystal Mage

Dodge: 15
Health points: 36
Intellect: exceptional
Physical Resist: +4
Mental Resist: +6
Average size: 7' tall, 200 lbs.
Attacks: strike: 1 x 1d6 + 3
To-hit modifier: +5
Hide/armor: 1d6 + 1
Initiative modifier: see below
Movement rate: 160'

The Crystal Mage is an alien being from the Age of Glass, originating there over a millennium ago. It possesses considerable magical abilities, and uses them to construct an odd workshop and labyrinth for itself. It jealously guards its lair and collected treasures, and is hostile to all humanoids, seeking to obtain their knowledge and possessions. The Crystal Mage does not speak.

Abilities: The Crystal Mage is immune to mind control, paralysis, poison, and disease. The Crystal Mage casts Hermetic spells of 5th Circle with a 20 intellect. As it does not have a mouth, it casts silently with a complex series of gestures. It also has incredible speed, able to

cast two spells each round. The first spell is begun at initiative 20, and the second spell is begun at initiative 0.

Physical description: The Crystal Mage is a 7' tall four-armed humanoid apparently made of whitish crystal or glass. It has an insect-like appearance, has six long fingers on each hand, and its head is featureless.

Daemons

Daemons are in a sense the 'true' demons of Twylos, being the direct servants of Breyana and native to the Blood Realms. There are several types of Daemon, three of which are described here: Oubrodaemons, T'sughodaemons, and the all-powerful Arcanodaemons.

Daemon, Arcanos

Dodge: 15
Health points: 99
Intellect: exceptional
Physical Resist: +10
Mental Resist: +14
Average size: 8' tall, 240 lbs.
Attacks: strike: 2 x 1d10 + 4
To-hit modifier: +5
Hide/armor: 1d4
Initiative modifier: +6
Movement rate: 160'

Arcanodaemons, usually called Arcanos (ar-KAY-nohs; both the singular and in plural), are the most powerful of Twylos' demons. It is believed that they are six in number, and are the mortal embodiments of the Six Princes of Breyana. Trapped in the Lower Planes, sealed away by the Order of Nhull, only the whispers of the Arcanos have crossed to Twylos. In the earliest days of Duuran recorded history, it was the Arcanos who contacted the Vox Duur and taught them the mysteries of Hermetic magic using their own language.

The Arcanos are not necessarily malicious, but they seek to return to Twylos, which was their original home. While the Zoran Gate is their main means of permanently returning, three times in the past an Arcanos was summoned to Twylos, only to be quickly imprisoned or banished.

Abilities: Daemons are immune to mental spells, and effects, poison, paralysis, and disease. They can see in the dark and see invisible creatures. Furthermore, Arcanodaemons can only be damaged by magical weapons. They are 50% immune to any magical spell or magical effect in general. The Arcanos are Hermetic spellcasters of utmost power, and may cast any spell from 1st to 8th Circle innately once per round (with casting time of 0 regardless of the spell's Circle). The language of the Arcanos is the language of Hermetic magic, and the words and sentences spoken by these creatures essentially act as Change spells, serving to remake the world. Arcanodaemons have all magic and knowledge proficiencies at Grade IV, and additionally have a bonus of +4 to these rolls. They seem happy or even eager, to share their knowledge with lesser beings. Due to their presence, Arcanodaemons also have Inspire, Intimidate, Leadership, and Persuasion at grade IV.

Physical description: Arcanodaemons generally appear as eight-foot tall wolf-headed humanoids, dressed in long red robes, clutching a massive tome shackled to their wrist, but given their magical skill, they can take any form so desired.



2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Hide/armor: 3d4

Initiative modifier: +0

Movement rate: 100'

Oubrodaemons, or Oubrochae (OO-bra-kay), are the metallic warrior-servants of the Arcanos, sometimes called by powerful priests of Typhon and the Church of Winter. They fetishize young, pure women, and the Church of Typhon has invented a grotesque Ritual Magic spell effective at calling an Oubroch to Twylos: the Typhonae maintain a camp of brain-dead girls at Aea Convent, and casting this spell has two immediate consequences: one of these women is summoned, and the victim of the spell is compelled to attack and kill her. Upon her death, an enraged Oubroch appears to take its vengeance upon the hapless murderer. These daemons are relatively unintelligent, and play the role of guardians and warrior minions of the greater daemons.

Abilities: Daemons are immune to mental spells and effects, poison, paralysis, and disease. They can see in the dark and see invisible creatures. They are 11% immune to any magical spell or effect in general. Oubrodaemons tend to wield weird bladed weapons. A common weapon is a serrated claymore of demonic steel, non-magically +1 to-hit and damage. Oubroch daemons are skilled warriors, and have the following combat disciplines: Advanced Counterattack, Counterattack, Greatstrike, and Pause and Study.

Physical description: Oubrodaemons appear as short, chitin-like suits of plate armor, with oblong head/helmets and gigantic horns and eyes.

Daemon, T'suggha

Dodge: 10

Health points: 30 + 2d8 (40)

Intellect: average to high

Physical Resist: +8

Mental Resist: +4

Average size: 7' tall, 400 lbs.

Attacks: strike: 1 x 1d8 + 4 or by weapon

To-hit modifier: +4

Hide/armor: 1d4

Initiative modifier: +0

Movement rate: 100'

T'suggha (t'SUG-gha) daemons are grotesque monsters. Despite their disgusting and hideous nature, they are quite intelligent and eloquent. They are also ravenous, and thrive on fresh humanoid flesh.

Abilities: Daemons are immune to mental spells and effects, poison, paralysis, and disease. They can see in the dark and see invisible creatures. T'suggha daemons are 22% immune to any magical spell or effect in general. The odor of the T'suggha is unmistakable, as these creatures reek of filth and waste. Anyone within 100' can smell the stench of the T'suggha demon, and anyone within 30' must make a Physical Resistance check at the beginning of each round (target number 8 + the number of rounds within 30') or be unable to act that round, overcome with nausea and retching. T'suggha daemons are proficient magicians, able to use 1st-3rd Circle Hermetic and Ritual magic innately (casting time 0). T'sugghadaemons prize riches and signs of wealth, and many of them appear with magical scepters (treat as magic wand for powers). These loathsome creatures have Intimidate and Magic Acuity at grade III, and often have several knowledge proficiencies at grade II or III.

Physical description: The T'suggha daemons appear as immensely fat, disgusting frog-headed humanoids. They are a dark green or greenish-gray in coloration, with mottled and blotched skin. They often carry themselves regally and dress in fashionable, courtly clothes. They have

large eyes, each about the size of a child's head, and enormous mouths and tongues.

Metasci

Dodge: 15

Health points: 20 + 3d6 (32)

Intellect: average to exceptional

Physical Resist: +4

Mental Resist: +6

Average size: 7' tall, 180 lbs.

Attacks: fists: 2 x 1d6 + 2 or by weapon

To-hit modifier: +4

Hide/armor: none or by armor

Initiative modifier: +2

Movement rate: 120'

The Metasci (meh-TAH-see) were one of the many slave races of the Archons, when the Archons fought the Arcanos for dominance of Twylos. Much like their former masters, however, the Metasci have since disappeared from Twylos. Unlike the true Archons, who were exiled and slain by the Arcanos, and unlike the lesser archons, now residing in the Realms, the Metasci remained on Twylos and began to interbreed with humans. The sole survivors of these offspring are some of the members of House Maxinay of Armech.

Abilities: Metasci were accomplished Hermetic magicians (3rd to 7th Circle), but were also themselves somewhat magic resistant (30% immunity to spells and magical effects). Because of their alien physiology, the Metasci were immune to poison and disease. Metasci were highly sensitive to magic, and possessed Magic Acuity grade IV.

Physical description: Metasci appeared as angelic humans, generally taller and more attractive, but pale, dark-haired, and blue-blooded.

Scrivener

Dodge: 13

Health points: 48

Intellect: n/a

Physical Resist: +8

Mental Resist: n/a

Average size: 4' diameter, 8' tall, 800 lbs.

Attacks: arms: 6 x 1d6 + 6

To-hit modifier: +5

Hide/armor: 1d4

Initiative modifier: +4

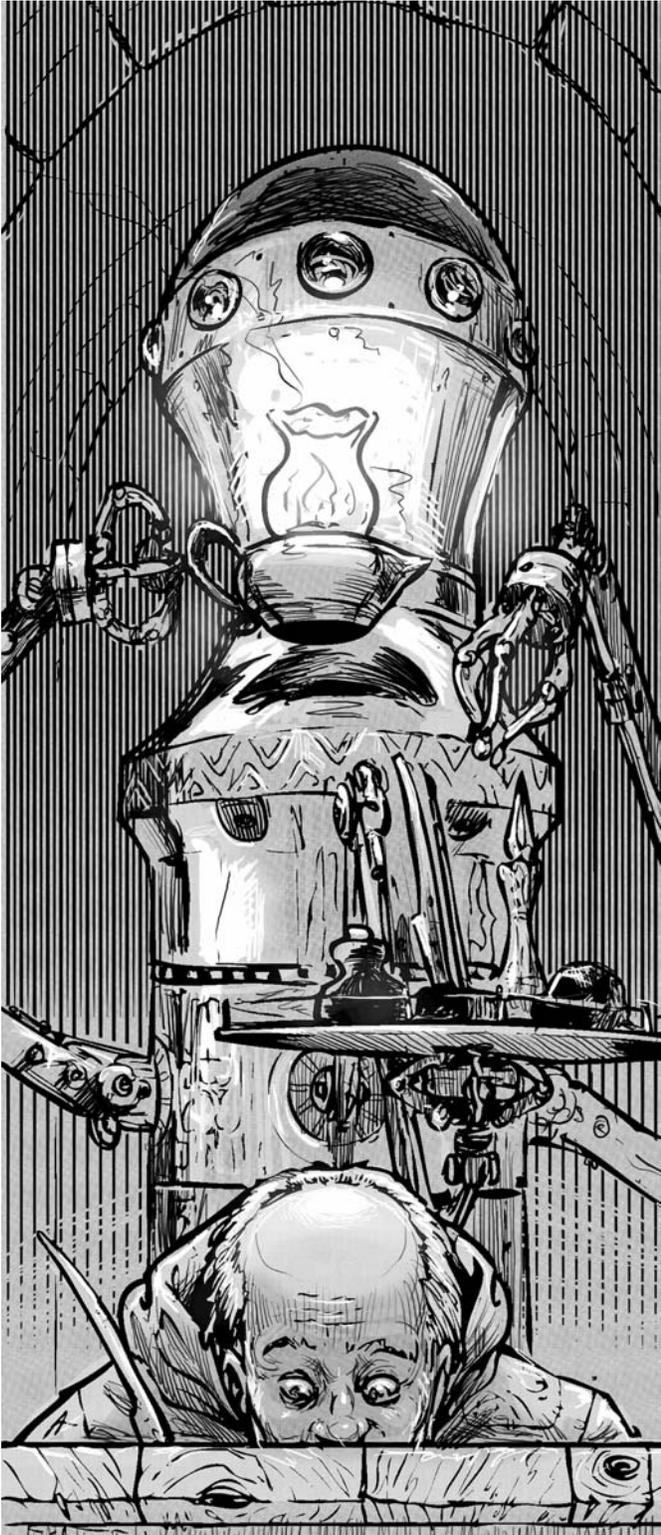
Movement rate: 140'

Scriveners are old Ixian constructs from the First Era, built by members of the Church of Ixus to help them copy manuscripts and perform difficult labor. They were built soon after the Ixians first arrived on Nycene, and most of them have succumbed to the ravages of time by now. The art of their construction has been lost, but a few scriveners have survived and still exist today. A few have been obtained by the Alchemists Guild, and one by the Bone Trade, where they have been found to be immensely valuable in the creation of minor magical items. The 'Create Scrivener' Hedge magic spell is named for these automata, although the rickety constructs created by that low-level magic pale in comparison with the real thing; these creatures are more akin to golems than to wooden writing contraptions.

Abilities: Scriveners are completely immune to all magical spells and effects, and are completely immune to any effect requiring a Mental Resistance check. They take half damage from fire and cold, and are immune to poison, paralysis, and disease. But the original use of a scrivener was not for combat. These machines were built in part to aid

in potion brewing (Alchemy) and magic scroll scribing. Both the time and financial costs of these endeavors is cut by 50% when one or more scribes aid the mage. Additionally, their help adds a +1 bonus to Dweomercraft checks.

Physical description: A scrivener is a large bronze or brass apparatus. It appears as a vertical column of three horizontal disks or wheels, centered around a tall vertical post. A host of spindly arms and appendages emanate from these disks, moved by inner gears. The arms are strong and agile, able to write in script or lift heavy objects.



Spirit-of-the-Land

Dodge: n/a
 Health points: n/a
 Intellect: low to high
 Physical Resist: +5
 Mental Resist: +5
 Average size: 30' radius
 Attacks: by object (usually 1 x opponent: 1d8 + 2)
 To-hit modifier: +4
 Hide/armor: n/a
 Initiative modifier: +9
 Movement rate: none

A spirit-of-the-land is a spiritual presence that inhabits a particular geographical area. These spirits are not undead, but are more similar to elementals. They tend to be malicious and zealous guardians of their land, and will animate different objects within it (e.g., trees, ivy, possibly a building or a scarecrow) to repel and destroy trespassers. These spirits can range in size from 3' radius to an acre. These spirits are difficult to deal with, as they are bound to and part of the earth itself. Destruction of all physical objects is an effective way of neutralizing, if not destroying, a spirit. A Banish spell or similar magic is the only sure means of permanently removing one of these entities.

Abilities: Spirits can simultaneously control many aspects of the environment they control. Treat their land possession ability as an Animate Plant spell (5th Circle Ritual). They cannot be affected directly by weapons or most forms of magic, although such measures are a good way at indirectly fighting back.

Physical description: A spirit-of-the-land has no physical appearance, being a disembodied force.

Appendix 2.1.3: Example Campaigns

In the first part of this appendix, we show how some of the people and places mentioned in the world guide can be linked together to form the Game Master's private background for a campaign. Little to none of this information ever needs to be revealed to the player characters—rather, the background information serves to motivate the actions of some of the more important NPCs (such as priests of Typhon) that the characters will interact with. The background also serves to set up the themes of the campaign—over-arching concepts such as family, home, loss, death, or annihilation. These themes should not be forced upon the players themselves, excepting once or twice in a campaign. Rather they should be incorporated into the lives and actions of NPCs, so that the players can experience these themes vicariously, but not feel as though the Game Master has given them no control over their characters' fates.

We stress that this is not necessarily the 'true history' of Twylos—there is no such thing. This is simply one narrative out of many possibilities. Additionally, this background information could be turned into the main story of the campaign itself.

The second part of this appendix contains three short introductions to campaigns that could be run in the world of Twylos. These are not meant to be complete. Instead, they are sketches, to be fleshed out by the Game Master before starting and during the course of play.

The Keys of Typhon

Amanda Dawson: It started simply, in the quiet hills of the village of Tarchartus. In the year 195 of the Third Era, Amanda Dawson was reading outside when some mercenaries from Brandmoor happened by. They were hunting some escaped slaves-turned-bandits who had

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

fled to the outskirts of her village. The hunt didn't go well, and one of these strangers, Sterling Halifax, was badly hurt. They ended up convalescing at the Dawson farm, and Amanda befriended them before they left for Rheyas to report back to the Slavers Guild. Before they left, Amanda gave Sterling a copy of her book and helped him learn to read a few passages from it.

These mercenaries were hired by the Bone Trade in Rheyas to escort a caravan heading south down the Zhellan Traderoad to Tzalvas. On the way down, informed of Amanda's intelligence, the Bone Trade flattered the country girl, suggesting that she come to one of their schools in Vasqueray. Amanda packed her things and joined the company. Going along for the journey was Terrence Ridlee, a priest of Typhon, who took to the girl.

Amanda and her escorts boarded the "Quindolean", a ship bound for Gorgos. However, it was blown off-course by a storm, and was destroyed by the Leviathan. Only Amanda and a few others survived the wreck, and washed up on the shores of Lunais. They were five in number- Amanda, Sterling, Father Ridlee, along with Morgannon Auxerre (a mage), and Travious Clay (his bodyguard). They took shelter in Muriel's house. Amanda seemed to recognize the place, and grew increasingly distant and disturbed as the manor was explored. Stealing away from the others one night, she retrieved the Book of Nightmares from its hiding place, and used it to help her friends escape via the Hall of Mirrors.

The Book put Amanda in direct contact with the Arcanodaemon Arcades (ar-CAY-dees) Shavaat, who began to teach her Hermetic magic in her dreams. While Amanda was fascinated with her new abilities, she was afraid to use them due to their sudden appearance and their source. She also began to believe she was Lady Muriel, returned to Twylos. Terrence Ridlee encouraged her gently in both her beliefs and magical skills.

Amanda studied in Gyre, secretly watched by Father Dhalgeng and the Typhonae. Dhalgeng didn't trust Ridlee, and sent Adlai Andrakkar to check up on her as well. After a year or so, she journeyed to eastern Drohksmere to meet her old friends, and then traveled with them to Thorenze. However, on the way they were attacked by Duuran Naturalists, and Amanda was killed in the battle.

At Ridlee's suggestion, Amanda was taken to Umslamyr, where she was reincarnated by the demon tree, into the body of an old childhood friend, Jenny Carmichael. This was too much for the poor girl, and she temporarily retired to Tarchartus, moving back into her old farmhouse (which had since been destroyed, in a fire set by raiders).

Meanwhile, her old friends repeatedly came into conflict with the Duurans, for abusing their own Hermetic powers and for awakening Umslamyr. They sought shelter from the Church of Winter in Thenzor Deep, and Morgannon and Travious eventually converted to the service of Breyana in Zoran. Sterling, concerned for his friends, went to Tarchartus to see if Amanda would help him talk some sense into the others. Not long after they arrived in Thenzor, the Guild of Optics conspired against them, leading the Knights of Aguierre and the Ixians to where Morgannon was searching for one of the Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday. Master Travious was killed in the fight, and his soul damned by the Ixian high priest.

Amanda recalled her own resurrection by Umslamyr, and felt guilty for getting her friends involved in the ancient war between the Duurans, the Church of Winter, and the Ixian forces. She went to Napres to seek the help of Aramach Vox Thrauxes in restoring Master Travious. Vox Thrauxes agreed. But in return, Amanda would serve him for one year.

Her service required her to find the other Jewels of Asmoday and open the Zoran Gate. She left her friends behind, and collected the three

keystones. She knew that Morgannon and Travious had rallied support for the ideals of the Order of Nnull at Zoran, and the entire Church at Zoran would oppose her actions. So she asked her old friend Sterling for his help in distracting them. Amanda got to the gate and, with Sterling's help, installed the keystones. Ridlee and Andrakkar, in residence at Zoran, turned on the Church and faced off against the host of Zoran. Morgannon managed to prevent her from destroying the Jewels, and thus opening the Gate, but held off on killing the poor girl. Amanda grabbed two of the stones and teleported away, never to be seen by her friends again.

She took sanctuary with Vox Thrauxes as his thrall, having failed in her service to him. She eventually came to carry his child (at least, so he and later scholars believed, although her daughter was seemingly human instead of cambion). She was now relentlessly pursued by many different factions of Twylos- the Opticians (for having Master Reeve's soulstone in one of the Jewels), the Duurans, the Church of Winter, and the Typhonae. She made the same decision as Lady Muriel, two centuries before her; she fled Twylos for the Ether and Dream Realms with her newborn daughter Aprill.

The First Keys Revealed: Recurrence is a central theme of Twylos. The first two Keys of Typhon, as revealed to Geryon Krassus, were the tutelage of young Ixondr and Muriel by the Arcanodaemon Arcades Shavaat, and the secreting of Muriel within her Dream Realm. Amanda was not the reincarnation of Muriel, but she may as well have been- she was also taught by Shavaat, and eventually left Twylos for the Realms as well. Her resurrection by Umslamyr was the Third Key of Typhon, held in testament by Terrence Ridlee. Father Ridlee was convinced the assassination of Travious Clay was the Fourth Key, and that Amanda's guilt would propel her towards the Fifth Key, considered by the inner circle of the Typhonae to be the opening of the Zoran Gate and return of the Arcanos to their rightful home.

Ridlee was wrong, and for this, has lived his life in exile in Amanda's home village of Tarchartus. He feels a fatherly sort of love for her, and has long since given up the machinations of his fellow Typhonae. He is hopeful she will someday return to Twylos.

The Gift of the Archons: She will not. Amanda, ever curious, accidentally chanced upon a horological glitch within the Ether, the lost Vausse Academy. Horological magic is among the worst and most exploitative of the Arcanos' inventions. The Vausse Academy has been periodically returning to Twylos even since before the First Era, in small pieces that appear as comets. By far the largest of these fell during the Second Era, where it fused a massive area of the Saethos desert around it to become Rhauxen.

However, parts of the Vausse Academy, suspended in a horological loop, were also sent back before the First Era of the Twylos humanoids. In Twylos' pre-history, the world was the domain of the Arcanos, the first children of the Thainist and Duuran gods. The servants of Xeres, the Archons, crept into the Tellurian plane from the Ether, and fought the Arcanos for dominance of Twylos. The Archons were destroyed, although their slave races survived- the metasci, the doppelgangers, and those now calling themselves 'archons'. However, some of the original 'true' Archons took shelter in the Academy from the onslaught of the Arcanos. There they killed and ate Amanda Dawson and her daughter, and replaced an Archon soul inside of baby Aprill.

In 200 T.E., the Arcanos Madriganii Illiese was freed at Zalen Vale by the Halifax brothers, and made its way to Rhauxen. Forcing itself inside, it killed the Archons within and took Aprill as its own. However, an odd team of Typhonae, Duurans, Handmaidens, Ixians, Guildsmen, and independent mages working together- the Rhauxen Pact- ambushed the weakened Arcanos outside Rhauxen, and destroyed its mortal form. The survivors then turned on the Duurans and Thainists and slaughtered them. They then covered up all signs of battle and entry into Rhauxen,



and fled to Aea Convent in the lands outside Gyre. There, they began a secret program attempting to reveal Aprill's magical abilities into several clones and constructs.

This program continues to the present day. The 'original' copy of Aprill Dawson was destroyed in the course of scientific research, but many second generation copies still exist. Some of the clones have managed to escape, to the great concern of the researchers at Aea Convent. Aprill occasionally manifested strange anti-magical abilities, as a function of her proxy-Archon identity. The Headmaster of Aea, Asmodean, has pursued this anti-magical effect, distilling it into a third generation clone named Abby.

Sister Joy and the Axan Morn: Aea Convent sees the need for persistent and powerful anti-magic, given the formidable magical abilities of even a single wounded Arcanos. One of the main reasons why they even succeeded in defeating Arcanos Illiese was due to the assistance of Abigail Preschon, Grandmother of the Murdyne Handmaidens (and the woman whom Abby is named after). Mother Abigail left her young daughter behind in Stonekeep and journeyed to Rhaxen, only having been told of the prophesied return of the Arcanos by the Vehrlands Duurans. Abigail wielded the Axan Morn, the anti-magical Sword of the Antiarch, and was essentially impervious to the spells of the Arcanodaemon.

This was also a problem for the Aea Convent clean-up crew, as they wished to get rid of Abigail and the other surviving Handmaidens (and hopefully claim the sword for themselves). Prepared for this contingency, the Alchemists poisoned Abigail with a massive amount of Zeaven, driving her partially mad. Mother Preschon then tracked down three of her attackers to Rooksroost, still hidden in the Ether. She easily butchered all the mages still working in the hidden school, but

was struck down by their angels and Oubrodaemon defenders. Her corpse and the Axan Morn still lie in the depths of Rooksroost.

Her daughter, now of age, took the name of Sister Joy and has left Murdyne in search of her mother. This is partially because the Handmaidens want to recover Abigail's sword, but Joy understandably also has personal reasons for seeking the whereabouts of her mother. She traveled to Timmorn's Well, only to receive a coded message she doesn't yet understand. Joy is quite headstrong and has eschewed help from her sister Brides. Over the course of her travels, she has come to think somewhat poorly of the other Handmaidens.

The Fourth Key: Adlai Andrakkar and Father Dhalgeng were both at Rhaxen for the recovery of Aprill. Initially, Dhalgeng thought Aprill was the fourth key, but has since recanted. Shortly thereafter, Mammon's Point was built in Tzalvas, with young Jessica Aires designing the wondrous murals in the main halls. The Typhonae have come to think that Aires has predicted the Fourth Key correctly, and admire her for her humorous interpretation of the Fifth Key, but do not yet understand what it represents.

The Fourth Key is Petrarch, the Duran hierophant, awaiting in his tomb beyond Zolace. Petrarch believes absolutely in the Archons, although he's confused now as to which is the worse evil- the Arcanos or the Archons- and thinks that they might be the same creatures. This is due to a revelatory, extra-dimensional text he found in which both an Arcanos and an Archon were depicted exactly the same way. Those who manage to find their way to Petrarch, he will greet warmly, and ask that they stay within his realm, safe from the coming destruction. Petrarch will not think much of killing those who try to leave, as he thinks they're doomed anyway, and he might as well clean up his own mess at this point (although he will not leave his tomb or the Ages).

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Petrarch has come to believe that the future of Twylos is hopeless, and that the Voran Cycle is about to end, if not actually over.

The Fifth Key: Petrarch is absolutely correct. The Voran Cycle has in fact come to a close, and Twylos has already been destroyed. The Zoran Gate was opened and the Arcanos returned to their ancient home. They began to remake the world to their own desires, turning Twylos into an earthly paradise for most of its inhabitants. Others- the Duurans, Ixians, and their ilk- resisted from the beginning and met a swift destruction.

Abby, however, was a trap. The Arcanos, enamored of Muriel and Amanda, found her irresistible. Seeking her out, they found the only hole in their new world of Hermetic magic. The other clones fell upon the powerless Arcanos and destroyed them, their essence consumed by the Archon within Abby, herself dying in the process. Twylos was now a demonic paradise without its benevolent and restraining masters. Rampant magic use quickly turned the whole of Twylos into a scorched, lifeless wasteland.

The Tears of Muriel: From her Dream Realm, Muriel was horrified at the turn of events. Once again, despite her best intentions, Twylos was destroyed by demons and desire, exactly as the first version of Twylos was destroyed eons ago. The power of Xeres' Book of Dreams had allowed Muriel to create, and re-create Twylos time and time again, permutating small variables and conditions here and there. It is her continued hope that eventually, she'll get it right, and Twylos' bleak destiny can somehow be averted in her next attempt. Amanda was not Muriel reincarnated, but was Muriel re-inserted by herself into the world; only that didn't seem to work out very well. Muriel is not Kiithain, but could be, or should be, or effectively is; for the world is her creation and driven by her dreams, hopes, and errors. Muriel has grown tired watching the destruction of Twylos a countless number of times, each time following a slightly different trajectory to the selfsame end, like raindrops down her windowpane. (Her difficulty, in part, comes from her ignorance of the nature of the Fifth Key.) She is tired of watching herself, or a version of herself, or her children, or her previous friends and family fall into corruption, malaise, and death.

Twylos is not a dream; it is real. However, it is not the original Twylos. It is one of many, relegated to corners of the infinitude of the Dream Realms. The true Twylos is now a lonely, empty place, much like Muriel's domain, and has been for eons. Each iteration seems destined for the same fate of the original, and the Dream Realms are littered with dozens of versions, or maybe millions, of empty, ashen Twylos. But what other choices are there? In Muriel's eternal view, delayed destruction is almost a fate worse than a quick end. Still, Muriel tries again, setting up the pieces, reconstructing the world as best she can, and then waiting, always waiting...

Campaign 1: The Egg of Voon

Themes: Death, revenge, friendship, and discovery of a new or changed world. This campaign is better for smaller groups of 2-4 player characters.

Summary: The player characters begin dead, only to be raised by the necromantic magic of the Egg of Voon, years after their deaths. They are test subjects, victims of rogue Alchemists, saved from further experimentation by the Typhonae. From there, they explore the ruins of their home city, or return to their homes in search of answers for their own deaths. In the process, they learn of other Alchemical research connected to Aea Convent.

Background: Characters begin separately, around twenty years in the past (or years equal to 66 divided by the total number of characters).

Just before the fall of Zostig would be ideal; as Game Master, you are free to adjust the powers of the Egg of Voon as necessary to bring them all back from 190 T.E. to 213 T.E., or to set the start date differently. Each character is then killed, in short prologue adventures tailored to their specific identity. Play through the prologue, not forcing specific events, but working quickly to the bitter end. Try to control the introduction and quickly get to their capture or death, so as to avoid letting them escape into the night. These introductions are best done apart from the other players. Here are some examples of how they could meet their ends:

The Addict: Another tiresome night in Zostig, or maybe Rheyas. Your friend has acquired something better this time- not just good, but better, different. You head over to partake in the goods. It's soft, greenish, almost like cheese, but tasting of medicine- it's some kind of Zeaven, some unusual kind. Strong stuff. Go ahead and make a Mental Resistance check. Something is being smoked, too, in an incense burner, but they're doing it wrong. Too much smoke. Head feels heavy. Finally the smoke clears. One of the people here, though... you see your two friends, and a couple new guys, but the last guy looks right at you. With all his eyes, he's covered in them. Grinning with all his mouths, covered in them. Leaking saliva, or ichor, onto the stone floor. Tall, too tall, too thin, too rubbery. You start to scream. Your friends have passed out. It's just you and the demon, or monster, or whatever the hell it is. But of course, it gets you. These things always do, you know.

The Duuran: You have been sent to town, to obtain a letter from the head of the Thainist temple. Your sect is small, but you have worked well in the past with the city Thainists. On the road, a beggar stops and stares. "Yer in the Lady's thoughts tonight," he says laughing, before moving off. The trip goes well, and the Thainists welcome you, give you your letter, and send you back on your way. You even almost make it back home. At night, just before leaving the main road to head back to your village, a carriage comes rumbling down the road. It's one of several that has passed in either direction. The coachman's assistant pulls out a crossbow and begins to pelt you with bolts. There's no cover except that of darkness. When you're down, a richly-dressed man steps out of the carriage, walks over to your body, and casually reads the letter. A tall orc escorts a cloaked woman out of the carriage and over to your body. You're not quite dead yet though, so she pulls out a hatpin, says a prayer, and slides it into your eye.

The Guildsman: One more customer, even though you're supposed to be closing. The other novices have already gone home for the night. After looking around, discussing the goods- he leaves. Bastard. Two of his friends outside smoking, laughing, at you? You close up, go back to your flat, have some dinner, and get to bed. They come for you in the night. Grinning face masks, dark cloaks, clubs. One at the window, two to your door. Maybe you make it to the bottom before they knock you down. Haven't even looted the store. They came for you. If you had a spouse, or a child- they're brought downstairs. Nothing special. Killed before your eyes. The place is ransacked but nothing taken. Just you. All goes dark.

The Scholar: You are studying at school, perhaps in training for the magical arts, or in other academic pursuits. Luksharrow in Turth would be appropriate. Perhaps you aren't very scholarly, but your friend's rich father enrolled you too, to protect your childhood friend from bullies or other perceived difficulties. The school is suddenly attacked at night, by Ixians (or someone dressed as Ixians). You are caught unawares in your room, or perhaps late at night visiting your friend in his room. The attackers make quick work of you, pushing a spear into your stomach. Is your friend alive? Dead? One of them? As you gag and die, one of the Ixians, holding a black candle, wipes ash on your forehead then kisses it, closing your eyes with his fingers. Darkness.

The Thief: You are nobody. Maybe a cutpurse, maybe just hired muscle. You are hired by another friend to commit a second-story job, in the better part of town, probably Zostig, or maybe Turth, Fayde Ehling, or Rheyas. Goes horribly wrong, your friend kills someone in the house, a child, and you are arrested, although your friend escapes. Locked in prison, not much of a trial, sentenced to be killed. A week later, hung at dawn. With rope around your neck, you see your friend, disguised, watching your execution. Neck snaps, but strangely, not dead, although seems like it to all appearances. Unable to move. Also in the small crowd, unnoticed by everyone else, is a priest in brown robes. Watches you intently as everyone else leaves- some spit on your corpse, some cry, some laugh, some shake their head. Friend watches too, until the end, then slinks off. Priest then makes a mark on your chest and leaves. You hang. It rains. A bird lands on your shoulder, tentatively pecks at your neck, painlessly, before flying off. Night comes, the priest in brown returns with three large assistants. Cut your body down, still unable to move. Take you to a dark cellar. Ritual performed- your left hand is cut off. All goes dark.

Narrative: The player characters, all strangers, all killed, awaken into darkness. Everyone has full health points (including regenerated hands), but no equipment save a sheet. It is completely dark, but fumbling around reveals that they are in a stone room, on stone benches, with a single wooden door out. Outside it is mostly dark, except for a faint glow down a corridor, from which low speech, or chanting, can be heard. Then, screams.

The characters are in Xociene, on the island of Zurvoten. A group of ex-Alchemists from Thenzor Deep, together with an assortment of Duurans and priests of Zhol, have discovered the Egg of Voon here and have are currently experimenting with its magical abilities. They have taken to calling themselves the Tavash Morn, and use the eclipsing-moon symbol of the original Tavash, even though they are unaffiliated with the real Tavash Morn still in Zoran. The player characters, along with one other NPC, John Dherin (1st level human), were the first group of successful test subjects, brought back from the dead ten to thirty years after their murders. Each of the characters was preserved with alchemical black ichor, and their bodies still contain a few liters of the stuff, which they will begin to excrete and vomit up over the next week.

Further within Xociene, the screams are coming from a temple one level below the player characters' storeroom. The characters are in a hall that forms a walkway around the upper part of the temple. Down below, priests in brown and black robes fight a losing battle against a small metal demon (an Oubroch) and a horde of spiders. As the players decide what to do, three individuals come down the hall, and stop to regard them. This is Grimlin Khael (4th level human, 3rd Circle Faith), priest of Typhon, and his two assistants/bodyguards. Khael's guards want him to keep moving upstairs, but he'll greet the characters and ask them if they're leaving as well. He won't try very hard to stop them if they insist on heading into the temple to the battle. He will just explain that he and some friends were here to clean up someone else's mess. He won't talk too much until leaving Xociene, whereupon the extended party will be ambushed by a couple of the new Tavash Morn and two skeletons.

Khael will then explain what little he knows of the situation- his master, Mother Ines, is still in Xociene, and he was ordered to flee to report back to Luksharrow. He knows little of the Tavash Morn, other than that they have been operating out of the College of Surgeons at Luksharrow, and that the Alchemists somehow seem to be involved. He doesn't know who the characters are, but is amused by their situation, especially given how long they've been 'asleep'. Khael will offer to escort them off the island, now a ruin, if they wish, although he's got something to do in Zostig itself (acquire some Zeaven from a priest of Rhiannon who makes the stuff, who still lives among the ruins). He has

a small boat just outside of town, and will head back first to Westgate, to catch a larger vessel ("the Eye of Ammon") back to Turth. Of course, the caverns collapse minutes after leaving Xociene, making re-entry difficult.

The characters will first have opportunity to explore a bit of Zostig in hopes of recovering parts of their past. The Game Master should be somewhat sensitive to characters with high presence or skills such as Contacts; perhaps one of their friends (now much older) is another of Zostig's survivors, or they had some money hidden in their cellar. Likewise, returning to Turth may be a bit of a shock. One or more of the characters may find that doubles, doppelgangers, or simulacrum have taken their place.

Dherin is an assassin from Fayde Ehling, who had just arrived in Turth when he was captured by the Tavash Morn. He'll be grateful for assistance back home, but finds he no longer knows anyone in town. Still, he'll be looking for some opportunities to get some money and equipment, and might bring some of the player characters along if they're interested.

The characters will then find themselves at the nexus of several overlapping conspiracies and misunderstandings. The surviving members of the new Tavash Morn, largely at Luksharrow, want to silence them and think that they now have their precious Egg. The Tavash Morn, under Zhillian Maars (of House Maars; 7th level human, 3rd Circle Hermetic) will pursue them across Twylos in search of it. However, the Egg was secretly recovered by Maedar Arangul (6th level human, 2nd Circle Hermetic), a Museum Scholar from Rauthos, working with Nichordjan Durang (6th level human, 3rd Circle Hedge) of the Guild of Optics. Durang believes the player characters are part of this new order of Tavash Morn, while Arangul is less sure. They were tipped off to the Egg's whereabouts by Grimlin Khael while in Westgate.

While Arangul takes the Egg and heads for Bourgangsbaïne with his wife Helena (3rd level human), Durang attempts to contact the Alchemists. He will now have left the Guild of Optics, and begin to be pursued himself by the Opticians under direct orders from Master Reeves to bring him back for questioning. Meanwhile, the real Tavash Morn in Thenzor Deep have now been alerted to the actions of the false Tavash Morn (who were unaware the Tavash still existed in some form). At first, the true Tavash Morn will simply be curious as to the identity of these pretenders, but come to realize they somehow possess (or possessed) one of their keystones, and will begin to aggressively hunt for the player characters and Zhillian's people. Maars might even approach the party to see about joining forces- she considers them kindred, and also sort of sees them as being her property.

The characters might opt instead to learn more about the Black Rose Rebellion. Khael is an agent of Oberon Frost's, reporting to him in Luksharrow. Or if they find the College of Surgeons of interest, the College could use help in removing Griminien Orbach from Tzalvas, who has grown too powerful and out of control.

Arangul will begin researching the Egg of Voon at the Shadowfall Library. In this version of the events at Bourgangsbaïne, his wife will hang herself after discovering his infidelity. Wracked with guilt, he will then attempt to use the Egg to bring her back. At this he will fail. The Zhollan forces now disgusted with the abuse of the Egg, Arangul will be transformed into Abraxas to guard it against further use.

Finally, Durang's message will reach Headmaster Asmodean of Aea Convent, and the conspiracy will come full circle. Maars was Asmodean's student and part of the Rhaxen Pact. A scholar of Amanda and the Arcanos, the Headmaster off-handedly suggested where the Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday might be found while he

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

concerned himself with construction of the Aprill clones. Asmodean will contact Father Dhalgeng of the Church of Typhon and ask that he clean this up. Dhalgeng concurs, and will send his minions to take care of things. Khael, if still alive, is considered expendable.

In the endgame, the player characters might face off against the Typhonae, or Abraxas, or Aea Convent. They might negotiate a kind of truce and retire in peace. Alternatively, they might realize the true function of the Egg of Voon, and attempt to either open the Zoran gate or destroy it forever, ultimately securing Twylos from the return of the Arcanos.

Campaign 2: The Return of Ixondr

Themes: Identity, destiny, revenge, and freedom. This campaign is suited for an average number of player characters (3-5).

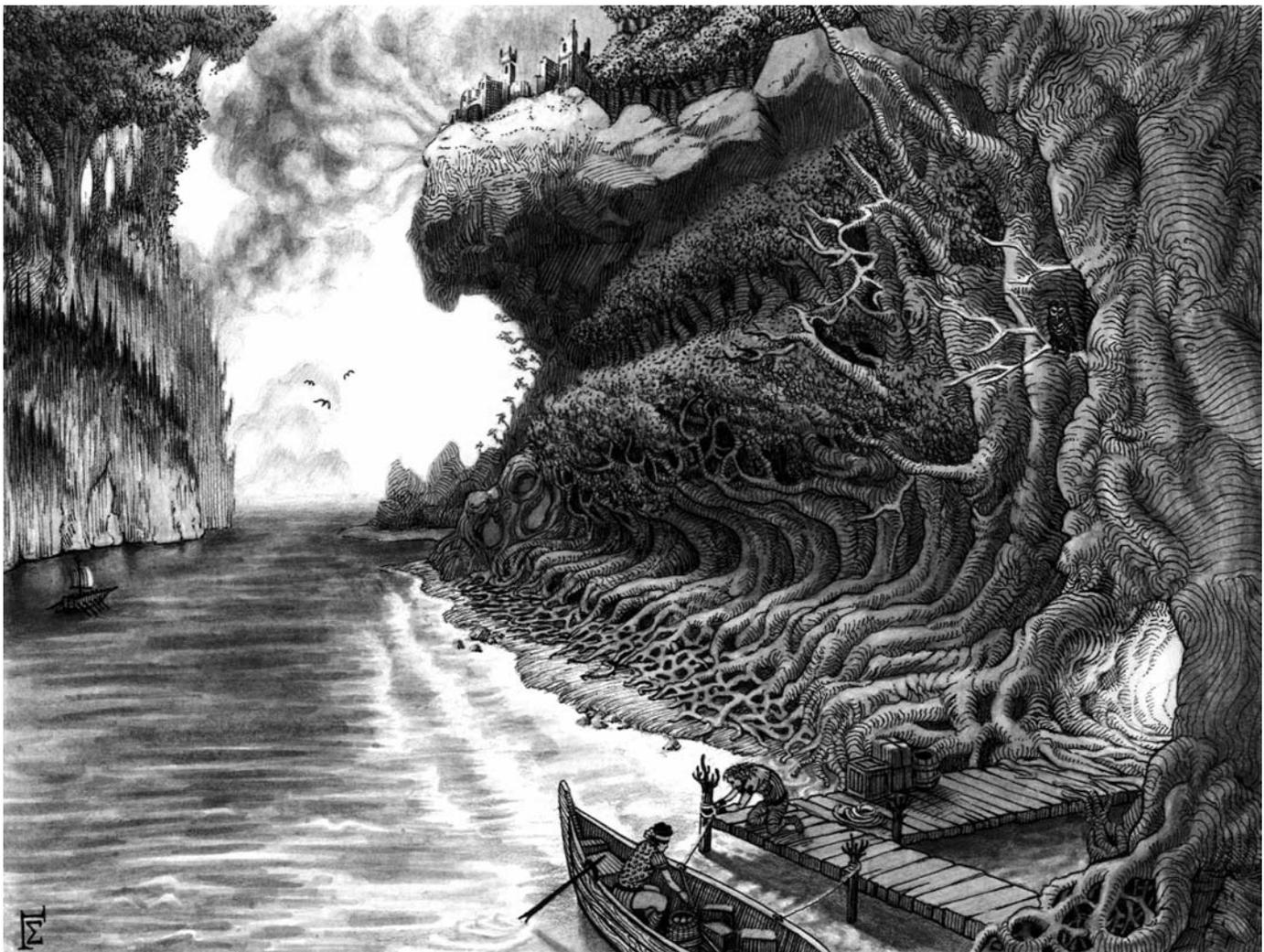
Summary: The player characters begin as slaves at the farthest edge of Twylos: the island of Morningstide in Vasqueray's Tears of Brielle. A horrible accident earns them their freedom, but they acquire bitter rivals. As the Ixians prepare for war, they pursue their enemies, or find themselves pursued, to Thorneskeep. Therein, they find that they have been party to a horrible conspiracy to secure the return of Lord Ixondr, and possibly Muriel or the Arcanos as well.

Background: The characters are Ixian slaves, brought to the Tears of Brielle in the southernmost part of Vasqueray. They have no possessions, but Sister Miriam has set aside some money for them

(equal to their presence-based starting funds) in a Bevan bank, for when they secure their freedom. Queyan and Ceyneian are appropriate starting languages. Characters who begin as Hedge or Hermetic mages will not begin with a spellbook.

Players' Introduction: While pestilence, strife, and the threat of war weigh heavily on most of Twylos, a few quiet corners remain. One such corner is Morningstide, the old Queyan cemetery in the Tears of Brielle. You've been brought to Morningstide unwillingly, because you are a slave. Whatever life you had before and whomever you knew growing up... these are distant memories and fading dreams. You were caught or captured somehow; in retrospect the details are unimportant, and the Slaver's Guild came to own you. After two hellish months living as an animal in the Praxis Slave city of Unsbourg, you were first transported to Vasqueray, and then to the Brielle archipelago, ending up at the guildhouse at the village of Bevan. There, you were purchased by a Thainist work farm and moved to Morningstide.

You expected endless, tiring workdays and thirsty nights. Instead, you've been treated better than you were even when you were free. Sister Miriam Andallay, head of the small group, has been very kind to you. You have joined a few other slaves to help rebuild the Morningstide docks and occasionally inter a body in the cliffside tombs, an ancient and forbidding place known as Barrowsreich. These labors take at most a few hours out of every day. Some days are spent doing entirely nothing, laying around in the lazy summer sun.



There are eight others, not counting yourself and the other slaves purchased with you who have fast become your only friends. Sister Miriam mentors the three younger Thainists, Sister Lara Morcrest (resident engineer of Morningstide), and Brothers Tar and James Voraan. Tar is the elder at age 21, and is the boatman of the bay. James is 19 and Morningstide's cook. Sister Miriam retains the services of Hrothgar, a somber Easterner who's Ixian and an ex-slave. Hrothgar is her bodyguard and wields one of the only weapons you've seen on the island, a large war axe. His presence seems mostly ornamental though, as there's been almost no bloodshed in the Tears since the Ixians began to take over.

The brunt of the workforce, however, is you and your fellow slaves. There are two other slaves as well, but they've been here from the start (about four years ago)- Paedra Marsis, a nice girl from Gyre, and Tomasz Fink, a swarthy, tattooed Zhellan. Finally, an Apprentice Slaver named Jamis Bled helps out around the compound, and keeps a loose eye on the lot of you. Despite the easy, almost idyllic life, you're still slaves. But just temporarily, you remind yourself. Sister Miriam has promised to free you after two years of service, when Morningstide has been rebuilt and re-established as a joint Thainist/Museum Scholar research institution. So perhaps you can wait it out.

It's the year 213 of the Third Era. You arrived at Morningstide in early April, and since then, the summer days wax and wane. It is now the first day of August. Within the last week, a sudden storm (a frequent occurrence) destroyed one of the landing docks in the bay, and under the supervision of Sister Lara and Hrothgar, you have been working all week to rebuild it. A few days ago, Sister Miriam received word that an Ixian ship would be dropping off a few bodies (an infrequent occurrence) in a month's time. In response, Tomasz Fink and Apprentice Jamis were sent this morning to begin excavation of another part of the Tombs. Yet another workday on Morningstide Island.

It's early afternoon under the hot tropical sun when Fink comes back, running and shouting. "Something happened in the Tomb... Jamis gone... some kinda loud boom, lots of rock fell! Not good..." He looks nervous and continually shakes his head.

Hrothgar quickly takes control and tells Fink to calm down. He fetches Sister Miriam to the docks, and she seems distressed by Fink's report. "Okay," she says. "Everyone, come with me... you too Fink. Hrothgar, you stay here with the acolytes and await Queynoth's shipment." (Queynoth is an old local who delivers dry goods to the camp.) Hrothgar has his doubts. "Don't worry, 'Gar!" She smiles. "There won't be any problems. And if there are, we'll hurry right back." She smiles at the lot of you slaves, beckons with her hand to follow her, and off you go. Along comes Brother Tar, to ferry you across the deep, sparkling blue water. As you head out, you stare across the sea to your destination, the high Morningstide cliffs. It's an hour and a half across the bay and up the bridges to the Barrowsreich Tombs. Stepping into the barge, Sister Miriam squints in the sunlight, saying "Don't worry, friends... The Lady Kithain is with us. I only pray for Mister Bled's safety." Fink mutters "Damn this heat... feels like a storm comin'."

Narrative: As described in the Tears of Brielle, the Tombs is managed by Sister Miriam Andallay (3rd level human, 2nd Circle Faith), her man Hrothgar (2nd level human), and her acolytes Brother Tar (1st level human, 1st Circle Faith) and Sister Lara (2nd level human, 1st Circle Faith). Apprentice Slaver Jamis Bled (2nd level human) watches over the slave workers, including Tomasz Fink (0th level human), Paedra Marsis (1st level human), and the player characters.

The adventure begins with Sister Miriam, Brother Tar, Fink, Paedra, and the player characters heading out across the waters, under the burning sun, to Barrowsreich. A sinkhole has opened up inside one of the secondary caverns. Under some rubble is the body of Apprentice

Bled, oddly charred. Also within the sinkhole, on the wall, is a faded symbol of a spread hand (a Perception check of 6 will notice that it has six fingers). There are several pillars supporting this room against the walls. Bled has his blade drawn, his Guild-issued leather armor, and a pickaxe lies on the ground near a spade.

Soon, a shade hound (as a war dog) emerges from the shadows and attacks. After four rounds, another one will appear. Miriam and the others will help fend it off. Miriam will cast Wrench using a Breyanic prayer in Irendi; it will manifest as a giant glowing blue hand, and her eyes momentarily will flicker ice-blue. Fink will take the sword and use it if no one else does, and then try to conceal it and bring it back to hide it under his bed. If asked about it, he claims that he'll need something if more of those hounds come back.

Back at the workhouse, Sister Miriam pens a letter to Bled's family in Bevan. The journey there will take two days- the player characters, along with Hrothgar, Fink, and Paedra will take his body back home. The next morning, Hrothgar leads everyone through the woods, the Elmsbreak, to the Morningstide Ferry. Hrothgar has the key to the barges here in his boot- he unlocks them, and everyone ferries across to Anvollier's Island. Stop for lunch, before going up and down some rugged bluffs. Finally, they reach the Bevanford and Queynoth's Watch. The Watch is a resting place built up into the trees over the ford. Two other people will be here- Danvers, currently staffing the Watch, and Apprentice Ghislaine, a Navigator. She has a pony, named Ixondr, tied up on the ground below the Watch. Ghislaine is bound for Morningstide, on private Guild business with Sister Miriam.

That night, a large crow flies around the Watch, before heading north. A Wilderness Lore check of 3 reveals that crows are not native to these parts. (This is actually the Duuran priestess Larissa.) In the morning, Ghislaine and Ixondr are already gone. In late morning, on the road to Bevan, the party will come across a combat in progress. Three riders have ambushed a wagon, fallen down into a small ravine. One of the riders' mounts has also fallen and lies near the wagon, legs broken. Two of the three riders (including the now-dismounted one) are wounded, and they are speaking with Ixian accents. They seem to be fighting a single guard, protecting an old man and a young girl. Soon, they will kill the old man, move to kill the guard, and finally the girl. They will claim she is an escaped murderer. In actuality she is one of the Aprill clones, escaped from Aea Convent, and the older man is a priest of Typhon who has largely exhausted his spell repertoire for the day. Hrothgar seems happy to have a chance to fight, and advises a sort of 'Handmaiden' style of intervention. If they want, the characters should seize the few weapons from the two other dead guards, and join him in knocking out everyone (except the old man and girl). They will first act to kill the Typhonaes, but then turn on any other combatants. As they have horses, they will attempt to escape if possible, one of them yelling in Ixian, telling them if they know what's right, they'll kill the girl themselves.

Aprill will claim that the old man was her Uncle Griv. He wears a silver ring with a Queyan inscription: "Grivener Dhalgeng, Master of the Third Star". Grivener was a relative to the head of the Typhonic church, and fled with the girl in an attempt to hide her at Morningstide. Apprentice Ghislaine, acting on behalf of the Church of Typhon, is delivering a message to this effect. Aprill doesn't really know what to do, but Hrothgar will suggest she come with them first to Bevan, then back to Morningstide. The Game Master can decide to what degree Aprill will play a role in the campaign, based on the actions of the players.

They will arrive at Bevan at dusk, and get a large room at the Silversail. Staying at the 'Sail is Rupert Smalls, his wife Erin, and a few others in his group. He is playing chess against a large raven, apparently his familiar but again the shape-changed priestess Larissa.

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Smalls is somewhat personable, and will talk of coming from Gorgos; he's on Alchemist Guild business in the Tears. Apparently the Church of Typhon tried to buy an island, but no one would sell them one, so they made their own and built a large theatre called Velanieh (named after Thorneskeep).

Meanwhile, Hrothgar and Paedra take Bled's body to his family and stop by the Thainist temple. The Thainists in town, led by Brother Kendrick, are not close to Sister Miriam and think that her operation in Morningstide is a bad idea. Hrothgar also buys some supplies.

The trip back to the Tombs is unevenful; the party will stay again at the Watch, and this time old Queynoth is at the desk. Working on the docks the next day, wrecked by storms again. Around noon, a ship appears, and seems to drop anchor in the harbor. About 30 minutes later, a boat rows up to shore, containing Rupert Smalls, his wife Erin, Sister Larissa, and Smalls' three companions from the Silversail (Thaddeus, Grischcombe, and Eugene). They seem friendly enough, and claim to have papers from the Alchemists Guild and Bone Trade for exploration of Barrowsreich. These are forged; Smalls has been led here by Larissa, hoping to find something called the Deimos Palantir which does not really exist.

Everyone comes over, and Smalls and Miriam discuss things privately for a few minutes. Then she has Tar ferry them over to Barrowsreich, expressing her doubts about the quality of their characters and their ideas. After a few hours, Tar has not returned. Sister Miriam asks Fink and the player characters to check on Tar. Fink gets a lantern (and maybe his sword), and they head over to the Tombs as a mist begins to roll in.

Fink is a fairly good tracker. If the player characters cannot, he can track them inside Barrowsreich, down the sinkhole, and through a secret door near the hand emblem. Through the door is an old temple of the Church of Winter. It opens into another circular chamber, containing two murals, one of a blindfolded girl in a garden, the second of an enormous pair of eyes and mouth. The mouth is also an archway, opening into a staircase headed down. At the bottom is a heavy stone door, currently sealed by Smalls' magic. More interesting is a corridor off to the side, with faint light at the end. It is flanked by three pairs of statues, each of the same woman holding different objects (first pair: a branched candelabra, a child to her breast; second pair: hand on heart and spade under feet, a spool of thread; last pair: a mirror, a rose). At the very end, holding a lantern enchanted with a magic candle spell and a broadsword, is Grischcombe, slumped on the ground. Seems like he's just been killed as he's still warm, apparently with a sword wound, but there are claw and burn marks as well. He also has a pouch with some money, and a letter from the Tears of Ozmandian pawn shop in Gorgos, owned by Fredicker Voyns, giving them the name of a Bevan ship and captain (also dead in the ship) that can take them covertly, quickly, and cheaply to the Tombs, and wishes them all well.

As the characters are investigating this, they will be charged by Erin, Thaddeus, and Eugene. Erin will draw her blade and fiercely attack, while Thaddeus pulls out a wand and uses it to form a wall of unbreakable glass across the corridor. Eugene shakes his head in disgust, as they have effectively walled off Erin with everyone else.

Erin should die here. As a last resort, Fink's blade can be poisoned, and she might die a slow death. Thaddeus and Eugene go fetch Larissa and Smalls, and bring them to the wall. Smalls will first berate Thaddeus and take the wand back. He will then see his dead or dying wife and go into shock. Larissa will shake her head sadly, watching Smalls closely. Thaddeus and Eugene also look sad. Smalls will ineffectually try to get past the glass wall, before being led away by

Larissa. She says something to Thaddeus and Eugene who wait at the wall with weapons drawn.

Then a cloud of darkness comes, and the magic candle and all other light goes out. As the light fades, Thaddeus turns and stares at the PCs with a look of complete horror on his face, mouthing words as he disappears from view into the darkness. After some time, Fink will re-light the lantern. Thaddeus and Eugene have been destroyed, left in a bloody mess, and a six-fingered, taloned bloody handprint is on the glass wall. After another 20 minutes or so, the wall will be dispelled and the characters are free to go.

They might explore deeper in the temple, or head back to Morningstide. Everyone is dead, but possibly Paedra and/or Hrothgar are missing. The place can be looted, although if they stick around too long, a shadow and four manes will attack them as well.

Of course, it is possible that the player characters try to escape, especially when they reach Bevan. Their only choice is by boat, and it will be possible for them to find a captain to take them, likely to Gorgos. As he's not a Guildsman, his ship will be searched leaving the ports, so they'll have to hide in barrels in the cargo hold. However, this ship will be hired by Smalls to detour back to Morningstide, where it will sit until attacked by the manes and shadow freed by their efforts. The characters will emerge from the hold to find themselves back in Morningstide, everyone else killed by the shadow and manes except for Smalls and Larissa.

At this point, the characters are free to do as they wish. They might investigate the temple of Breyana, or inquire after Voyns in Gorgos. In any case, Smalls/Moors hates them for murdering his wife, and will pursue them, using his wand to keep himself alive when necessary. Of course, the characters aren't truly free, as they're still the property of the Slavers Guild. In a couple days, an Ixian ship will come to Morningstide with some bodies- finding everyone dead, it will head to Bevan to give a report. The player characters are the suspects, and Journeyman Slaver Gregory Celles will hunt them down with a team of guards. Hrothgar will be with them if he survived the demonic destruction of Morningstide. They will likely be apprehended at a port with the help of the Navigators, as in Vasqueray, most transport is done by ship. They will go back for sale, and Smalls/Moors will end up purchasing one or two of them. They will be tortured. Maybe not all of them will be captured- perhaps at least Fink will get away. If not, April or Paedra could be around, and see whoever was bought by Smalls. They will buy the others back from the Guild, and help rescue whoever Smalls is torturing. Smalls and Larissa will be out of their cellar apartment when the raid occurs though, leaving only a few guards, possibly returning near the end of the battle only to flee once more.

The campaign then turns to Gorgos. To hasten their departure, the characters should hear news of the growing Ixian presence in the Tears. There are signs of imminent war, with the Ixians planning on invading Vasqueray, and the Bevan ports will be among the first to close. On a lighter note, a group of traveling entertainers (a Circus of Piedmont) calling itself the Guild of Dreams is planning on performing "Gardens of Zil" at Velanieh. The head of the Guild of Dreams, an odd lanky man named Zeb Ohls, will give a flyer to one of the player characters, when they are at a tavern. It advertises their show, and with some additional colorful language ("we bring fantasies to life! we're whats under your bed!"). After handing it over, his glass eye will fall out, into the character's drink. Ohls will stumble around blindly, searching for it. If returned, Ohls will be grateful and give them free tickets (just a piece of parchment that says TICKETS on it, but apparently does the trick). If kept, it acts as a sapphire ioun stone. The Guild travels on a ship called the S.S. Pinochle.

In Gorgos, the Guild of Optics will be busy installing their new telescope. Meanwhile, Smalls/Moors is searching for the magic of the Guild of Thorns. He is guided in this by Sister Larissa, who additionally plans on steering him eventually to Thorneskeep. Smalls and Larissa will be in attendance at the theatre. Their contact Voyns knows this and can point the characters in the right direction. At the theatre, Smalls and a new set of hired guards (including the Ixian twins Zara and Piotr Vogels) are there to assassinate the Lady Yvesa Vauntrec. They will stage it to look like the Cult of Winter has attacked her, thus giving the Ixians leverage to act in seizing control of Gorgos and the ports. This will upset the Church of Typhon which has worked hard on their image in Gorgos. During the play, characters must make Mental Resistance checks to avoid being entranced during the final act. Eventually, they will notice ivy growing over everything and everyone, and hear Smalls' voice in the box seat below them. He and Larissa are immune to the soporific aspects of the Guild of Dreams, and are about to act to kill the Lady. In the aftermath, the Ixians, the local government of Gorgos, and the Church of Typhon will all be distraught. The Guild of Dreams set sail, leaving another poster behind for their next performance: "The Vile Orphans" in Oberton.

Next stop is Oolvaunt, if the characters wish to leave Vasqueray at all. Here the Ixian invasion will finally catch up with the player characters. The Sun King himself will arrive in Oolvaunt, with many Ixian ships blocking the ports. The Ixians will raid the town, just as the player characters stumble on the inn where Smalls and Larissa and a few others are staying. Smalls and company will flee the city through the sewers, eventually opening out into the wilds outside Oolvaunt, where they will head into the brambles surrounding Thorneskeep.

Inside Thorneskeep, Smalls will suddenly realize the terrible mistake he made in trusting Larissa. She essentially gives him over to Ixondr. The rest of their companions might seek the player characters' aid in escaping, although the hatred that fills the castle will eventually cause them to come to blows with each other. Prior to that, they might be invited to join Ixondr at his dining table. Through a small window, they can watch as a comet destroys Oolvaunt. After some time spent in preparation, Ixondr will take Smalls' body. Now free of the curse, Ixondr will leave Thorneskeep to seek Muriel in Lunais, although he first will rest for quite some time to regain his strength and abilities.

It is suggested that the player characters escape Thorneskeep, after Ixondr leaves, through one of the Transport Mirrors. Moving the campaign to Zalen Vale at this point might open up several different possibilities. The characters might hasten down to Tzalvas to determine what has become of Smalls/Moors/Ixondr and Larissa, or to aid in the battle between Vasqueray and the Ixians, who will begin to conquer Saethos and sweep up into the Vehrlands. Otherwise, they might be done with that arc, and decide to explore Armech or Tarach. If players have expressed more interest in Hermetic magic itself, than its abuse by Smalls/Moors/Ixondr, moving them to Thenzor Deep would provide many possibilities.

Assuming that the characters move to Tzalvas, the end of the campaign might rely on Aprill. She will still be hunted, by both the Ixians and the Typhonae, but will begin to recover her memories of Aea Convent. On the road down to Tzalvas, they might meet Terrence Ridlee and Adlai Andrakkar in Tarchartus, who will be surprised to see one of Amanda's daughters. (Or, strictly, one of the clones of the daughters of Aprill's simulacrum.) Andrakkar knows of Abby, and might eventually suggest obtaining her to deal with Ixondr's potent magical abilities. He would come along for amusement, wanting first to detour to obtain the Scroll of Vriian as a backup plan, in case an assault against Aea Convent goes horribly wrong.

It probably will. The Convent is well-defended by the combined forces of an odd collection of Typhonae, Ixians, and Alchemists, not to

mention the girls themselves. Asmodean is mostly a helpless old man, who mainly wants to see no harm come to his precious Abby. Andrakkar- or preferably one of the player characters- will summon Vriian to destroy the legions that swarm to Aea after it is entered; Vriian will eat the whole of the Convent. Only those protected by Abby's anti-magical shielding will be immune to Vriian's devastation.

Lastly then, to Lunais, where Ixondr will be entering Muriel's Dream Realm to fetch his beloved sister. The characters will be pursued to Lunais by the remnants of the Rhaxen Pact and the interested parties behind the Aea Convent project. They will kill Abby if possible. Inside Muriel's Dream Realm, though, Ixondr's magic will be useless. Enraged, he will attempt to murder anyone who tries to prevent him from seeing, and finally killing, the Lady Muriel. With Ixondr dead, and the portal to Muriel's Realm open, the campaign comes to a close. The characters can stay safe in her Dream Realm, or another of their own creation. Or perhaps Muriel is too tired, and returns to Twylos to experience it first-hand. Or maybe she is dead, and the end result is the same- her re-creations of the doomed world will finally cease to be.



Campaign 3: The Idylls of Ulmsdeep

Themes: Home, family, memory, and love. This campaign is suited for an average or large number of player characters (3-8).

Summary: The player characters are Slavers, the town guard in Ulmsdeep. The discovery of old magics casts them into another version of Muriel's Twylos in which they never existed. They then find themselves in the middle of a war and two love triangles. In the end, Petrarch's Zolace seems to be the source of their problems.

Background: As explained in the Guidebook, Ulmsdeep itself is a modest-sized village, governed by Mayor Hubert VIII from Ulmsborg Keep, a larger walled city a day's travel away from the village. The Slavers Guild manages the village itself, acting essentially as the local guards and militia. Living here and patrolling Ulmsdeep village out of Aramside Guildhall are Journeyman Obhram (6th level human), his Apprentices Inago Ores (3rd level human), Lazlo Vrusk (7th level human), Dominick Irtheth (2nd level human), and the player characters. In addition there are two Novices, Bertil (1st level human) and Brenna (2nd level), owns Queyn's Timepiece although is unaware of its abilities). Obhram is a widower, with one daughter, Kaila Mendelene (2nd level human), of whom the Journeyman is very protective, even though Kaila often wishes to partake in the patrols and exercises of the Slavers. She keeps to herself, riding her horse alone through the hills outside Ulmsdeep.

Player characters all begin knowing each other, as Apprentices in the Slavers Guild (with according bonuses). Characters with Hedge or Hermetic magic will also have a joint appointment in the Alchemists

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Guild (also with those Guild bonuses, including reductions in the cost of Hedge magic), and will begin with a simple spellbook. Characters with Faith or Ritual magic will be acolytes in the local chapel, Vespers, run by Prefect Yannan Mathers (3rd level human, 2nd Circle Ritual). In addition to their starting funds, characters will each have a suit of leather armor, a shield, a club, and a dagger. Larger weapons are not permitted in town, and in fact it is their job to enforce that rule. The Journeyman has a stock of more lethal armaments though, just in case of an emergency. Starting funds will represent each character's savings. Characters are encouraged to have other jobs and families, as their Guild Apprenticeship is really just part-time work in Ulmsdeep. The starting language is Zhellan.

Players' Introduction: You live a quiet life in the Ulmsreich, on the western shores of the Vehrlands, in the small port town of Ulmsdeep. This is where you and your friends have grown up, with families, friends, and honest work. You're Guildsmen- Apprentice Slavers to be precise. As such, you're all part of the informal militia and government of Ulmsdeep, although this is more in title than in deed. There's hardly any trouble in Ulmsdeep, thanks to the able governing of the Ixians based out of Ulmsborg Keep, about a day to the south.

Today, though, is different. There's a tension in the air and a sort of a visceral feeling of excitement. It's the first autumn rain after a long, dry summer. More to the point, in late morning, Journeyman Obhram, the old captain of the Ulmsdeep militia, calls you all out to the field, where you can see arms and implements being cleaned and prepared by Inago, a big Ixian man and fellow Slaver. You're standing in the mud and drizzling rain, waiting for his command. Obhram pauses, looks at you sternly, and tells you to grab the weapons and ready yourselves... it's training day again for the Ulmsdeep Slavers.

You live in Ulmsdeep, a small harbor town at the far western edge of Verlaine (part of the Vehrlands) on the world of Twylos. Verlaine has no central government; instead it is a loose collection of regions under local control. Ulmsdeep is part of the province of Ulmsreich, containing one other larger city: Ulmsborg Keep, overseen by Mayor Hubert VIII. Together these regions are also known colloquially as Ulmsdeep. Ulmsbourg is managed by a council of merchants (Councilmen Allana, Ganterby, and Hortes) working with the Guild.

Historically, "the Guild" is the Slaving Guild, although slavery is now only a small part of your day-to-day affairs. You are all part of the Guild, being part of the Ulmsdeep militia. The other Guildsmen (and thus Slavers and militia members) are: Journeyman Obhram Mendelene, Apprentices Lazlo Vrusk, Inago Ores, and Dominick Irteth, and Novices Brenna and Bertil. Traditionally, Guild rankings are: Master, Journeyman, Apprentice, and Novice, but the number of Masters is quite low (especially in these parts), so Obhram is acting guildmaster of Ulmsdeep. You are Apprentices, meaning you act with some autonomy but still receive orders and are stationed in Ulmsdeep. There is a larger Guild in the Keep, where the two other guilds also operate: the Navigators and Alchemists Guilds.

Perhaps you were born and raised in Ulmsdeep, or maybe you are a transplant from elsewhere in Verlaine. You might have a family. Inago, for instance, came to Ulmsdeep four years ago with his wife Mina. Journeyman Obhram himself is a widower, with a daughter Kaila. You may also have a job or a house. Militia work is part time for some. If you are a mage, you're likely apprenticed to the apothecary, Landerin Wehr. As a priest, you may work and live at the Thainist shrine in town, Vespers, overseen by Prefect Yannan Mathers. Working either place would be fine for non-spellcasters as well. Regardless, once a week, you train, work, and live in the Guildhall, Aramside.

Ulmsdeep is a village of a few hundred people, and over a thousand live in the Keep itself. It is located on a river, feeding into the western

ocean, and situated between two cliffs. The flag of Ulmsdeep is white on brown, depicting two lighthouses with an octopus underneath. The lighthouses are local landmarks- one on shore (Daalian Ley) and one out to sea (Daalian Mhon). Octopus is a local delicacy, and the fishing is quite good. Aside from seafood, Ulmsdeep is supported by agriculture and lumbering, surrounded by farmlands to the south and east and forests to the north.

Although Verlaine has no official ruler, it is nominally controlled by the Church of Ixus and their god-incarnate the Sun King. The Ixians originate on a barren southwestern island, Nycene. Therefore, in addition to being citizens of Ulmsdeep and Slavers, you are also Ixians, at least geographically, if not spiritually or politically. While Obhram is not Ixian in more than name, Mayor Hubert's family had ties to the Church, and so it is that Obhram's daughter Kaila will be wed to the Mayor in the days to come. The eccentric Mayor has no other surviving family, except a half-sister (or maybe cousin), Aprill, a Duuran witch now in exile from Ulmsdeep. Fortunately, although Aprill may be gone, her ogre workman Tennyson still comes down from the northern caves every few weeks to bring huge slabs of ice, just the thing to keep cool in the hot Ulmsdeep summer.

Narrative: The campaign starts slowly. We suggest that several sessions be used to set the feel of Ulmsdeep and give the players some sense of Ulmsdeep as their home. It first begins on training day for the Ulmsdeep Slaves, using wooden weapons; the player characters spar against each other. Inago breaks Journeyman Obhram's leg; Prefect Mathers can heal it somewhat, but Obhram needs to be off his feet for a few weeks. Around town, Kaila is being prepared to go to Ulmsborg Keep for wedding to the now-reclusive mayor, Hubert VIII.

Later that day, Obhram gets a message from the Navigators Guild, delivered by arrogant ex-Guildsmen Armand Hollander. The infamous pirate and smuggler Francis "Frank" Burton is coming through town, and they have to apprehend him tomorrow night. Lazlo freaks out at this ("there's not enough time, not enough hours in the day... and I can't take it") and disappears into the woods in the night. If apprehended, he remains silent and brooding, but will try to escape his pursuers.

The next night, Frank's boat (the 'Maidenhead') sails directly into the docks, apparently unmanned. Talk of "Black Ship of Zhol" by locals. Obhram orders the Apprentices and Novices to take real weapons, and go aboard and get Frank Burton. He's down in the main cabin below decks, standing motionless but staring at a music box on the floor, everything in disarray, with three other sailors also all motionless. Two other sailors with crossbows are waiting in ambush in the back. Dominick approaches with shackles, reading Frank the statement of his arrest. Frank's eyes slowly focus on him. As he touches Frank, before the shackles are attached, Frank grabs a letter opener and stabs Dominick through the cheek. Melee. Everyone first turns on Dominick, and it's okay if in the course of combat, he's killed.

Responsible for the ship's crash and the sailors' psychoses is the Zolace Musicbox (see Appendix 2.1.1). In addition to the music box, there are some papers describing transport of some unspecified goods from Ellsdeep in the north down to Ulmsdeep, signed by "S. Lovejoy" of the Alchemists Guild, and promising a large payment (500 sc). The name Lovejoy is unfamiliar. Obhram will take the music box, and consider it into the night. (He will seem very tired the next morning.)

Later that night, celebrating victory outside the local tavern, a comet streaks overhead. Perception checks of 8 to notice it. Brenna sees it. Bertil complains he never sees shooting stars. A couple nights a week, everyone sleeps together in the Aramside Guildhouse barracks, including tonight. Everyone dreams that night. Here are four example dreams:

The Ball: You are ready to go to costume ball, in a gown of finest purple silks and lace. Your escort, a tall older man, in a brown raincoat and carrying a large old doctor's bag, comes to collect you. No, you're not going to a party, you're preparing to flee the castle. The winds pick up. You sneak down a back stairs, and head into the woods. Your dress is ruined in the rain. You end up at a dark cabin deep in the woods. But the trees are all fake here, like bad theatrical props- leaves tied on with little strings. You are alone now, and quietly head to the door. You open it and peek inside. Seated around table are an old magician, a court jester, and the young woman from the music box found on the Maidenhead, all dressed as lumberjacks. No, wait, this is all wrong too...

The Bucket: You wake up in your cell, vomiting. But you are not you, and you are not speaking Zhellan but it's still your native tongue. All this is oddly familiar. Your roommate, a timid girl, is making wooden dentures. Soon, a horned demon comes to collect you- time to go to work. But there's a hole in your bucket. The demon scoffs at you. "You'd just better go and get another one then, you dolt." Damn, and your roommate won't share hers. You leave your room into the massive stone halls of the castle. Tiptoe down to the galley, to ask for a new bucket from the disgusting cook- a huge, obese demon, with a humanoid torso, arms, and head growing out of his side, wearing a 'Kiss the Cook' apron. For your impertinence, your failure, or just your presence, he flies into a rage and smashes your head into the counter, then into the floor. He grabs a cleaver and cuts you up. You'll be soup for sure.

The Cabin: You follow Lazlo out of town into woods to cabin at night. He's there playing poker game with three others. Behind Lazlo is a statue, life-size but really small at same time, of a really angry demon. One man vomits, chokes, and dies. Lazlo and the third man are shocked, while the fourth man steals a card and winks at you. Lazlo gets up to go, but you draw your weapon to hold him back- a brief melee, and you stab Lazlo through the gut, killing him.

Piece By Piece: You must make Physical and Mental Resistance checks (although it doesn't matter what the character rolls). The night terrors come, paralyzing you in your bed. You are not dreaming, as you are not asleep. You hear a voice, very far away, softly singing- or is it just the wind? The voice gets louder, slowly increasing as something comes closer. You then see a tall, black, spindly shadow thing creep in through window. It crawls across the floor, up onto your bunk; slowly, softly singing to itself "piece by piece, piece by piece, change of pace, change of face". All the while, it climbs onto your chest, reaches in your mouth, and wrenches out a tooth. It inserts it into its own mouth and leaves through the window. (Yes, the character will be missing a tooth if they check in the morning. Brenna and Bertil will claim that this character lost it in a horse-riding accident several months ago.)

These dreams do not necessarily refer to anything in particular, although some elements (Lazlo, the cabin, Mr. Beasley, and the three figures from Petrarch's Curious Folio) may be referenced in the campaign in adventures to come. Dreams in Twylos are more stylistic, to set the mood and tone, and to provide players with the motivation to pursue specific interests that they otherwise might not care about.

Bertil dreams he can fly. Brenna doesn't talk about dreams, as she thinks they're personal. Her grandmother's family was Queyan, and she called dreams 'muares', visions of the Gray Lands.

Some free time to be had in Ulmsdeep- Kaila is due to be taken down to Ulmsborg Keep in three days. Additionally, Obhram will have the characters escort Frank Burton to the Ulmsborg jail. If a player character is an Apprentice Alchemist, the Apothecary Wehr tells him to pick up two new lenses from the Opticians when they go to Ulmsborg. In the meantime, several events occur as the Game Master wishes. If he

has one, Prefect Mathers tries to teach his player character acolyte about animal summoning, deep in the woods one evening. A large wolf appears and kills the Prefect. The wolf then speaks to the character, offering his services, and that he hopes he too can eat the character some day. Mathers, on his body, will have a key previously unseen by the character, which opens a chest in the basement containing a Duuran prayer book and some sacred earth.

The first day. It starts to storm. A fishing boat reports that the far lighthouse (Daalian Mhon) light is still on. Hunter's dog finds severed leg off in woods... Lazlo's? Tracking "Lazlo" reveals a cabin in woods, but no Lazlo. It's similar to the cabin in the dreams. No one inside. In the woods, the characters might run into a pair of gnole scouts, who will be hostile but cautious.

The second day. Obhram has them check out the lighthouse, along with Inago and the Novices. There's a trail of blood leading up to top, where lighthouse master Jexen Mazerik is dead in his study. Lighthouse master clearly killed by Lazlo, who's also dead down near the entrance. Lazlo, however, has burn marks and claw marks, and his arm was ripped off. Lazlo's corpse is found through a secret door down in cellar. Through the secret door, is another door, this one made of mysterious metal. It is sealed- it doesn't budge and is marked with curled shell-like nautilus symbol (really the eclipsing-moon symbol of the Tavash Morn).

So what happened here? Lazlo had realized that events were recurring in a similar manner as he remembered from the first two times that Meeks and Huxley set off the Zolace trap. Lazlo wrongly thought that Mazerik was involved and came here to kill the mage before it could happen again. However, Mazerik was able to activate one of the Lighthouse's defenses, and summoned a lesser demon to kill Lazlo. After fulfilling its task, the demon disappeared.

Back in town, on the morning of the third day, Frank Burton in the Aramside jail is conscious. He curses intelligibly to children throwing mud at him through his little window at the top of the cell. He has no memory of the music box, the shipment, or his voyage. Obhram thinks it's time the characters took Kaila and Burton to Ulmsborg Keep. He gives them 5 sc apiece to have some fun, and suggests staying at the Sign of the Singing Fish. Again, Wehr reminds his student to pick up lens from Guild of Optics, and gives them an extra 1 sc, as he heard that some interesting spices and compounds have come up from Saethos. Finally, they should buy some ice blocks from Tennyson and take them along to Ulmsborg. It's a day of travel to the small, walled keep. They leave Ulmsdeep, with Kaila in a hired carriage, and the player characters walking alongside a Slaver caravan holding Burton in chains.

Kaila rather reluctantly goes off to meet her new husband, although she's met not by the Mayor, but by Sir Garen Arvaitth, a noble from the nearby city of Ellsdeep. Arvaitth kisses her hand and escorts her into the Keep, away from the player characters, who are not allowed inside. Charmed, Kaila forgets a small satchel inside her carriage. In the satchel, is her diary. It contains the notes of a frustrated girl, not allowed to participate in what she sees is the fun, exciting life of the Apprentices, who seem to be Obhram's 'real children'. Also within are a long string of numbers, systematically varied, with a small note saying that "of course, it's her birthday". These are her attempts to crack Obhram's wall safe, in which are contained several papers (and the music box). Her birthday is 7-13-94, which indeed is the combination.

Drop Frank off to the Navigators Guildhouse. There, a husband and wife team of Slaver conditioners take over. Posters are advertising the Harvest festival of Ulmsborg. That night, they stay at the better of the two inns in town, the Sign of the Singing Fish. There, Bertil and Brenna

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

get quite drunk and hang over each other. Bertil goes to get another pitcher, and the player characters might notice he's been gone a long time. He's talking to strangers about the Lighthouse, the murders, and the strange door they discovered. A few strangers listen bemusedly. They will spend the night at the Sign, and head back to Ulmsdeep in the morning with the empty Slaver wagon.

If one of the characters has to fetch the lenses, they must go to the Alchemists Guildhall, with which the Opticians in town are associated. The Guild of Optics is located in a set of rooms in the cellars below Ulmsborg, down a long white hall. In the entrance chamber, a bald, androgynous clerk will be distinctly unhelpful. As the character tries to get the lenses, Guildmaster Edrac Reeves arrives in town, pushed in a wheelchair, accompanied by Journeyman Ebryes Adelsen among many others. They are all dressed in the strange high-collar robes of the Opticians, which rises above their mouths and nostrils. Fortunately, Ebryes is an old classmate of Wehr's, and will leave off Reeves' entourage to fetch the lenses for his old friend. The entrance clerk is an experimental proto-simulacrum named Jen, created by the Guild to help out around the office.

Two days after being back home, two Alchemists with the Vassar Archives (the Bone Trade) will arrive in Ulmsdeep, seeking to talk to Obhram. These are Glenn Huxley (5th level human, 3rd Circle Hedge) and Parsifal Meeks (7th level human, 3rd Circle Hermetic, 1st Circle Faith). Bertil and Brenna will initially be out doing chores. In Obhram's office, they ask about the Lighthouse door, and show papers from the Guild authorizing them to explore. When the Novices return from outside, they will blatantly stare at Brenna. Huxley does most of the talking, being rather friendly and obsequious. Meeks scowls a lot. They will take a room at the inn. Obhram will ask that the player characters accompany them, along with Inago and Bertil- mainly to keep an eye on these suspicious fellows. Obhram will exclude Brenna from going along, to Brenna's consternation- she will storm out of the Guildhouse. Bertil will chase after her, only to be told to "piss off". The next morning, back to the Lighthouse. The Alchemists will ask why Brenna isn't coming along, and seem concerned about it, but they are unable to find her.

Huxley's spell will open the metal door, revealing a circular staircase down. At the bottom is a bluish-metal elevator room, that will descend deep into the sea. Underneath the Lighthouse is a small living quarters and some empty offices, and a glass tunnel leading across the seafloor into a domed chamber. This is the Mhon Aquarium. Meeks and Huxley will head purposefully down the corridor, as if they've been here before. Through the glass, the characters can see a ruined ship sunk in the sea bed, and a giant chambered nautilus, the size of a horse, floating serenely in the waters, watching them with its giant eyes. In the Aquarium, Meeks and Huxley busy themselves trying to open a combination lock. The player characters are sent to explore another set of living chambers, to make sure there's nothing there that might attack them and disrupt their concentration. In these other chambers are sealed metal canisters containing several formless bodies, but the characters will be unable to open them. When the characters return, Meeks and Huxley have opened the door, revealing a glass wall, sealing off a small office. A quick Perception check (target 6) reveals that the flame of a candle within is motionless. Huxley pulls out the Zolace Music Box, which they stole from Obhram's office the night before, and winds it. The glass wall shimmers and disappears. A tall wolf-headed figure rises from a large chair facing away from the characters; Meeks and Huxley exchange a worried glance, and Huxley manages to say 'well, that's different'. The wolf-headed figure traces a small glowing rune in the air, similar to the U-shaped nhul rune (in fact being the zhul rune, that of annihilation). As all goes white, the characters hear a soft, powerful voice in their heads saying "thank you my children- there is much work to be done". Everyone passes out.

This is a simulacrum of the Arcanodaemon Madriganii Illiese, created before Illiese journeyed to talk to the Stonedrake, and then imprisoned here by the Duuran Naturalists. In this version of Twylos, Illiese's recovery leads to the world's end, and thus Muriel recreates Twylos again. Illiese's simulacrum sent himself and the others into the new version of Twylos, into which the player characters will now awaken. The Naturalists that once built and lived here in the Mhon Aquarium were first enamored of the Tavash Morn, and were avid infernalists. Gradually, however, the discovered Archon technology in their final days, and the 'octopus' symbol on the flag of Ulmsdeep actually represents the dead kraken they found in the sea. Misusing their powers, they turned themselves into pseudo-doppelgangers now waiting in the holding tanks, and managed to sabotage the Arcanos simulacrum to distort its motives. They will have awakened just prior to Illiese's sending magic, and will be sent along to the new Twylos. They will take the player characters' forms and scatter throughout Twylos.

As an alternative, the player characters might in fact be these doppelgangers, having stolen the memories and identity of their real selves before the sending spell was finished. As the campaign evolves, it is probably best if the true identities of the characters, and what happened in Ulmsdeep, be kept secret, with different investigations suggesting different answers.

The room the Arcanos simulacrum was in also contains a Mirror of Kithain, leading to Zolace. Meeks and Huxley, along with a woman who was Brenna's mother, have used this entrance twice to get into Zolace. However, in this iteration of Twylos, the Duuran Naturalists did things a little differently, and tried to defend their master's tomb with an extra defense- the corrupted Arcanos simulacrum. They have been eager to find Brenna, as both Meeks and Huxley are in love with her. But, once in the Lighthouse, their curiosity will get the better of them, and they figure they can return later to find Brenna and figure out what happened.

Afterwards, the player characters, along with Bertil and Inago, will awaken on a boat, all feeling quite sick. All physical stats are equal to 1, and intellect and presence are adjusted by -3 (min. 1). An Alchemist, Apprentice Huys Mannings, found them on the Lighthouse island, and is taking them back to town. There's no sign of Huxley, and Meeks is convalescing below decks, and should not have visitors. It is late at night, and Mannings drops the characters off in the Ulmsdeep docks before sailing south. The characters are still wearing their Ulmsdeep guard armor and regalia, and a light is on in Aramside.

However, Ulmsdeep is different. Most of the people are the same, but do not recognize or remember the player characters. If they return to Aramside, Brenna and a strange woman are in the main room. Brenna will look shocked, and the other woman will get the other Apprentices, including a very surprised and alive Lazlo, the others all unknown to the player characters. They will be arrested for impersonating Guildsmen and locked in the jails below. Bertil and Inago of course know them, but are equally confused as to what is going on.

Lazlo will be killed again, and Burton will be captured again and placed in the cells with them in the next day. He will not recognize the characters either, but be rather friendly to them, seeing as how they're all in the same situation. Spellcasters will be kept poisoned with Slaver drugs. In jail, the characters will have the same dreams as before, although some of the details may be different, and one of the characters may find that they cannot sleep.

The next day, Kaila departs, but the prisoners do not go with her, as they need to get a larger caravan to hold all the prisoners. Three days later, everyone is loaded into the larger caravan and sent towards Ulmsborg. Attribute points are recovering at the rate of one per day. It

is pouring rain. Loaded over capacity, the Slaver caravan gets stuck in the mud at the top of a hill. Meanwhile, the Illiese simulacrum has returned to Ulmsdeep, and has begun summoning a horde of lesser demons as a defense against the kraken beneath the town. Many of these demons have escaped the control of their flawed master, and invade Ulmsdeep. The horses are startled by the arrival of some of these demons, unseen by the prisoners in the back, and the caravan slides downhill, killing animals, driver, and one of the guards. The other guard checks on the slaves, then limps away to town, to be killed shortly by demons. Starts to really pour. Night falls.

A demon slowly approaches the back of the caravan while the player characters are still chained up. It is a short, cloaked, alligator-headed figure, grinning. It smashes a side of the cart before it is seen, then comes into view in the back. It grabs Inago's arm off through bars; he screams, gasps in pain, and the arm finally pops off. The demon regards it, and takes it with it as it leaves. Inago takes awhile to die, saying his wife's name repeatedly, as his blood fills the floor of the caravan, given the angle, warming the cold feet of the player characters. Bertil screams. Burton curses in disbelief.

The smashed caravan makes escape possible, depending on the skills of the characters. Anyone with a vantage can see smoke coming from Ulmsdeep, which is burning. Perception checks reveal a pack of wolves entering the town. Fortunately, the Slaver caravan driver and guards had equipment that can be salvaged. Burton suggests heading to Ulmsborg. On the road, Bertil finally breaks down and can't take it. Burton tells him to "grow a pair".

The characters are stopped at the Ulmsborg gate as before, but now the flag is different- green with leaping frog. Frank Burton doesn't want to meet authorities; rather, he's going to meet a friend, Illyian Vanderish (who's missing- been killed). Most likely hauled in front of Mayor Hubert VIII, who's now an enormous, grotesque frog demon. He wears a sickly-sweet smelling Alchemical perfume to mask his true disgusting odor. The court of the Mayor has fallen into disarray; his ministers have fled, and his court is now staffed with thugs. In attendance are Christopher St. John, Balthazar Buchs, Kaila Mendelene, Captain Lars Unger, and Mister Hendry Grannich. Kaila appears on a balcony over the throne room, and regards the characters. The player characters are vagabonds; if they talk about demons destroying Ulmsdeep, the Mayor yells in anger, cursing his sister. The Mayor gives them living quarters, amounting to the guards locking them in basement cells. St. John and Buchs accompany in the back bickering about their card game. The Mayor apologizes for the imprisonment, but must first verify the information.

Early in the morning, Kaila, now wife-to-be, comes and visits one of the characters (whoever has the highest presence, or was nicest to her in the beginning of the campaign) and asks who they are. From her spies, knows they're slaves- her man destroyed the evidence, and they seem familiar to her- she has the feeling of resentment, as if they brought her to her fate, although she knows otherwise. She brings food, clothes, and blankets. Seems resigned to be sad... asks the player characters to bring her evidence of her father's survival or death. She tells them that the Mayor will be sending them back to the ruins of Ulmsdeep, now an empty, burned ruin. Asks that they hide or destroy the prayer book the Mayor will ask them to find.

The Mayor lets them out the next day; also tells them they're probably the slaves escaped from an abandoned cart. Mayor thinks his sister, Sister Aprill du Maxinay is responsible- she's the one that cursed him, and she's a witch of Breyana. He has a proposition for them if they want to be respectable. Fetch from the Thainist temple in Ulmsdeep the Prefect's prayer book and chalice. The wedding was supposed to be in Ulmsdeep, but failing that, the temple trappings should be rescued from the demons. He'll provide a healer, so that all attribute points are

recovered in just two more nights. He'll also offer money to purchase basic equipment around town (50 sc per character). Also, they'll be given better quarters in a tower of his keep. Two guards will go with them. Alternatively, he will turn them over the Slavers Guild, as he understands that they have good conditioners there now. Burton will go too, if they contact him before leaving.

Kaila has a vague recollection of the characters from her dreams. Her impression is mainly negative, because her last interaction with them in the previous Twylos was their delivery of her to her awful husband-to-be. Journeyman Ebryes Adelsen is the only NPC who might actually remember the characters, and will express his condolences for the destruction of Ulmsdeep. Adelsen remembers this precisely because he is Illiese's simulacrum, now shape-changed to dwell among the humans.

Looters have already arrived in Ulmsdeep, although the town will be empty when the characters arrive. There are corpses and burned buildings- the people and places the characters remember. Glenn Huxley (with three to five mercenaries from Ellsdeep) seems cautiously happy to see the player characters, but then suddenly Glenn wants to kill them, and will attack for a few rounds before using a Fold Space potion to disappear if the battle turns against him. The Prefect is still alive, but driven mad by two manes demons still in attendance. The book is there, covered in gore, and the chalice untouched. No sign of the other demons. Mundane equipment can be taken around town, and in the ruins of Aramstide, good equipment can be found in Obhram's safe. A spellbook could be made available at the apothecary.

When they return to the Keep, the Mayor will likely be pleased with them, and treat them well. He will also ask that at some point, they head back into the forests around Ulmsdeep and kill his sister, hopefully to end his curse. Brenna will also show up. She had to go south for her brother's death, and now she's heard the news about Ulmsdeep, and come back to mourn her friends and fellow Guildsmen. She is now well on the road to becoming a Handmaiden later in the campaign. Bertil will try to talk to her, but she has no memory of him, and projects the death of her friends onto the player characters' arrival in town. Bertil will be confused and heartbroken.

Frank Burton has a theft lined up if one of the characters is obviously roguish. (Typical Frank dialogue: "You been to prison before? I have, in and out just like I was payin by the hour. Let's do this thing.") The wedding preparations begin. The Mayor was a modest request, for them to get wedding present for Kaila from a larger city nearby; his magistrate suggests they also get a present of their own, for Mayor and also for Kaila. Kaila absolutely does not want to get married, and keeps her distance from the disgusting Mayor. Kaila confides in the characters to test their loyalty, and see if she can get them to do something somewhat mild, but clearly against the Mayor's interests. The Mayor will ask if Kaila asked them to do anything special for her.

At the pre-wedding party, Sir Garen Arvaith will again make an appearance. He and Kaila are secretly planning on eloping. Parsifal Meeks also shows up, and tells the characters that he's sorry they aren't dead. He's angry with Huxley also, and doesn't want to discuss what happened in the Lighthouse. Later, they might run into Huxley, who is much more talkative. Huxley will explain that he thinks that he keeps going back in time, while his associate believes something a bit more cynical- that these are the Gray Lands, and everyone here is dead, so it doesn't really matter how he acts. Huxley might even be persuaded to tell the whole story, about Zolace and Brenna. (Although the Brenna he knows is in fact the current Brenna's mother, sent back in time by the horological trap in Zolace.)

After the wedding, Sir Arvaith and Kaila will flee to Elmsdeep, where they will work to contact the Duurans. The Mayor will ask the

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

characters to assassinate Arvaith and bring back his wife. He will promise them Journeyman positions in the Guilds. However, regardless of their actions, the forces of Elmsdeep will join with the Duurans to attack Ulmsborg Keep, and wage a war of attrition to oust the Mayor. They will keep the city surrounded. In one terrible show of force, a skeleton will pull in a cart containing the dead bodies of an Ulmsborg patrol caught outside in the beginning of the war. It will enter the throne room, where it delivers a message about Elmsdeep and the Duurans, and say that the Handmaidens will be joining them as well. It then will start casting Wake Dead once each round, raising the dead soldiers to attack the throne room from within.

The characters can side with the Mayor, and aid in the battle against Elmsdeep, the Duurans, and the Handmaidens. Unfortunately, the Mayor's promise of Journeyman status is empty, as the Guildsmen will all flee from Ulmsborg before the battle begins. Most likely the battle will conclude with the Duurans destroying Ulmsborg Keep. The Mayor might try to wed a female character, claiming that his city needs hope now more than ever, although he will not push the issue. If the characters escape, the Mayor will feel betrayed. He will survive and escape, to return later to a secret room beneath the ruins of his old castle. He will have Buchs and St. John capture the characters and bring them to him. He will kill them. Two years later, Aprill will return to the castle, reincarnating the dead characters into the bodies of the Mayor's servants, and dominate them into killing the Mayor. Of course, they could side with Kaila and possibly Sister Aprill from the beginning. Through Aprill, they might work their way backwards to Aea Convent, although Aprill's memories are fractured from her time before coming to Ulmsdeep.



Thus concludes the first part of this campaign. Ulmsdeep will start to be re-settled, and problems with the merrow off-shore will begin. The characters might aid in the reconstruction of their home and face off against the ogres, only to discover the kraken in the depths beneath the town. Brenna will head into the Vehrlands and find work as a mercenary. Bertil will still try to see her, to force her to remember him. Huxley and Meeks will once again attempt to enter Zolace, this time finally succeeding in bypassing the early traps to reach the Ages and

Petrarch's Tomb. Their actions will be monitored by Illiese's simulacrum, by now fully converted into an Archon proxy.

Between the kraken, Illiese, and the Knights of Petrarch, Ulmsdeep will have more than its share of problems, if the player characters are at all concerned about their old home.

In the end, Illiese and Petrarch will both seek out Lady Muriel. Petrarch sees in her his former love, Sarah DeVaunet, the moth-girl (depicted in the music box statuette); indeed, DeVaunet was a version of Muriel inserted into Twylos long ago to keep Petrarch from opening the Zoran gate himself, turning him instead to found the Naturalists. Illiese does not want her return to Twylos (as the Arcanos would desire) or to join with Petrarch in his Tomb (as he desires). Instead, he aims to destroy her and take back the Book of Dreams. With the destruction of the Book and of Muriel, Twylos' endless cycle of recurrence can finally come to rest.

Appendix 2.1.4: Glossary

Abby: Last of the Aprill clones and Archon nhul-magic proxy.

Abraxas: Avatar of Zhol. False Fourth Key of Typhon.

Aea Convent: Ruined school in Nadur, outside of Gyre. Currently the base of research on the Aprill clones.

Aguierre: God of vengeance and justice. Served by the Knights of Aguirre.

Aguierre, Antiarch of: Title of Caradoc, slave-priest that resurrected the dying religion of Aguirre in the mid-First Era. His legions fought against and deposed the priests of Mordred to become the official religion of the Empire of Irendor. First step in the Fall of Irendor.

Aguierre, Knights of: Official priesthood of Aguirre. Formerly the main religion of Irendor. Based in Bordermarch.

Aires, Jessica: Daughter of Tellian Aires, architect of Mammon's Point. Supposed prophet of the Fourth Key.

Amana: Paths of life in the classic Ixian tradition. Guiding principles based around a central code or art.

Alchemists, Guild of: Powerful organization of Hedge magic users and tradesmen. One of the four true Guilds of Twylos. Based in Gyre.

Andukar: Northern region of Twylos, between Drohksmere and Armech. Considered to be the land of the giants and ogres. Also, the name of the language of the Andukar giantkind.

Antiarch: See Aguirre, Antiarch of.

Antiarch, Purge of: Destruction of the Church of Mordred by the Antiarch of Aguirre and his followers, starting in 822 F.E.

Aprill clones: Simulacrum daughters of Amanda Dawson. Raised and trained by a secret coterie of Typhonae, Ixians, and Alchemists in Aea Convent to be powerful mages.

Arangul, Maedar: Scholar who will become Abraxas in Bourgangsbaïne.

Arcanodaemon: See Arcanos.

Arcanos: The former demonic masters of Twylos. First children of the gods. Tall, wolf-headed humanoids in red robes clutching a spellbook. Taught the first Duurans to use Hermetic magic. Sealed within the Blood realms behind the Zoran gate by the first humanoid priests.

Arcanum, The: First secular school of magic. Founded in the First Era in the Ered Wastes by exiled magicians from Irendor.

Archons: Antitheses of the Arcanos. Non-magical soul-eating servitors of Xeres.

Archon Proxy: A creature corrupted by the Archons, gradually brainwashed into behaving in ways to subvert the intentions of the Arcanos.

Armech: Northern nation consisting of Valstach and the Valstedt. Formerly the Empire of Irendor.

Arosquey: A now-closed mage school on an island off the coast of Rheyas. Responsible for the permanent stormclouds around Rheyas.

Asmoday: One of the six demonic princes of Breyana.

Asmoday, Carcodian: First Era priest of Breyana. Creator of the Zoran Gate. Unrelated to the demonic prince Asmoday.

Asmoday, Jewels of Carcodian: The three keystones to the Zoran Gate that keeps the Arcanos from entering Twylos. The Egg of Voon is one of the Jewels.

Asmodean: Headmaster of Aea Convent, and father-figure to Abby.

Bael: One of the six demonic princes of Breyana.

Barrowsreich: Officially refers to the massive tomb complex of Morningstide in Vasqueray. Also used disparagingly to refer to the Slavers' Obroch Conditioning Tanks of Tzalvas.

Belvaunt, King Maraxam: Ruler of Tarach. Formerly a mercenary captain of Fayde Ehlling. Helped to the throne by Typhonic agents in Tarach.

Black Rose Rebellion: In 209 T.E., deposition of the Mendhelose family by Maraxam Belvaunt and his mercenaries. So-called due to the burning of the rose-emblem flags of Avenaigh.

Bone Trade: Officially, the Society for the Advancement of Archaeology. Merchant organization dedicated to the recovery of ancient artifacts and magic. So-called due to their image as grave-robbers, and the tendency of some members to pretend to be necromancers. Led by Garrison Bones (born Hyule).

Bones, Garrison: See Hyule, Garrison.

Breyana: Goddess of life, pain, death, demons, winter, and revenge. Part of the Duuran tradition. Served by the Church of Winter. Sister goddess or malign aspect of Rhiannon.

Caradoc: See Aguierre, Antiarch of.

Ceyneian: Language of Nycene and the Church of Ixus. One of the main languages throughout the South and the Vehrlands.

Covenant, The: Legendary champion of western Drohksmere, destined to free its people from under control of the Houses and the Ulgan Sceptre. Captain John Ulgan V is not The Covenant.

Dawson, Amanda: Peasant girl from Tarchartus and Third Key of Typhon. Mother of the original Aprill. May be Muriel's persona in the reconstructed Twylos.

Dawson, Aprill: Daughter of Amanda Dawson. The original Aprill from which the Aea Convent clones were manufactured. Replaced in the lost Vausse Academy with an Archon proxy.

DeVaunet, Sarah: The moth-girl; lover of Petrarch. Avatar of Gayla in the original Twylos, and persona of Muriel in the reconstructions.

Drohkan: Language of Drohksmere and Gyre.

Drohseck: See Drohkan.

Drohksmere: Eastern nation of Twylos. Large trade conglomerate loosely ruled by the Ulgan Sceptre.

Dulaine, Rogan: Infamous high priest of the Church of Ixus. He and two advisors- covert priests of Xeres- journeyed into Saethos after the formation of Rhaxen in 508 S.E. Dulaine went mad and returned to Sun Keep in 517 S.E., where he was destroyed by the golem guardians. Author of the play "Gardens of Zil".

Durvan Range: The large mountain chain in central Twylos. Stretches from Tzalvas and the eastern Vehrlands up to Armech and Andukar.

Duuran: General name for a member of the Vox Dur. Also refers to the private, ancient runic language of the Duurans.

Ered Wastes: Scrubland, steppes, and plains found between Armech and Drohksmere.

Fleshtongue: Common vulgar name for the outdated Slaver's Cant.

"Gardens of Zil": Play written by Rogan Dulaine while in Saethos, about the futility of action.

Gayla: Goddess of annihilation and the end of the world. In the Thainist mythos, she is the daughter of Zhol. Her symbol is a spade, which she will use to bury her family members at the end of times.

Gossick: Main language of Gossar and the Saethan Desert. Common in the South.

Guild of Thorns: Revolutionary secret society dedicated to deposing Ixondr from Vasqueray.

Guilds: Loosely, a collection of craftsmen. Strictly speaking, there are four 'true' Guilds, which are wealthy international corporations: the Alchemists, the Navigators, the Slavers, and the Surveyors.

Grey Lands: Underworld of Twylos, where the dead reside. Portion of the Realms of Perdition overseen by Nergal, brother of Zhol.

Gyre: The so-called 'jewel of Twylos', and home city to the Church of Typhon. Independent city-state at the edge of the Myrinae swamps between Drohksmere and Khaedor. Second largest city in Twylos, after Turth.

Halifax Brothers: A trio of demon merchants who took their name from Sterling Halifax, formerly of Brandmoor.

Halifax, Sterling: A soldier from Brandmoor, priest of Xeres, and friend of Amanda Dawson. Disappeared shortly after she did, to look for her in vain. After his disappearance, several demons set up shop in Brandmoor, calling themselves the Halifax family.

Handmaidens: See Zhol, Brides of.

Houses: The ruling families of former Irendor and present-day Armech. The Great Houses are the most prestigious and wealthy, and second only to the Imperial House Valstach. The Lesser, or Minor Houses are numerous and constantly jockeying for position.

Hyule, Garrison: President of the Society for the Advancement of Archaeology (the Bone Trade). Goes by the moniker 'Garrison Bones'. Powerful sorcerer and figurehead leader of Mask.

Illiese, Madriganii: Arcanodaemon kept in Zalen Vale by the Stonedrake. Freed by the Halifax Brothers. Journeyed to Rhaxen to collect Amanda and Aprill Dawson, but destroyed by the Archons and the Rhaxen Pact.

Irendi: Language of the Empire of Irendor. No longer in use; replaced by the modern language of Valan.

Irendor, Empire of: Former Empire of Twylos during the First Era, and original source of humanoid civilization. Fell during the Second Era, and reformed under the Great Houses into the current nation of Armech.

Irendor, Fall of: Gradual decline in international prominence of the Empire of Irendor at the end of the First Era and into the Second Era. Irendor would later become the modern nation of Armech.

Iron Throne, The: Ruling parliament of Armech. Made up of representatives from the Great and Lesser Houses.

Ix: Primordial, unknowable life-force within each humanoid. Worshipped as the god-head by the Ixians. Ix is a core passion, fueling hate, lust, and ambition.

Ixian: Generally refers to any member of the Order of Ixian, the Church of Ixus, any of their agents, or anyone from the territories controlled by the Church or the Order. In a different context, also refers to a specific aspect of Ix governing self-control and intelligence. The Order of Ixian reveres this aspect, believing it to be the 'higher' component of Ix, as opposed to the 'lower' more basal Ixus. Finally, used informally to also refer to Ceyneian, the language of the Ixians and Nycene. Source of much linguistic confusion.

Ixian, Order of: Priests and scholars devoted to self-discipline, meditation, and study. Initially a splinter sect of the Church of Ixus, but now usually seen as an academic wing of the Church of Ixus itself.

Ixondr: See Markovitch, Lord Valstav Ixondr.

Ixus: The knowable, achievable component of Ix.

Ixus, Church of: Priests of Ixus. Based out of Sun Keep on Nycene, where they were exiled from Irendor during the early First Era. Have a deserved reputation for fanaticism. The Church is planning on conquering Vasqueray and southern Twylos, to help them fight the heresies of the east. Believe the Church of Typhon and priests of Xeres are Twylos' greatest evils. Duurans, and the associated Duuran religions (specifically, the priests of Breyana) also have earned their enmity. Unforgiving and catholic. Often use fire magic.

Izain, Ayrrhannos: Last Dragon-King of the Suvan Azule. Found in the Crypts of Syeth, kept alive, but catatonic, by an alchemical life-support system.

Kala: One of the six demonic princes of Breyana.

Kallanday, Lady Muriel: Sister of Lord Ixondr. Last of the Sea Kings of Vasqueray. Beloved of the Arcanos, specifically Arcades Shavaat. Fled her brother's madness with the Book of Dreams, to hide alone in her Dream Realm. First and Second Keys of Typhon.

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

Khaedor: Proper name for central Twylos- a loose collection of mountainous city-states and valley towns. One of the first colonial areas of Irendor.

Kithain: Goddess of life, fate, and the natural order. Mythological wife of Zhol. Worshipped officially by the Thainists, and unofficially by everyone of Twylos. Symbol is a mirror. Personified by Lady Muriel in the Matter of Vasqueray.

K'Teauva: Insect goddess of the Sathar. Sleeping in her giant cocoon at Vhog. Worshipped by the Spawn of K'Teauva.

K'Teauva, Spawn of: A depraved apocalypse cult of the Sathar. Worships K'Teauva, the insect goddess of destruction.

Liira: One of the six demonic princes of Breyana.

Lotus: A magical plant now found almost nowhere in Twylos.

Luksharrow: New university of Turth, funded by the Church of Typhon.

Maids' Misery: The battle of Vesbridge during the Vehrlands War between the Handmaidens of Zhol and the combined forces of the Vehrlands and the Sathar.

Markovitch, Lord Valstav Ixondr: Last of the Sea Kings of Vasqueray, and mad lord of Thorneskeep. Brother of Lady Muriel. First Key of Typhon.

Maxinay, House: Conniving and secretive Great House of Armech. Descendents of the metasci. Largely a family of inbred mages.

Metasci: Slave race of the true Archons. Inter-bred with humans to found House Maxinay.

Middle Lands: General term for the central expanse of Twylos, consisting of the eastern Vehrlands, Khaedor, and the Zhellve. Sometimes includes Rheyas, Tzalvas, and the western part of the Valstedt.

Moloch: One of the six demonic princes of Breyana.

Morday: See Mordred.

Mordechs, Sebastian: Mid-Second Era explorer. Discoverer of Tharkenge and Barrowsreich.

Mordred: God of slaughter and warfare. In the Thainist mythology, the son of Zhol. During the First Era, deposed the Knights of Aguierre to become the official theology of the growing Empire of Irendor. Later destroyed by the Antiarch of Aguierre and his legions.

Muriel: See Kallanday, Lady Muriel.

Museum Scholars: See Vrayne, Scholars of Pavis.

Morgan, Tabitha: Famous Taran playwright. Author of "A Shadow's Fall". Lives in Nies, where she was killed by a doppelganger, who has now assumed her identity and continues to write.

Name Scholars: See Vrayne, Scholars of Pavis.

Napres: Island off the coast of Zostig. Former home to the Vausse Academy, and current home to Aramach Vox Thrauxes.

Naturalists: A group of Duurans under Petrarch. Explored much of Twylos. Attempted to completely characterize the flora and fauna of Twylos. After Petrarch's death, became extremely reactionary and anti-infernalism.

Navigators, Guild of: One of the four true Guilds of Twylos. Controls sea travel and shipping, except for throughout Drohksmere. Based out of Turth.

Nergal: God of the Grey Lands, the underworld and afterlife of Twylos. In the Thainist mythos, the brother of Zhol. Zhol is death itself, while Nergal oversees and manages the dead.

Nhul: One of the countless runes of Hermetic magic. The nhul-rune is the anti-magic rune.

Nhull, Order of: First Era splinter sect of the Church of Winter from Zoran. Devoted to preventing the Arcanos from returning to Twylos. Opposed to the Tavash Morn.

Nycene: Island domain of the Ixians in the southern ocean. A barren, desolate place.

Ny'ryeth: Old goblin tongue of the Valstedt and the Nyvraen Holdings.

Obroch: Slaver conditioning tanks outside Tzalvas. Not to be confused with Oubroch.

Old Saethan: A primitive, glyph-based tongue from the old Saethan Empire. No longer in use, except by the clergy of the Suvan Azule.

Optics, Guild of: Crypto-magical society of physicists and tradesmen. Led by the immortal Edrac Reeves. Paranoid and semi-mystical. Opposed to almost all other organizations of Twylos, including the Duurans, the Ixians, the Knights of Aguierre, the Church of Winter, the Typhonae, the Bone Trade, and the Museum Scholars.

Orethedron: Island wasteland in the southern ocean. Last stronghold of the Archons on Twylos.

Oubroch: Warrior and guardian daemons. Devoted to virginal girls, a fact exploited by the Typhonae.

Oubrodaemons: See Oubroch.

Ozmandian, Vladimir: Historian of Twylos' Third Era. Mentor of Pavis Vrayne. Killed by demons in Praxis.

Petrarch: Greatest of the Duuran Hierophants, and founder of the Duuran Naturalists. Now a lich. Lives beyond Zolace in his Dream Realm tomb. Eventual Fourth Key of Typhon.

Piedmont: Island enclave and retreat of the exiled Great Houses in far western Twylos. Still contains four great manor houses, sealed by protective magics. Later a Thainist leper colony and site of Xeres heresy.

Piedmont, Circus of: Originally, a leper colony on Piedmont tended by the Thainists. Infiltrated by priests of Xeres, attracted to the older magics still on Piedmont. The lepers formed a traveling circus and spread disease, filth, and madness across much of western Twylos. Now refers to any strange sideshow attraction, but usually with some taint of Xeres.

Praxis: First city of the Ixians, and the only city on Nycene.

Queyan: Main language of the South. Native tongue of Vasqueray; also spoken in the East.

Reeves, Edrac: Master of the Guild of Optics. Immortal due to prior experimentation with the Egg of Voon. Regrets his immortality, and is trying to find a way to die.

Rexor: One of the six demonic princes of Breyana.

Rhaxen: Enormous glass mountain in the middle of the Saethan desert. Holy site of the Church of Ixus, and where Rogan DuLaine went mad. Formed in 508 S.E. In 200 T.E., the Archon-proxy Aprill Dawson was retrieved from Rhaxen and stolen away to Aea Convent, another False Fourth Key of Typhon.

Rhaxen, Pact of: Collection of priests, sorcerers, and devotees of the Order of Nhull. Met in Rhaxen in 200 T.E. after several prophetic visions of the return of the Arcanos. Defeated Madriganii Illiese and took Aprill Dawson to Aea.

Rheyas: The 'city of rain' in northern Khaedor. Forever surrounded by stormclouds thanks to the mages of Arosquey.

Rhiannon: Goddess of life, birth, nature, youth, and spring. Part of the Duuran tradition. Served by the Church of Spring. Sister goddess or benign aspect of Breyana.

Rooksroost: Lost mage academy of western Twylos.

Saethos: The desert of southwestern Twylos. Once the location of the great Sathar Empire.

Sea Kings: See Vasqueray, Sea Kings of.

"Shadow's Fall, A": Recent famous play by Tabitha Morgan of Nies. Somewhat prophetic of the advent of Abraxas.

Shavaat, Arcades: Arcanodaemon mentor of Lord Ixondr, Lady Muriel, and Amanda Dawson. His mortal form is trapped behind the Zoran Gate in the Blood realms, but he could whisper into the dreams of his students. First Key of Typhon.

Silence, Church of: Priesthood of Timmorn. Was based out of Khaedor, but membership dwindled into non-existence.

Slavers, Guild of: First of the four true Guilds of Twylos, and still the most powerful. Based out of Tzalvas, which the Guild also governs. Now focused more on prison and resource management than acting as a true slave-taking organization.

Spring, Church of: Religious order of Rhiannon. Closely related to the Vox Duur and affiliated with the Thainists.

Sun Keep: The cathedral of the Church of Ixus, on the Axan Caldera in Nycene.

Sun King: The head of the Church of Ixus. Formerly the high priest of the Church, until the madness of Rogan DuLaine. Now the title of a beautiful, ageless boy.

Surgeons, College of: Organization of doctors and physiologists at Luksharrow in Turth.

Surveyors, Guild of: Third of the four Guilds of Twylos. In decline. Based out of Rheyas.

Suvan Azule: The Sathar priesthood. Worships Ayrrhannos Izain, the last of the Dragon-Kings.

Tamara: See Timmorn.

Tarach: Large, wealthy western nation of Twylos. Originally a colony settled by the exiled members of House Tharose. Ruled for centuries by the Mendhelose family before usurpation by Belvaunt during the Black Rose Rebellion.

Tarachian: See Taran.

Taran: Language of Tarach. Derivative of Irendi.

Tavash Morn: The 'children of magic'. First Era society within the Church of Winter at Zoran who were dedicated to re-opening the Zoran gate.

Teauvites: See K'Teauva, Spawn of.

Thainists: Priests of Kithain, and to some degree Zhol. Largest and most popular religion of Twylos. By default, everyone is loosely a Thainist. Benign, but often considered ineffectual by the other, more proactive and fanatical clergies.

Tharkenge: Tallest point of Twylos, found deep in the Andukan mountains. Storehouse and tombs of the Arcanos, built by their titan slaves.

Tharose, House: Former Great House of Irendor. Exiled to Tarach, where they started the Mendhelose line and ruled for generations.

Thenzor Deep: Large underground city of Armech. Contains rich mines controlled by the Great Houses. Site of much infernalism.

Thorneskeep: See Velanieh.

Timmorn: Goddess of knowledge and insight. Worshipped by the now-defunct Church of Silence.

Tovites: See K'Teauva, Spawn of.

Turth: Main city of Tarach and largest city of Twylos.

Typhon: God of absolute destruction. Believed by the Typhonae to be the eater of the gods at the end of the universe. Symbol is a circular dining table that appears identical to the loom of Kithain and the wheel of the Voran cycle.

Typhon, Church of: Priests of Typhon. Based out of Gyre. Wealthy, out-going, and diabolical.

Typhon, Feast of: Large, usually decadent, sometimes debased parties to celebrate life. Thrown by the Church of Typhon to initiate new members into the Church, and to display their wealth and generosity.

Typhon, Keys of: In the Typhonic mythos, the five signs of the apocalypse before Typhon devours the gods and the multiverse. Initially revealed to a minor artist of the Oberton Table, Geryon Krassus. Several previous events have been postulated to be Keys by overly-eager priests of Typhon; these are called 'False Keys'. The First Key was the training of Ixondr and Muriel by Arcade Shavaat. The Second Key was the retreat of Muriel to her Dream Realm with the Book of Dreams. The Third Key was the reincarnation of Amanda Dawson by Umslmyr. The Fourth Key will be the discovery of Petrarch in the Age of Glass. The Fifth Key will be you.

Typhonae: General name for members of the Church of Typhon.

Tzalvas: Large slum-city of the Slavers Guild in southern Khaedor. Was worse before the Slavers took over.

Ulgan Sceptre: Large merchant corporation that controls Drohksmere. Founded by John Ulgan (born Olgham). The Sceptre does not manufacture anything themselves, but governs shipping routes across eastern and southern Twylos. In competition with the Navigators Guild.

Umbrage, Mirtil Michaeloid: Literary critic residing in Oberton.

Umslamyr: Demon tree of the Ered Wastes. Formerly an Arcanodaemon transformed by the Duurans. Site of great heresy and the Third Key of Typhon, in the reincarnation of Amanda Dawson.

Valan: Main language of Armech (the old Empire of Irendor).

Valstach: The Imperial family of Irendor. Also the name of the mountainous region of Irendor/Armech. Generally controlled by the Great Houses.

Valstedt, The: The lowlands of Irendor/Armech. Generally managed by the Lesser Houses.

Vamooris: Northern island of Twylos, and home of the minotaurs. Possibly to become an island prison of Tarach and Armech.

Vasqueray: Island nation in the southern sea of Twylos. Formerly prominent during the Second Era, under the rule of the mage-lords of the Sea King Dynasty.

Vasqueray, Matter of: The story of the fall of the Sea King Dynasty of Vasqueray. In particular, the story of the madness of Lord Ixondr and the sadness of Lady Muriel. Originally referred to the story of the founding of the Sea King dynasty, but the colorful events of the Fall have overshadowed the origins story.

Vasqueray, Sea Kings of: Centuries-long Markov dynasty that ruled Vasqueray during the Second Era. Derived from House Maxinay and House Markov of Irendor's First Era. Ended with the seclusion of Lord Ixondr and Lady Muriel.

Vausse Academy: School of magic founded in 170 T.E. by Gauston Vausse on the island of Napres near Zostig. Suddenly vanished four years later. Giant floating citadel, where world-scope magic was invented, funded by the Guilds to create a complete map of Twylos. Now suspended in a horological loop in the far Ether. Pieces have been periodically falling back to Twylos since the pre-historical period, including the largest section which became Rhauxen.

Vehrlands, The: Large plains of western Twylos.

Vehrlands War: Not referring to a single battle, but rather a massive series of on-going land wars throughout the Second Era between Tarach, Saethos, Khaedor, and several churches, including the Ixians, the Duurans, the Handmaidens, the Church of Mordred, and the Knights of Aguerre.

Velanieh: The beautiful rose palace of the Sea Kings of Vasqueray. Based on the design of the Tharosen palace of Avenaigh. Corrupted during the madness of Ixondr, and transformed into Thorneskeep.

Verlainen: Old language of Khaedor and the Vehrlands.

Verlyhne: See Verlainen.

Voon: Island off of Tarach containing ancient ruins.

Voon, Egg of: One of the Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday.

Voran Cycle: The pattern of eternal recurrence in the Duuran tradition. Similar to the turning of the seasons, Twylos periodically rises and falls, with different nations or races coming into prominence before dying off. Usually depicted as a wheel.

Vorn: First god of Twylos. The earth, nature, the universe, and Twylos itself. Worshipped by the Vox Duur.

Vox Duur: The 'Voice of the Land'. Priests of Vorn. Usually called Duurans. See themselves as the protectors of Twylos. An early schism in the Vox Duur led to two main factions- those that see Breyana and the demonic races as potentially helpful, and those that see them as the main threat to Twylos.

Vox Thrauxes, Aramach: Demon sorcerer of Napres. Master of Amanda Dawson in her last days.

Vrayne, Pavis: Head of the reorganized Irendor Museum of Hereditary Virtues and Lineage (also called the Museum Scholars of Pavis Vrayne, or the School of Names). Student of Vladimir Ozmandian.

Vrayne, Scholars of Pavis: Also called Museum Scholars or Name Scholars. Based out of the Irendor Museum of Hereditary Virtues and Lineage in Bludszech. Genealogists. Initially kept records of Imperial marriages, births, and deaths, to help decide questions of inheritance, especially regarding the Irendor Throne.

Vriian: Powerful demon of hunger and destruction.

Vussan: Language of Vussar, eastern Saethos, and the southern parts of Khaedor and the Vehrlands.

Winter, Church of: Clergy of Breyana. Generally regarded, correctly, as cave-dwelling demon worshippers.

Winter, Cult of: Disdainful term for the Church of Winter.

2.1 Game Master's Guide to Twylos

World-Scope Magic: Hermetic magic with an extremely large area of effect (all of Twylos). Created by Marachs von Ehling at the Vausse Academy. Only used once, to create the world map of Twylos.

Writ of Coins, The: Established in 192 T.E. Allows sharing of personnel and resources between the four Guilds of Twylos.

Xeres: God of madness. Also god of art, disease, and corruption. Source of much of Twylos' ills, including the original Archons and doppelgangers. No official clergy, but served by priests called Mouths of Xeres and the occasional Circus of Piedmont.

Xeres, Mouth of: General term for a priest of Xeres, regardless of whether the priest is 'out' or masquerading as a priest of another deity.

Zaevan: A hallucinogenic and euphoric drug, popular in Khaedor and Gyre.

Zelan: See Zhellan.

Zhellan: Main language of the Middle Lands, Khaedor, and the Vehrlands.

Zhellan Traderoad: Long road that runs roughly north-to-south between Rheyas and Tzalvas across Khaedor.

Zhellve, The: Eastern part of the Middle Lands; essentially the central stretch of the Durvan Range.

Zhellvish: See Zhellan.

Zhol: God of death. In the Thainist mythology, the husband of Kithain. Sometimes viewed by sailors as the god of the seas as well.

Zhol, Black Ships of: Undead vessels in the seas of Twylos. An ill omen.

Zhol, Brides of: Matriarchal society of warrior-monks. Usually called the Handmaidens of Zhol, or just 'the Handmaidens'. Based out of Stonekeep in Murdyne. Founded by six widows at Murdyne, destroying the forces of both Aguierre and Mordred. Began by trying to end the Vehrlands War, taking on all factions and mercilessly slaughtering anyone in their way. Now usually fight against the Durans and the Ixians.

Zolace: Last refuge of the Duran Hierophant Petrarch. The name reflects Petrarch's bad sense of humor.

Zoran Academy: The bottom of Thenzor Deep. Stronghold of the Church of Winter and House Maxinay. Location of the Zoran Gate, where the Arcanos were banished from Twylos. Possible site of the Fifth Key of Typhon.



Appendix 2.1.5: Final Words

Here we offer some advice on being a Game Master.

The most important thing to do is know your players. Even the most experienced players, having played a wide range of characters, will still be remarkably invariant in their basic responses to challenging encounters. Thus it can be useful, especially when running a game with a new set of players, to test them with some non-lethal challenges early in the campaign. For example, the first battles in example campaigns 2

and 3 are designed to give the Game Master a high degree of control over the flow of the battle. The first battle in campaign 2 is a combat-in-progress, against enemies already eager to escape, and with a friendly, competent NPC on the players' side. The first battle in campaign 3 is explicitly a test, with the player characters fighting each other with fake weapons.

The main challenge of Game Mastering is to let the players believe they are in control of their characters' fates, or at least believe that their fates are left to chance. Great players will actively engage with the world and make it easy for you to tell a story; great players will provide new avenues and elements you wouldn't have thought up yourself; but remember that it is always your story. A good analogy is that a Game Master is like a stage magician. It doesn't matter what the story really is, as long as the players see amazing things, are entertained, and believe what you want them to believe.

Names are all-important. A name alone can define a place, a character, or an item. For example, consider the 2nd level mage Bartholomew Nivens in Rothaine, and form an image of him in your mind. Then form an image of a mage named Moloch Streng. It becomes obvious, if somewhat cliché, why Nivens would change his name to Streng, even though he's still just 1st Circle. The converse case is that of Xaran Moors in the second example campaign; Moors changed his name to Rupert Smalls, to seem more innocuous and less of a threat. We strongly suggest keeping a name list handy so that the local tavern, blacksmith, and assistant to the bandit chief all can have identities established as soon as your players ask what their names are. It's alright to sometimes go over the top with names (e.g., Moloch Streng, Sister Hope, and Bartleby Ravenous IV), but you shouldn't make a habit of it. Also, try to have some regional consistency, but again, don't overdo it.

Things to do:

Roll your dice out in the open, so that the players can see your rolls. This establishes their trust in you, and simultaneously makes combat seem a bit more real- there's no room to fudge rolls in anyone's favor, to save characters. Of course, you should routinely cheat in every other way possible. You are free to use whatever combat modifiers, saving throw modifiers, and amount of health points necessary for combat to be tough and exciting.

Take combat personally. The players do, and so should you. Cheer on your NPCs and monsters (your 'side'). Pretend to be annoyed when your side rolls poorly. Laugh when your side scores a critical hit. This will make the combat that much more realistic and satisfying for the players.

Lie religiously. Remember that you are telling the players only what their characters are perceiving, not the real nature of things. Give all distances and encounter numbers in approximate values, and often provide over-estimates.

Introduce NPCs who allow you to influence the campaign indirectly. Do not add an all-knowing, all-powerful wizard who sets them on a quest. Instead, rather than knowing the real secrets of the campaign, provide NPCs that have deep-seated beliefs that are patently false.

In our experience, the most useful and interesting NPC to add to a party is a friendly, evil priest (e.g., a priest of Typhon in Twylos). They provide healing for free, which is a safe route to the players' hearts. They can set the players on interesting courses of action; knowing where some ruins are, or the location of an item they are interested in. Importantly, they never disguise the fact they are demon-worshippers, but are adept at nicely talking around the issue, being moral relativists.

Remember that most player characters, at a basic level, are thieves and murderers. Most roleplaying game systems are about characters engaging in dangerous combat for the pursuit of objects that aren't theirs. The priest of Typhon merely courts and exploits this fundamental principle of the game. The NPC priest is invaluable for parties that do not have their own healer, and the Game Master should feel free to discourage player characters from being priests.

Likewise, smaller parties can often use NPCs who are mercenaries. We've also found it useful to provide an NPC warrior type who is easy-going, somewhat blood-thirsty, combat-happy, and rather dense when it comes to strategy. There may be encounters you've designed that require the players to be creative, careful, and thoughtful to survive. However, adding NPCs who provide useful strategies takes the glory of victory away from the players, and they will rightfully feel cheated. Instead, NPCs who gleefully provide bad ideas (e.g., "let's just charge them... that always works!") cues the players that they should think things through more carefully.

Make combat dangerous. The player characters should find themselves low in health and spells by the end of the battle, if not completely devoid of magic with several members unconscious. Every combat doesn't need to be challenging, but most of them should be difficult. When the characters become higher level, however, it is occasionally fun (once or twice, total) for the player characters to fight a much easier combat, perhaps similar or identical to one of their first battles. This will give the players a feeling of accomplishment in the campaign.

Allow for chance. Let the dice fall where they will. Often allow dice rolls to determine things that otherwise might be meaningless. In one of the Twylos campaigns, a throwaway NPC villager became a campaign-long major ally of the PCs and an important story element, just because her intellect score was randomly determined and happened to be maximal (natural 20 on 5d4).

Understand the mechanics. Keep combat going quickly and smoothly. Remember that 20s (critical hits) kill PCs. Players tend to play smart and defensively, but forget that critical hits happen, and if a PC has just a few health points left, double damage can easily sink the character into deep negatives. For this reason, it's generally best to avoid giving NPCs the Critical Hit discipline. However, if you want to up the odds of having one NPC kill another, Critical Hit might come in handy.

Things not to do:

Split up the party. This generally just means that most of your players will be sitting around bored.

Have an NPC in the party for the sole purpose of betraying the player characters later. This is a specific case of the more general rule: do not have too much faith in any single one of your NPCs.

Force player characters to believe something or behave in a particular manner. In most games, player characters wander the world, killing things and looting them. This is not generally 'normal behavior'. The philosophical concepts and social norms of your world should be expressed, and only expressed, through NPCs. Players will usually do a good job of picking up certain ideas after some exposure. For instance, in Twylos, generally the more powerful a magic-user became, the crazier they were. This was especially true, historically, for those casters who possessed more than one kind of magic, such as both Faith magic and Hermetic magic. PCs did not have to abide by this rule, but those few players who acquired multiple forms of magic tended to play more bizarre characters. As another example, resurrection was largely taboo in Twylos. There were stories, such as that of Sweet Ellery, about the psychosis of the newly-raised. Again,

PCs were not held to this. They heard stories from a priest early in the campaign, and possibly witnessed first-hand a Duran resurrection ritual with disastrous consequences, and then could decide for themselves if or how their characters were altered by the experience of dying.

Love and loss are major themes of Twylos. Let the players experience this through NPC-NPC romances and deaths. If a player is interested, they will seek it out for themselves in the game; otherwise, assume your players are just interested in having fun, killing things, and seeing strange sights, rather than getting married and having their families victimized.

Be too generous with treasure and magical items. Players want to be challenged, and feel like they've overcome the challenges in the game in spite of you, not because of you. As a general heuristic, we provide the first enchanted weapon around 5th or 6th level, usually just +1 to-hit and damage. In general though, giving a weapon or item a minor ability, a unique name, and a colorful history makes up for lack of power (e.g., Ninvaliir Acidtongue).

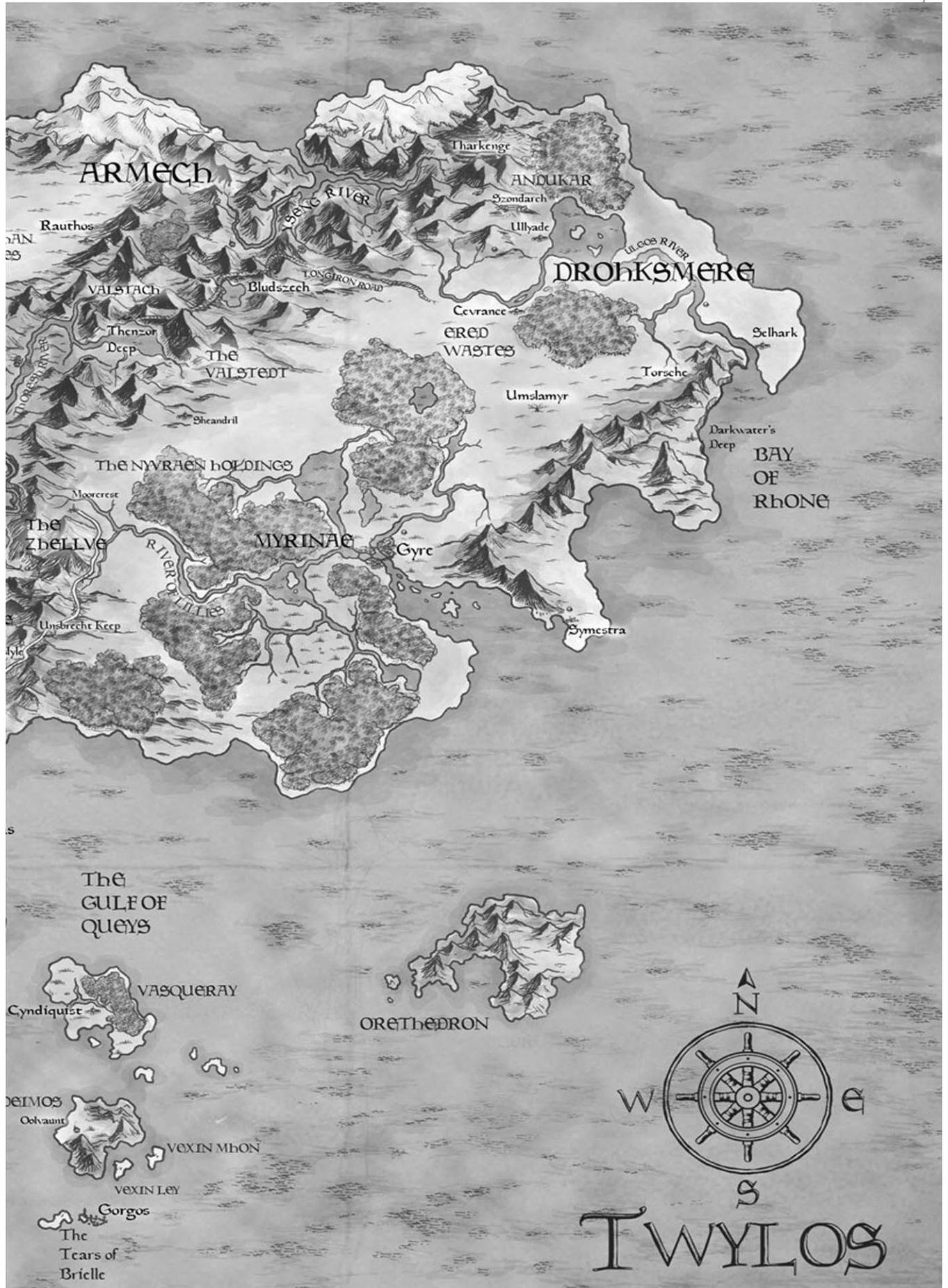
We've seen several games in which the main motivation of the players has been nothing more than to obtain better equipment and spells. This is more than adequate- as long as something in the game world is motivating to them, you can get them to do almost anything. In the course of trying to obtain more power, they will invariably make a number of enemies and commit a variety of crimes, some of which can have lasting consequences (sometimes spanning more than one campaign in the same game world).

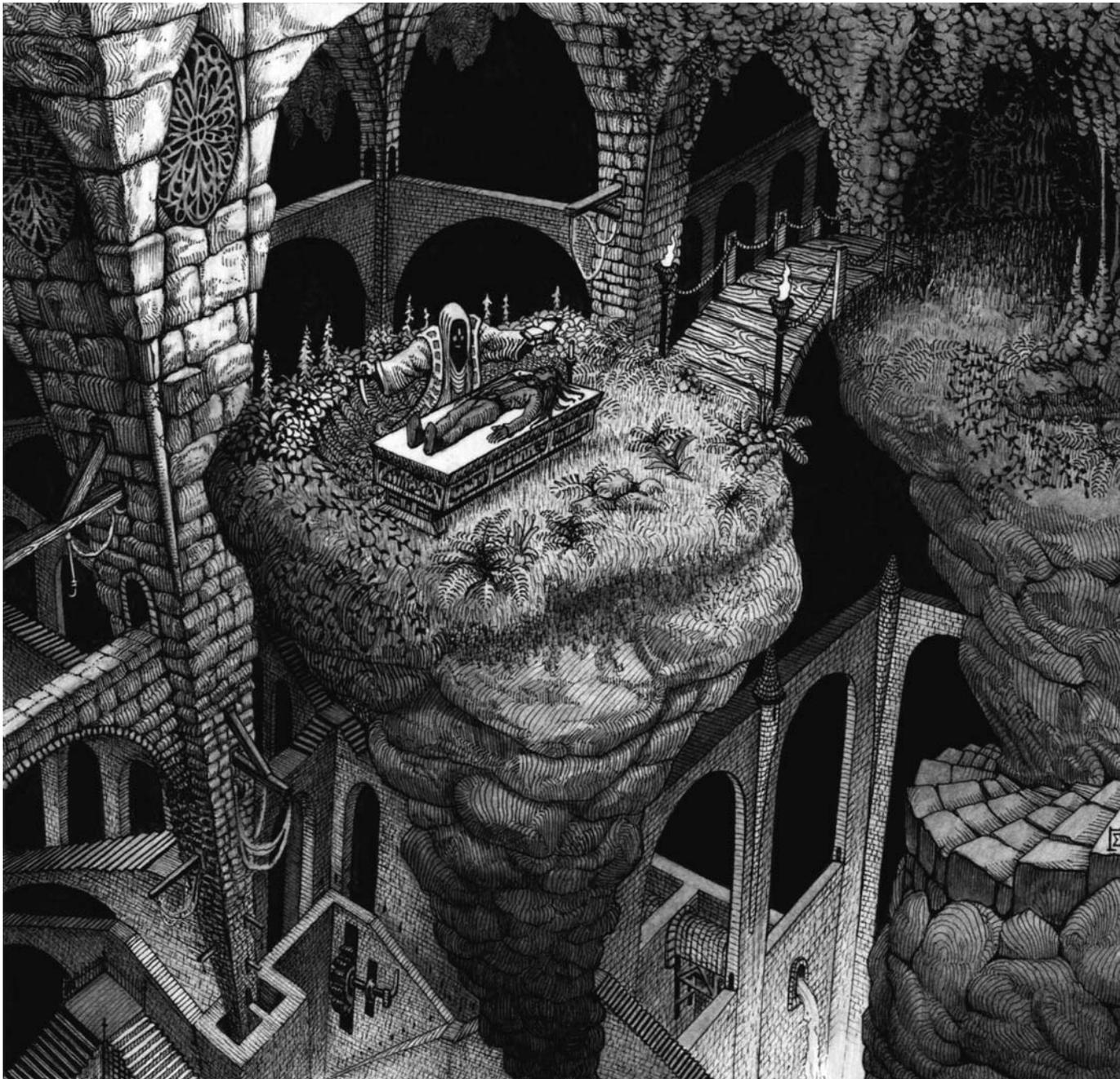
As a corollary, be stingy with the Hermetic spells you provide to player character mages. Some spells will permanently change the campaign when they are acquired: Teleportation is the best example of this. We suggest that acquisition of another spellbook should be extremely rare. We also suggest that mages start out with just two or three spells such as Sense Magic, Friends, and Illuminate. Spells that increase the characters' mobility and chance for escape (e.g., Fly and Teleport) greatly change the dynamics of the game. In our experience, teleportation in particular instantly reverses the control of the game flow, from Game Master to players. This is not a bad thing, but it is hoped that by the time the characters achieve the ability to teleport, the game is sufficiently advanced enough that the players have an extensive agenda and can drive the plot of the game on their own. Teleportation allows the player characters to revisit old locations, friends, and enemies; at once, the entire world is open to them.

Likewise, use of divination magic and scrying gives the players much more information, and thus control, over the structure of the game. We have found most players are scry-happy, and make extensive use of this magic. The best course of action is to assume other magic-using characters basically behave similarly to the player characters- if scrying is commonplace, so should scry-shielding and use of protective magics. Players will usually try to create spells that are at least as powerful as the best spells of a given Circle. Be extremely critical of player-created spells, especially spells that deal damage directly. Ensure that the average damage and damage range of a given spell is equal to or weaker than the spells in the Wayfarers spell list. In our view, the rules for spell and magic item creation make it clear why these things are best left to NPCs, rather than PCs with limited time and resources.

You can generally break each of these rules once per campaign. More than that, and we have found that players lose interest. For example, if you've been overly stingy with treasure and magical items, offering them an overpowered weapon (e.g., one of the Swords of the Antiarich) might seem like a trap to the players, making for an interesting game dynamic.







Twylos: The Fourth Era

Introduction

It is now the year 199 of the Fourth Era (F.E.) of Twylos. The Third Era (T.E.) ended with the abrupt Second Fall of Irendor in 233 T.E., twenty years after the end of the chronology (provided in Section 1.2 of this book).

Here we assume that the events described in Section 2.1 of this guide are generally correct. Twylos has been ruined and re-created by Lady Muriel for countless iterations, and the people and places listed below take place on one such copy of Twylos, forgotten by Muriel and left to burn out in its own particular way. Of course, with little to no modification, most of the settings and specific details here could be used in Twylos of the Third Era or the Game Master's own campaign world.

Given that two hundred years have passed, all locations in Section 2.1 of this manual will be substantially different than first described; certainly most of the NPCs will be long dead. Here we will not update every location, but only focus on some of the highlights and historically important people and places in the wasteland that is now Twylos of the new age.

The Second Fall of Irendor

While the first collapse of the Irendi Empire took place over two centuries, the Second Fall occurred much more rapidly, over the course of about a decade. The reformed government of Armech was inherently unstable, made up of opposing factions (the Great Houses) all vying for

control of the council (the Iron Throne). This ruthless socioeconomic competition was initially useful in curbing excess and abuse- if one House became too powerful, the others tended to band together to bring it back down.

However, there had long been undercurrents of political and religious dissent in Armech, dating back to the earliest days of the First Empire. The Tavash Morn continued to work in the depths of Thenzor Deep, and the Duurans with allies from the Knights of Aguierre and the Handmaidens became increasingly involved with Hermetic magic. But the religious battles, which had mostly been waged covertly, came to head as the Ixians pushed north and brought their anti-Hermetic crusade into the heart of Armech. Initiated in Gyre in 218 T.E. with the simple four-word speech of Brother Henry Ink ("no mages on Twylos"), the so-called 'Myrinae Pogrom' attempted to curb what the Ixians believed was a widespread attempt by the priests of Breyana and Typhon to open Zoran and bring demonic apocalypse to Twylos.

The Ixians assaulted Venoshua, an old stronghold of the Church of Winter. A fallen Knight, Sister Betca, was the sole survivor of the Venoshua massacre and swore revenge on the Ixians. She got it. Betca took the Axan-Morn, one of the legendary swords of Aguierre's lieutenants, and used it to rally some of the Knights around her. Her counterattacks on the Ixian forces in Armech soon led to conflicts across the North, with the forces of Valstach and the Valstedt choosing various sides in what eventually amounted to an all-out land war.

The Knights of Aguierre were split roughly in half, with one side aiding Betca against the Ixians and their brethren Knights. The Great Houses were quick to get involved, with House Zouthan and Valstach siding with the Ixians against Houses Kray and Maxinay, and their contingent Lesser Houses. While the Handmaidens, Typhonae, and Church of Winter worked with Betca in different capacities, the Duurans were widely divided, with some of the Vox Duur on one side, some on the other, some trying to mediate, some against all sides, and some left Armech or simply retreated into the wilds.

Betca was slain fairly early in the battles, but her daughter Lisabeth claimed the Axan-Morn, took the oaths of the Handmaidens, Knights, and Duurans, and eventually slaughtered the remaining members of the Iron Throne in the last days of 232 T.E. By this time, most of Armech's populace had fled or were killed. Those who remained, mostly in the mountain fortresses around Thenzor, swore fealty to Lisabeth and her husband, the White King.

The Keys of Typhon

The White King was the Arcanodemon Arcades Shavaat. In truth, the Ixians and most of the internal armies of the Houses had decimated the Duurans and almost completely eradicated Hermetic Magic use in the North. In desperation, the Duurans and Church of Winter worked to open the Zoran Gate at the bottom of Thenzor Deep. Guided by the Typhonae, Lisabeth entered Zolace in search of the Jewels of Carcodian Asmoday, where she met and slew Petrarch. The Fourth Key came to pass. Quickly, all three Jewels were recovered and Zoran opened, revealing the Fifth and final Key of Typhon as the Arcanos re-entered Twylos.

Shavaat and the other Arcanos rarely took direct action themselves, but their return heralded victory for the Hermetic forces under Lisabeth, the Church of Typhon, and the Tavash Morn Duurans. In this case, 'victory' meant near-total destruction of Armech before pushing outward, to the East, West, and South, attempting to destroy the Ixians and anti-Hermetic Duurans forever.

While the North was practically deserted, and the Western and Eastern reaches of Twylos dealing with the fallout of the Armechian

war, the agents of the Arcanos focused on the Ixian empire in the South. While the Arcanos were demi-gods on Twylos, the Ixians had been preparing for such an event for a long time, culminating in the technologies developed by the Alchemists Guild and Aea Convent. With potent magical shielding, the Ixians were able to resist and even destroy some of the Arcanos. In the fourth year of what would come to be called the Fourth Era, the Ixians sacked Stonekeep, destroying most of the Handmaidens' demesne and the Arcanos there (called Mother Agatha 16). Outnumbered over fifty to one, the remaining forty-two Handmaidens inside the Keep committed mass suicide, damning a large expanse of the countryside and obliterating the entire Ixian army at Murdyne. Thus there are no more Handmaidens in Twylos, and the ruins of Stonekeep and Murdyne are still cursed.

Lisabeth's final act of vengeance was in answer to her Sisters' annihilation. She, her Genarch, and Arcades Shavaat laid siege to Sun Keep, and at the end of the bloodbath, Shavaat sank the entire island of Nycene into the sea. Weakened by their efforts, an Ixian soldier killed Lisabeth, grabbed the Axan-Morn, and destroyed Shavaat. In the years that followed, the battles ceased and a quiet, empty peace came to Twylos. The Ixians, defeated but not destroyed, worked to restore their Church. A few decades later, the last of the Duuran Hierophants issued a set of edicts rejecting Twylos, as the Vox Duur themselves were diminished and disbanded.

Eventually, in the less tumultuous corners of the world, reconstruction of once-glorious towns and temples started to begin. Perhaps the most important of these was the re-creation of the Oolvaunt Chapterhouse of the School of Names. The first official act of the Museum Scholars was to dub this new age of Twylos the Fourth Era, with the renaming itself occurring in 181 F.E. Most of the second century of the Fourth Era has been without incident, but this is more to do with the extreme poverty, waste, and disease now spread across the land, rather than any new great age of prosperity.

Viral Magic and the Toxicologists

In most iterations of Twylos, the opening of Zoran and entrance of the Arcanos signals the beginning of the end. Muriel, feeling that she has failed once again, turned from that failed Twylos back to the Book of Dreams to re-create the world anew.

This particular version of Twylos however had one slight change, seemingly innocuous, that led to large repercussions and effectively set in motion everything described above. In the mid-Third Era, in the year 104 T.E., a small publishing house in Rheyas called The Learning Tree tried to capitalize on the new wealth of the Guilds. They started publishing children's books, and in most other copies of Twylos, their first publication sent to the kindergartens of the Guilds was the Zhellan classic "Timmorn and the Apple Tree". In this Twylos, however, a coin flip led to a different decision- that "Paedra and the Ogre King" would be the first issued publication.

"Paedra and the Ogre King" was a revised and updated version of an old fairy tale. It was not initially well-received, especially in the van Sinth household. Gilbert van Sinth was a successful Procurer, manufacturing new kinds of Zeaven for the Rheyas aristocracy. His daughter, who happened to be named Paedra, began to be teased ruthlessly at her new school once The Learning Tree's books were distributed to the Guilds' Youth Education Centers. Mrs. Katerin van Sinth, who hated Rheyas anyway, demanded that her daughter be moved to a new school- preferably where she had family, in the Drohkan city of Torsche.

The van Sinths moved east to Torsche, and to his pleasant surprise, Gilbert found it to be extremely lucrative. Several other Procurer operations soon moved once they got word from Gilbert, and the drug

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

trade blossomed with the new money of the wealthy merchants of Drohksmere. When his daughter grew up, Zeaven use in Torsche was thought to be a considerable problem, and Paedra used her connections to establish the Torsche Council on Toxicology in 144 T.E. Officially, the Torsche Council was founded to eradicate the Eastern drug trade by issuing edicts, warrants, and descriptions of compounds and their creators to local authorities. Unofficially, the Torsche Council really operated to regulate and control drug use and manufacture. Paedra van Sint went on to become one of Torsche's most wealthy citizens, as well as being an influential and respected member of the Honorable Friends of Torsche, the city's ruling parliament.

The Council on Toxicology began to diverge from both its official and unofficial capacities after Paedra left to join the government. With their accrued connections and knowledge of chemical and toxin manufacturing, the Council was an early form of the soon-to-come Alchemists Guild, and several of the most prominent members of the Guuran Tower and the Alchemists had their initial training in the Council. Eventually, just after the formation of those two infamous institutions, in 193 T.E. the Council spun off a research division in collaboration with, and centered at, Aea Convent. While the Council itself continued to operate in Torsche, all of the major researchers left for Aea, and the Torsche Council ceased to be effective in any capacity.

Hedge Magic- a simpler form of Hermetic Magic invented by the Alchemists that could be easily taught and mastered- was spreading in popularity across Twylos. Some of the staff at Aea Convent worked to push the limits of Hedge Magic, but the major breakthrough came in 215 T.E. One of the luksharrow scholars, Thomas Anopheles, had previously studied with Edrac Reeves of the Guild of Optics, and continued Reeves' work on what they called 'essence'. Essence magic was a sort of soul-binding or domination magic, and late one night, after giving up on his universal language project, Anopheles discovered a simple incantation for reading auras and interpreting the characteristics of an individual's essence. With his research, he petitioned the Guild of Optics for admission and was sent to Aea Convent to continue his work.

Anopheles' project attracted the funding of some fellow Typhonaes, who were covert agents for the Church of Ixus at the Convent. The Church was looking for easy ways to permanently mark, follow, and cripple Hermetic mages, and believed that Reeves' and Anopheles' essence magic could be the key. It was. With the generous resources of the Ixians, funneled through the Church of Typhon, the Alchemists Guild, and Aea Convent, Anopheles quickly made progress. He was joined by the members from the Torsche Council, and together they ended up inventing a new form of magic, a full realization of Reeves' essence magic and the Ixians' dreams which was basically high-Circle Hedge Magic, and came to be called Viral Magic.

While several categories of neo-Hedge Magic enchantments are now called 'Viral Magic', the core of the discipline (referred to as the Toxicologist Canon by the Alchemists, or Anopheles' Canon by the Opticians) is a set of spells that permanently 'tags' an individual as a mage, subliminally propagates that tag to other mages via spells cast by the tagged individual, and eventually degrades or kills everyone who is tagged in this manner.

In essence, what Anopheles and the Toxicologists invented was anti-mage magic, a sort of magical disease that ended up destroying large numbers of the Northern and Eastern populace. Viral Magic attracted such intense interest by the Toxicologists that not just Hermetic practitioners ended up affected and afflicted, but almost everyone in Northeastern Twylos at the time. The Toxicologists quickly realized what they had invented and left Aea Convent in 218 T.E., shortly before Aea's destruction during the Myrinae Pogrom and Second Fall.

They continued their work in secret in an underground bunker near Torsche, the Sweetwater Pond Research Laboratory, until infighting amongst the Toxicologists led to the deaths of most researchers and the closing of their labs. But by that time, the damage had been done, and persistent magical effects and plagues continue to ravage Twylos.

Thus it was the sudden onset of Viral Magic and its use in hunting down Hermetic mages that led directly to the opening of the Zoran Gate by the Tavash Morn, the Second Fall of Irendor, and the wasting of Twylos in the Fourth Era. The former clergy of Typhon, now defunct and reorganized under the Museum School, take some comfort in the irony that the revealing of the Fifth Key and collapse of Twylos was triggered by- of all things- Hedge Magic.

The Fourth Era

In some sense, Twylos is finally free. Free from demonic masters, and from emperors and nation- or world-spanning oligarchs. But the usual price of freedom is safety. The former custodians- the Duurans, the Typhonaes, the Houses, the Guilds, the Arcanos, Petrarch, and Muriel- are gone or have turned away from Twylos. The world that remains is a wasteland, a violent shadow living in its former self, perhaps permanently ruined by magical abuses, Viral Magic, pestilence, and war. This is Twylos of the Fourth Era.

" You cast us out.

We were few in number, yet you cast us out.

We were philosophers and scholars, hermits and monks, yet you cast us out.

We counseled rule through wisdom rather than the weapons of war, yet you cast us out.

We engineered beautiful machines promoting the ways of peace, yet you twisted our designs into your engines of destruction.

We looked up to the sun and the stars, shining simply down to Twylos, yet you stared deep into the abyss to glean the secrets of death, and there but dwelt your new masters.

We unshackled man from the hateful gods, yet you took those shackles and replaced them round the wrist of the Arcanos.

You have appealed to your demons, and by your demons shall you be judged.

The time has come: Vermhos ax ala Twylos."

-Brother Henry Ink, in a speech to the Third Rose Council of Gyre, 218 Third Era. This statement is believed to be the start of the Ixian Myrinae Pogrom and Second Fall of Irendor. The final oft-quoted four words mean 'no mages on Twylos' in archaic Ceyneian, although the term *Vermhos* is profanity, stemming from the terms for both prostitutes and worms, and might more literally be translated as "Twylos begs for the death of the whores".

Twylos Chronology

Entries shown in italics were not previously described in Section 1.2: A Player's Guide to Twylos.

Third Era

0: Vehrlend Covenant signed at Llesendor, ending the Vehrlands War.

1: Slavers Guild chooses their Guild symbol, officially becoming the first of the Guilds.
 20: Birth of Pavis Vrayne.
 23: Lord Ixondr retires to Thorneskeep.
 45: Navigators Guild founded.
 48: Vladmir Ozmandian publishes [The Histories](#).
 50: Vladmir Ozmandian publishes [The Theologies](#).
 53: Vladmir Ozmandian dies in Praxis.
 77: Pavis Vrayne reorganizes the Museum Scholars.
 98: Death of Pavis Vrayne.
 103: First and Second Keys of Typhon revealed to Geryon Krassus.
 104: *The Learning Tree* publishes "Paedra and the Ogre King".
 120: Surveyors Guild founded.
 133: Ulgan Sceptre takes control of Ullyade.
 144: *Torsche Council on Toxicology* founded.
 151: Death of John Ulgan.
 160: Kierven Strauze kills the Baron Zostig and re-opens Xociene.
 166: Alchemists Guild founded.
 170: Kierven Strauze gives Napres to Gauston Vausse. Foundation of the Vausse Academy.
 173: *Edrac Reeves begins to research essence magic at the Vausse Academy*.
 174: The Vausse Academy disappears.
 182: The Symestra Gold-Rush.
 184: Arosquey closes as storm clouds cover Rheyas.
 185: Bienstock Massacre at Tzalvas.
 187: *Edrac Reeves acquires the Egg of Voon*.
 190: Silence of Zostig.
 192: Writ of Coins of the Great Guilds.
 193: *Toxicologists move to Aea Convent*.
 197: Aramach Vox Thruxes moves to Napres.
 198: *Third Key of Typhon: Amanda Dawson reincarnated by Umlamy*.
 199: *Amanda Dawson fails to open Zoran, and is captured in Rhaxen by the Archons*.
 200: Incident at Rhaxen.
 203: Asantha Morgaine murdered by Ioethane the Red-Handed. Fayde Ehling revolts.
 204: *Birth of Lisabeth to Betca*.
 205: Founding of The Arcanum in Gyre.
 209: Black Rose Rebellion in Tarach; usurpation and coronation of Maraxam Belvaunt.
 211: The dragon Strabo destroys Symestra and Lockmere.
 215: *Thomas Anopheles joins Aea Convent and Guild of Optics*.
 218: *Church of Ixus begins the Myrinae Pogrom. Toxicologists move to Sweetwater Pond Laboratories*.
 223: *Axan-Morn obtained by Sister Betca. Destruction of Gyre and Aea Convent. Start of the Second Fall*.
 224: *Battle of Eyrinskeep in Thorenze Valley*.
 225: *Death of Betca*.
 228: *Viral magic widespread throughout Armech and the East*.
 230: *Fourth Key of Typhon: Petrarch slain by Sister Lisabeth with the Axan-Morn*.
 231: *Fifth Key of Typhon: Zoran Gate opened and Arcanos return to Twylos. Nobbins Bock arrives in this Twylos*.
 232: *Sister Lisabeth leads the Genarch against the Iron Throne*.
 233: *Second Fall of Irendor, disbanding of Navigators and Surveyors Guilds, and end of Third Era. Muriel forsakes Twylos*.

Fourth Era

3: *School of Toxicology closes; Secreting of Sweetwater Pond*.
 5: *Razing of Stonekeep by Church of Ixus*.
 13: *Sinking of Nycene*.
 15: *Plague of Luksharrow; mass exodus from Tarach*.
 16: *Destruction of Arcades Shavaat. Church of Ixus begins Reconstruction of Praxis*.
 37: *Ixians abandon Praxis Reconstruction- Ixian Argosy established*.

66: *Voran Eulogies issued from Timmorn's Well*.

71: *Fall of Bordermarch*.

101: *Heresy of Vhog and Sathar Abominations of Saethos*.

181: *Guild Protectorate established. Museum School revises calendar; Twylos' Fourth Era defined*.

193: *Reconstruction of Bordermarch begins*.

199: *Present day*.

Guilds of Twylos

The Guilds suffered greatly with the Second Fall. The Surveyors Guild was already in decline before the Fall began, and although the Navigators enjoyed a brief spurt of growth as the Houses fled Armech for the West, the wars eventually dragged the Guild into conflict. The Alchemists and Slavers Guilds seemed to share a common fate though, and became increasingly linked together from the work of Aea Convent and Barrowsreich. Initially each Guild suffered great losses, but in the massive restructuring that occurred in the wake of the Fall, both Guilds surged in wealth and prominence.

Generally in the Fourth Era, people speak of just the Guild, the 'Reconstructed' Guild, or the 'Guild Protectorate', as the governing bodies of each of the four Guilds have essentially been merged into one massive administrative and executive body. The Guild armies and navy, now called the Guild Protectorate, is the largest single sub-organization within the Guild, numbering almost 10,000, and mainly acts to stave off an Ixian invasion of Tzalvas, the Vehrlands, and the Zhellve.

The Alchemists

The general organization of the Alchemists Guild is unchanged. While the Guild experienced many setbacks during the Fall, and was a focus of much of the Ixians' animosity, the Alchemists weathered the first few decades of the Fourth Era. With the destruction of Nycene, it was easier for the Alchemists to recover their losses, and by the end of the second century of the new Era, the Alchemists were essentially back to the same level of wealth, prestige, and productivity.

The main difference between the Alchemists of the Third and Fourth Eras is that the latter are divided into considerably more factions, both geographically and philosophically. The advent of Viral Magic and Ixian war on magedom scared the Alchemists, or at least the somewhat reasonable members of the Guild. They then scaled back the scope of their operations, returning to their roots as local herbalists and apothecaries. They remained quiet until the rise of the Museum School and the return of Hermetic practice, years after the Church of Ixus was nullified by the Duurans.

Creation of Magical Items by the Guild: One of the major results the proto-Alchemists achieved was a dramatic reduction of cost in the creation of enchanted items. This was especially the case for potions and scrolls.

Game Masters are free to change the costs of magic item creation as given in the GM's Reference Book, but here we recommend that for a Journeyman, with the resources of an average Guild laboratory at their disposal (e.g., a staff of around ten Novices, Apprentices, or Scribes in a medium-sized city), the cost of potion or scroll creation in silver royals is given by the Circle of the spell, squared, then multiplied by 20 (for Hedge Magic) or 40 (for Hermetic Magic). Thus creating a First Circle Hedge Magic scroll would cost 20 sr, creating a Second Circle Hermetic Magic potion would cost 160 sr, creating a Third Circle Hedge Magic potion would cost 180 sr, and so on.

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

The time taken for creation is also changed: the Circle of the spell (for Hedge Magic) plus one or the Circle plus three (for Hermetic Magic), in days. Thus a 1st Circle Hedge Magic potion would take two days to brew, while a Second Circle Hermetic Magic scroll would take five days to inscribe.

In general, the markup for sales to non-Guild members is two to ten times the price of creation.

The Navigators

The Navigators lost much of their fleet during the Second Fall. As the Houses fled from Armech, the relationship between the Navigators and the merchant families became strained to the point of piracy. Several of the Houses commandeered Navigator vessels to ensure they could escape the collapse of the empire. Likewise, many Drohkan merchants came into direct conflict with the Navigators, or took advantage of the Guild's weakened position and resources to remove them from the cities of the East. Most of the Guild's knowledge of advanced shipbuilding, oceanography, and astral navigation was kept highly secret throughout the lifetime of the Guild, and as such, much of this information was lost in the Second Fall. The Navigators main role in the Fourth Era is to manage the fleet of the Guild Protectorate.

The Slavers

The two main groups to emerge successful, albeit scarred, in Twylos' Fourth Era are the Ixians and the Slavers. The Reconstructed Guild and the army of the Guild Protectorate both draw primarily from the resources and foresight of the late-Third Era Slavers Guild. The Fourth Era Guild as a whole could be seen mainly as the Slavers Guild, plus the remainders of the three other straggling Guilds.

For this reason, the mission and practical duties of the Slavers have changed dramatically from the early Third Era to now. The Slavers are managers of what is now essentially a giant temp office. Most of the 'slaves' they deal with are debtors and refugees from the numerous wars and plague-ravaged villages of the North. Their workforce is therefore constantly in flux, with most of their slaves working short-term (weeks to a few years), moving to various locations throughout the remains of Twylos (generally farms in the Vehrlands, and mines and quarries in the Zhellve).

The Surveyors

The Surveyors are defunct in the Fourth Era. Already diminished before the Second Fall, they were effectively folded into the Navigators and Slavers Guilds in the Reconstruction. Now, essentially any Journeyman or set of Apprentices that set out into the ruins of Twylos on Guild business act to some degree as Surveyors, with responsibilities to the Guild to bring back trail maps, news of events, and reports of danger.

Armech

The Armech of the Fourth Era is similar to that of the early Second Era—a bleak and lawless place. Like much of Fourth Era Twylos, what pockets of civilization remain are essentially independent city-states ruled by despots. Most of the structural elements of the major cities remain, due to their construction from stone and iron. (An exception is Thenzor Deep, which has been completely flooded since the early Fourth Era.) Valstach thus fared better than the Valstedt—much of the southern plains of Armech were turned into battlefields, and in the wake of the magical wasting, the Valstedt is almost entirely barren, a wasteland containing little flora or fauna, and fewer people.

Longiron Road

Landmark (partially refurbished railroad); moderate-high difficulty (skill levels 6+).

The Longiron was first a Third Era project between the merchant Houses of Armech, the Surveyors Guild, and the oligarchs of Drochsmere, to foster trade between the East and the West. It was supposed to run between Thenzor Deep and Ullyade, with major stops at Bludszech and Cevrance, but most of the Drohkan leg was uncompleted due first to a series of complications and minor land wars, and then lack of funding and interest on the part of the Houses.

The Horrors of Venoshua: The Ixians are run by the Office of the Apostles, a group of undead priests and magicians now in hiding on the moon. The Ixians have recently discovered the value in exploiting the horological magics of Zolace, and have constructed an elaborate portal system across Twylos to move technology and persons of interest back and forth between the Argosy, Zolace, and the new Sun Keep being built on the ruins of the lunar Astromancer's Tower. This portal system is based in Venoshua, an ancient Breyanic temple in the farthest reaches of Armech.

Venoshua is a series of ice caves, magically sealed from divination and translocation magic, with the exception of a potent set of mirrors at the bottom used for scrying and teleportation. The Ixians have cleansed the temple of Cult of Winter heresy and have turned it into a laboratory and stronghold for necromantic experimentation, as well as using it as the main waystation between different regions of Twylos. The Office has filled it with undead guardians and brainwashed Ixian soldiers, as well as a few researchers kept under careful watch. Venoshua is managed by the Shedu Barrabas (Shedu, 4th Circle Faith) and Brother Jemory Rosell (13th level hobgoblin, 6th Circle Faith), and contains a number of golden barghests, wraiths, skeletons, and zombies, as well as the lich twins Kyllian (6th Circle Hermetic, 1st Circle Faith) and Jyllian (6th Circle Faith, 1st Circle Hermetic).

The Ixians have grown bolder. With the help of stolen Zolace technology, they have partially repaired and rebuilt the Longiron Railroad, mainly as a means to secure the rich metal deposits of eastern Armech. Barrabas has begun trading with ogres who live at the other stretch of the working rail, in the mining camp of "Ogers Gold". The ogres are somewhat frightened of the Ixians, especially those tainted with necromancy from Venoshua, which the ogres have long feared, and have more or less given in to all of the demands of the Ixians for trading and supplies.

Nos Thana and the Black Quill Academy

The Nos Thana is a group of wizards that maintain a small Hermetic school named the Black Quill Academy near the western source of the Yseng River. The school is housed in an ancient citadel that overlooks the small village of Neece.

The Black Quill Academy was founded during the Irendi Empire by Ebor Thana, the last living member of a minor ruling family. Due to minimal resources and limited strategic importance, Neece and the Academy have avoided most of the conflicts common to the region. Although part of Armech, and once nominally under the authority of the Iron Throne, Neece is essentially governed by members of the school.

The Nos Thana asserts little political influence beyond Neece, and is very secretive, even by wizard standards. Nevertheless, the village of Neece is peaceful and well-governed, and as a result, the residents are supportive of their enigmatic masters. In fact, the prevailing belief of residents is that Academy's secrecy and Neece's fortune are essentially intertwined. As a result, townsfolk typically avoid discussion of The

Black Quill Academy with outsiders, and are likely to report suspicious inquiries to the Nos Thana.

Mages of the Nos Thana have a reputation of being skilled and self-sufficient. They are masters in dweomercraft, and often carry spells unique to members of the Black Quill alone, being prohibited from trading these spells with others. Furthermore, some unusual spells available to members may only be memorized within the confines of Academy itself, and copies of these spells are not physically removed from the school. There are currently 18 members of the Nos Thana. The group is led by a four-person council comprised of Ursula Anastasov (17th Skill level, 8th Circle Hermetic, human), Dunbar Anastasov (15th Skill level, 7th Circle Hermetic, human), Beatrice Worley (16th Skill level, 7th Circle Hermetic, 4th Hedge, human) and Minos Herrero (18th Skill level, 8th Circle Hermetic, orc).

The Black Quill Academy boasts a splendid garden, which is maintained by a short venerable man that residents of Neece refer to as 'Uncle Gibbs'. Local legend is that Uncle Gibbs and his mule Joshi have been visiting Neece for gardening supplies for well over 200 years.

Niven's Creek

Small village.

Population: 75; 91% human, 9% orc.

Resources: moderate, low magical and technological levels; mining, metalworking, stonework, agriculture, woodworking.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; led by Constazne Morrin (3rd level human), militia of 10.

Niven's Creek is a small trade outpost in the Valstedt, centered amongst several mining and logging operations. It is an old quiet settlement, and in its 160-year history has never numbered more than 100 residents. Niven's Creek is located along a trade road 32 miles northwest of Sheandrill.

During the last six years, an increasing amount of copper ore has been coming out of nearby mines owned by the Morrin family of Sheandrill. As a result, the relative value of the outpost has grown. In response to the increased economic activity, the Sheandrill Slaver's Guild established a permanent post in Niven's Creek two years ago. The head of this post is held by the Journeyman Anton Gauss.

The residents of Niven's Creek appreciate the increased economic activity due to the Morrin's mines. However, relations between the residents of Niven's Creek and the Slaver's Guild have been somewhat strained recently.

Thenzor Deep

Landmark (sunken city).

With the opening of the Zoran Gate and the Second Fall, Thenzor Deep was the first of the Armechian cities to feel the full wrath of the united Ixians. Dam controls were destroyed, holes bored in rock, and Lake Thoresh was drained into the vaults of Thenzor after the Ixians swept tunnel after tunnel, purging directly what viral magic had failed to destroy. Undoubtedly, priceless artifacts remain in the deeps, but the ruined city is now completely submerged in a partially-drained Thoresh.

"My Healthy Living- Longevity": Thenzor Deep was a den of amoral and immoral mages, and attracted some of the most bizarre sub-sects and subcultures outside of Gyre. Naturally then, Thenzor was selected

as part of the late Third-Era Alchemists Guild project "My Healthy Living". Five small villages across Twylos were secretly chosen for Alchemical experiments on small, somewhat isolated populations. A small graveyard a few days into the mountains, Obbro Vaults, was chosen for "Healthy Living- Longevity" in 219 T.E., due to its proximity to the magical riches of Thenzor, its effective isolation, and cunning series of locks and traps to ensure that entombed members of House Maxinay and others would stay entombed.

Obbro Vaults became a secretive cloning project by Alchemists scared of the power and religious ties that Aea Convent had. Separately, the Obbro Alchemists (or, as they somewhat awkwardly styled themselves, the 'MHLers', later 'Muellers', which many of them found to be serendipitously funny as one of the old Obbro tombs was for the Mueller family) built up an elaborate cloning project, that under the helm of Master Hennig Mueller, took an odd turn. Master Hennig ascribed to holeography, a Second Era philosophy that had resurgence in popularity among a few of the late Third Era Alchemists- namely, that physical features in the body and face reflected personality traits and mental states. Thus under his directorship, when My Healthy Living lost funding, the entire project was routed towards his goal: recreation of famous historical figures from the past ages of Twylos.

An important feature of the Obbro cloning project was longevity- the Obbro scientists were working to slow down or stop the aging process, and in their deranged, cloned historical figures, they were largely successful. Thus Obbro, sealed and dark, is a small village of somewhat happy but confused clones, including Ixondr and Muriel, Petrarch, Vladmir Ozmandian, various Emperors of Armech, and so on, who run small shops for each other and generally have a nice life together. However, they are acutely aware of the fact that they are ageless clones, and have developed an intricate legend about the 'Water of Life' found within (now submerged) Thenzor Deep, which will transform them from essence-less, ageless clones into 'real' people.

Drohksmere

The wars and pestilence that ravaged Irendor quickly spread into the East via the traderoutes established during the early and mid Third Era. As the people of Armech fled their collapsing empire, roughly a third of them came to Drohksmere. This influx served mainly to destabilize Drohksmere, as former heads of Houses attempted to insert themselves into both the complex mercantile hierarchy of the Ulgan Sceptre and the land-ownership schemes of the northern holdings. As a result of several small wars and the influence of Viral Magic, Fourth Era Drohksmere is severely underpopulated. The reduction in population and the decline of large international trade routes led to severe poverty in Drohksmere, with many small villages existing amongst the ruins and shadows of once-expensive manors, trade halls, hotels, and shipyards.

Gyre

Ruined major city and epicenter of the Myrinae Pogrom.

Gyre was once the center of Twylos. Initially a small stopping point on the shipping lanes of the South between Saethos, Nycene, Vasqueray, and the new wealth of Drohksmere, as the Ulgan Sceptre became wealthier, Gyre prospered. Its independence allowed it to grow and thrive in a way unencumbered by the politics and hubris of Armech, Vasqueray, and even Tarach and the Ulgan Empire. Gyre seemed to relish its libertine identity, leading to the formation of the Church of Typhon, and eventually spelling doom for this once-great artistic capital. Gyre was obliterated as part of the Myrinae Pogrom in 223 T.E., but not in the way that is now conventionally believed. It was not the Ixians who sank Gyre, as much as they enjoy taking credit for what they fully believe to be just desserts. Rather, dissidents within the

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

Alchemists Guild, acting independently, let loose Vriian in an attempt to destroy Aea Convent. They succeeded, only to learn that Vriian razed Gyre as well. In the years since, the marsh has reclaimed Gyre, which is now largely submerged and covered with brackish, dirty water.

The Ruins of Aea Convent: The magical studies that took place over several years at Aea Convent are often blamed for the Second Fall and the current troubles of Fourth Era Twylos. Although the general population remains completely in the dark about the existence and research that took place at Aea, most of the participating organizations themselves- the Ixians, the Church of Twylos, the Alchemists Guild, the Tavash Morn, and the Toxicologists- are likewise largely clueless as to the full extent of what was occurring in the various laboratories. This was because of the highly paranoid, misanthropic, and competitive nature of the Aea Convent staff.

Aea was demolished by Vriian. Initially after its destruction, mages and scientists from across Twylos rushed back to Aea to secure and destroy whatever remaining evidence they could find. All that remains of Aea now are the stone walls of the convent foundation, along with a secret stone vault deep under the earth. This vault, sealed completely with stone and lead, thus remained impervious to Vriian's annihilating force. It contains a mirror portal, non-functional to the proximity of the sole remaining 4th generation Abby clone, ABBY431, who has remained in hypnotic stasis for decades just a few feet from the mirror portal. Beyond the portal and within this vault is The Nursery, the main facility involved in the production and refinement of the Aea Abby clones. ABBY431 was stationed just outside the mirror portal, essentially to seal The Nursery for good, by Zhillian Maars. Maars was a former student of Asmodean, since moved to Thenzor Deep, and murdered by the Children of Gayla. The Nursery, full of glass and crystal vats for clone breeding, gestation, and conditioning, is now otherwise almost completely devoid of life, but remains somewhat operational given the right expertise. Embedded approximately five feet from Nursery Chamber VIII is the last 3rd generation clone, ABBY320, kept alive by the Stasis Generator (see Appendix 2.2.3) grafted to her. Chosen stochastically- out of three potential clones, ABBY320 did not shut off this Viral Magic device attached to her torso. Much like ABBY431 prevents the mirror portal from functioning, the presence of ABBY320 prevents a Gate from opening, bringing back Aea's last Breeder and Wet Nurse pair to Nursery Chamber VIII, gone mad from decades spent paralyzed within the Ether.

Sweetwater Pond Research Laboratories

Landmark (former school of the Toxicologists); low to high difficulty (levels 3-16).

Forty miles southwest of Torsche is Sweetwater Pond, a tiny isolated lake that is indeed sweet to the taste. The water is highly poisonous, and thus nothing lives in Sweetwater. In the middle of the Pond is a small stony island with the remains of several dead trees. Covered by pebbles is a trapdoor that leads to the research laboratories of the School of Toxicology, called by their peers the Viral Mages. The Toxicologists worked in secret, in the latter part of the Third Era for a period of about a century. Initially called the Torsche Council on Toxicology, they were the group of magical researchers who pre-dated and directly influenced the later Guuran Tower and Alchemists Guild.

With money made controlling and fueling the Drohkan drug trade, the Torsche Council developed a world-class laboratory, eventually moving to Aea Convent where they changed their name to the School of Toxicology. The school was funded by crypto-Ixians who had infiltrated the Church of Typhon and Aea. With this Ixian funding, the Toxicologists, joined by Edrac Reeves' student Thomas Anopheles, created what was basically high-Circle Hedge magic, focused in theory

on enchantments and metamagical effects, while in practice becoming an insidious form of disease, called Viral Magic.

Once the core set of Viral spells were invented and perfected, the Toxicologists were amazed and shocked by their discoveries. They left Aea Convent to work in secret, using old money and connections from Torsche to build a large underground bunker beneath Sweetwater Pond. The Sweetwater Pond Research Laboratory was completed in 218 T.E., and the Toxicologists worked here for the next 18 years, on increasingly bizarre and sophisticated topics, including extensive additions and modifications to Viral Magic.

During their peak at the end of the Third Era, the Toxicologists had about 50 members, separated into three divisions: Red, Gray, and Black, depending on their beliefs on the directions and applications they should pursue. The Red and Black divisions each had a staff of around twenty, with the Red Toxicologists pushing for real-world application while the Black Toxicologists believed only in pure research, emphasizing the clear dangers of Viral Magic. The Gray Toxicologists, numbering around six, were mainly for psychological support, serving to mediate between the Red and Black Schools until finally, in 3 F.E., the philosophical differences between the Red and the Black reached its apex (over the incident at Primrose Farms), a vicious battle broke out, and the eight surviving Toxicologists agreed to close the School, permanently end their research, and never meet again. However, this agreement was made in Torsche, as at the time the Sweetwater Pond labs were overcome with Viral Magic effects, and none of the original Toxicologists returned to destroy their research.

As a consequence, the Sweetwater Pond Research Laboratory is surprisingly intact. While traps, wards, and some residual Viral Magic is still present, most of the research space is still viable, and, scattered amongst the papers and vaults of the individual researchers, a complete codex of Viral Magic can be found within, along with a large number of potions, poisons, and Zeaven. There are also some experimental curative agents that may be partially effective at reducing or removing Viral essence links.

Thomas Anopheles lives on, somewhat, in the Sweetwater Pond laboratories. Before Sweetwater was closed, he grafted his essence into a set of three somewhat-decrepit nth-generation Abby clones (see Appendix 2.2.3; 5th Circle Hedge, 5th Circle Viral). The hostile environment in the heart of the Toxicology labs has, over the decades, worn down the clones' ability to repair themselves; each only regenerates one health point every other round, and all of them will be permanently disabled if the essence ring in any of the three is destroyed. Collectively these rotting girls still contain the remains and mind of Anopheles who attempts to continue his/their work as best he/they can, sealed in the deepest reaches of the Red Halls.

The Laboratory also contains a number of stasis tanks, holding among other things Cancer Carl 13 for the Guild Reticulum in case of emergency.

Half-Moon Mountain: Previous Duuran stronghold and lair of Strabo. All of this has been repurposed now, into an elaborate astronomical observatory by the Brothers of Zeph.

The Brothers of Zeph

The Brothers of Zeph are a group of monks based within a compound on a small rocky island east of Half-Moon Mountain. There are currently 63 Brothers of Zeph, and due to their beliefs, there can be no more. To replace Brothers that have died, new Brothers are not recruited, but are stolen as babes from unfortunate mothers, usually along the Myrinae coast.



The Brothers of Zeph were founded in 152 T.E. by a Thainist monk named Zeph Goostu. In a short autobiographical work called "A Mirror Mox" Goostu claimed to have been part of a secret cult called the 'Mox Duur' that was comprised of 100 members. According to this history, Goostu bore witness to a horrific Mox Duuran ceremony wherein 100 shape-shifting demons called Olipox were released upon Twylos. These demons consumed, then took the likeness of the priests that had summoned them. For his part, Zeph experienced a last-minute change of heart, killed his respective demon, and escaped.

To make good for the evil he had helped to unleash upon Twylos, Zeph Goostu swore to eliminate the other 99 demons. To this end, he built an orphanage near Gyre, and over the course of several years, recruited 98 more brothers to aid him. The first Olipox discovered by the Brothers of Zeph was Bastian Hugress, Guildmaster of the Gyre Navigators Guild. Hugress was killed, however the assassination was botched and Bastian's young son and two journeymen were killed as well. Three Brothers of Zeph were captured, and hanged. As a result, Goostu shuttered his orphanage, and the Brothers relocated to their current offshore location in 163 T.E.

It is the sole purpose of the Brothers of Zeph to find and destroy these demons that in their view threaten the fabric of civilization. The Brothers of Zeph have located and killed 37 of these shape-shifting demons. The Brothers believe that these demons are almost always found within positions of power, and typically take on a human guise. Once an Olipox is located, the Brothers convene a council to determine whether or not the individual is indeed an Olipox. If the council determines an Olipox has been found, a single Brother is sent to destroy it. Upon killing an Olipox, the Brother of Zeph will return to the compound with proof. This Brother then sacrifices himself in ceremony called a 'Feast of Zeph', in which he is cooked and eaten by his remaining Brothers, transferring his knowledge and power unto them. If there are ever fewer Brothers than Olipox, a new Brother is

acquired and trained. Zeph Goostu died of natural causes in 184 T.E. and was consumed by his Brothers. Currently the eldest Brother, Tomas Ponte (11th Skill level, 2nd Circle Faith, human), serves as the active head of the order.

Of course, in Muriel's infinite, deviant series of Twylos iterations, this narrative has been disfigured. While the Brothers usually cannibalize innocent civilians, occasionally the Olipox are real. In this case, most of the Olipox are the Brothers themselves, driven mad by eating infected tissue. It's a hazard of the diet I suppose.

Verdansk ("Golem Town")

Small fortress and village.

Population: 86; 100% golem (41 lesser golems, 29 golems, 16 greater golems).

Resources: poor, high magical and technological levels; golem production, metalworking, stoneworking.

Religion: none.

Guilds: none.

Government: none.

Verdansk is a small stone fortress formerly surrounded and supported by several ranches. It is built up against the mountains, containing a moderate wealth of precious metals and iron. It played a key role in the Thorenze War of Eyrinskeep in 224 T.E. Initially, Baron DuVray rallied much of Thorenze against Krindolina of Eyrinskeep. The war was at a standstill, largely due to the threat of reinforcements from Krindolina's sole ally, Lord Aerick of Verdansk. However, the Duurans-who covertly instigated the war in order to depose Krindolina-promised to heal Aerick's son and only heir, a crippled and autistic boy of nine. Aerick then sided not with Krindolina but DuVray. Eyrinskeep fell, but not before Krindolina's friend, one of the escaped

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

Aprill clones named Jenny, used the stolen Scroll of Vriian to completely decimate all parties involved.

"My Healthy Living- Industry": Verdansk was selected as part of the late Third-Era Alchemists Guild project "My Healthy Living". Five small villages across Twylos were secretly chosen for Alchemical experiments on small, somewhat isolated populations. Verdansk was chosen for "Healthy Living- Industry" in 220 T.E., due to its mineral wealth as part of the Thorenze Valley region, and its stability and security relative to the rest of the volatile Thorenze holdings. A large factory was built to mass-produce golems for working in the Thorenze mines. The rulers of Verdansk would get several of these tireless workers for free, while the Alchemists would sell the rest, in hopes of making an enormous profit.

The timing was poor. The Thorenze War was followed swiftly by the Second Fall. Although some of Thorenze remains populated by small enclaves and steadings, Verdansk was abandoned and has remained so to the present day. However, the golem factory has remained in service, slowly creating more and more golem workers to replace all the citizens of Verdansk village, although it recent years due to entropy and a reduction in resources, production of more golems has slowed almost to a stop. Superstitious townsfolk in other Thorenze dwellings might have heard rumors of 'Golem Town', a village completely populated and run by men of stone and steel.

The golems methodically and mechanically go about their business, slowly rebuilding walls, trying in vain to operate the kilns and furnaces of the mine smelter, even obsessively hoeing and tilling the dead soil to no avail. There are a few shops where golem storekeepers have a variety of common goods for sale, and the Verdansk armory, staffed by three greater golems, sells an incredible collection of non-magical goods from the early days of Healthy Living's operation- one apiece of each type of metal weapon and armor from the Player's Reference Book, with weapons having a bonus +1 to hit and to damage, and armor absorbing one extra point per hit. These special pieces sell for ten times the usual price.

Ivy grows over everything, recapturing Verdansk; the city is an overgrown stone ruin, and occasionally one of the golem workers can be spied attending to some pointless task. But Ichabod gan Llesing (10th level human, 5th Circle Hedge) has big plans for Verdansk. gan Llesing was formerly an Alchemist Guildmaster, but twelve years ago was fired and jailed by the Guild for embezzlement. Now freed from prison, he's discovered the locations of the Healthy Living experiments, and is bringing to Verdansk five leprous slaves and a new Viral Magic spell he's been working on, 'Fill the Vessel'. His plan is to transmit the souls of the lepers into the bodies of the golems in an elaborate sacrificial ritual. Of course these things never go according to plan, and after his five sacrifices, instead he will have summoned five Spirits-of-the-Land, who will invade the golems and factory and turn this quiet ruined town into a deathtrap.

Khaedor

Khaedor, like Vasqueray and the Vehrlands, was less affected by the Second Fall than the other, previously predominant nations of Twylos (the empire of Armech, the kingdom of Tarach, the Ixians of Nycene, and the oligarchs of Drohksmere). While the Knights of Aguierre were disbanded and their fortress of Bordermarch destroyed, reconstruction has begun throughout Khaedor and the Zhelive, funded in large part by the Slavers, now in control of Fourth Era Twylos' largest and wealthiest city, Tzalvas.

Tzalvas (ZAL-vas)

Major city and Guild headquarters.

Population: 101,000; 75% human, 19% orc, 1% dwarf, 1% reptilian, 4% misc. (including demons, faeries, ogres, ratkin, undead).

Resources: wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, stonecraft, fishing, shipbuilding, agriculture and husbandry, metalworking, library, military academy.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran, Ixian, Aguierre, Xeres.

Guilds: Slavers, Alchemists, Navigators, Surveyors.

Government: strict; oligarchical control by the Guild, led by The Reticulum and Guildmaster Rogan DuLaine (Scrivener Boss), well-trained army and navy of 10,000.

Tzalvas has become the leading city and center of civilization in Twylos, mainly by default. It is huge and crowded- the narrow streets and tall, decrepit buildings are all tucked into a narrow stretch of land approximately five miles square between the mountains and the salt marshes. Unemployment and crime are rampant in the lower quarters, while the Guild officials and Masters that oversee operations live in huge compounds and mansions tucked into the mountains out of town.

Guild operations have become extremely complicated, and most of the Tzalvas Slavers Guild proper is strictly governmental, managing the concerns of its workforce and the city. With the consolidation of all Guilds during the Reconstruction, and the formation of the Guild Protectorate, Guild members found themselves wasting most of their time engaging and scheming in local politics, while the Ixians began re-conquering much of the South and the rest of Twylos suffered.

Thus the acting Guildmaster of the entire Guild was replaced with a machine. This worked so well, that the whole Guild council has been replaced by Scrivener Bosses- advanced automata with limited intelligence and spellcasting abilities, but act extremely efficiently and multi-task well. The current head of the Guild is a large Scrivener Boss jokingly named Rogan DuLaine (x2 health points, 20 intellect, 5th Circle Hedge and Hermetic Magic) after the infamous Second Era Ixian High Priest. The Scrivener Boss Council now forms a large amalgam of pipes and machines, called The Reticulum, located in the bowels of what was formerly Barrowsreich, the Slavers Guild conditioning tanks.

Cancer Carl Wants To Die: Keeping the Guild Council operating requires an enormous amount of energy. Some of this is provided by a seemingly-immortal slave kept locked within Barrowsreich, Captain Carl Dopsin (12th level immortal human, 1 endurance, 1 health point), called by the Barrowsreich Surgeons who tend to him and have studied him "Cancer Carl".

Cancer Carl was one of the adventurers who made their way into the Shadowsfall Tower after Maedar Arangul became Abraxas. A down-on-his-luck shipcaptain, ex-Navigator, he was recruited by the Conclave on their failed mission to liberate the library. Carl was the only survivor of the battle against Abraxas, and discovered the Heart of Abraxas after fleeing the fight. Rather than destroy it, he took it from the tower, made his way into the Saethan desert, and paid a Sathar shaman to graft the Heart into his body.

Carl died. The next morning, Carl came back to life, but somewhat diminished and amnesiac. The Sathar took care of him and eventually sold him to Guild Surgeons at Barrowsreich in 218 T.E., who discovered that Carl had the remarkable ability to survive massive amounts of bodily destruction, regenerating and returning to life every morning. Much like a starfish, he could also grow into two Carls, if cleanly separated in half, although such an invasive procedure resulted in the new half growing back deformed and cancerous, with anomalous tissue growth, and some of his body parts somewhat misplaced. For this reason, the Guild Surgeons have taken to affectionately calling him 'Cancer Carl'.

There are now 13 Cancer Carls (numbered one to thirteen), which seems to be the limit supported by the grafted Heart of Abraxas. Each one contains its own copy of the black Heart. Each of the Carls is in immense pain, has a single health point, dies every night, and is reborn the next day. Each of the Carls is kept in a Viral Magic-derived essence chamber, siphoning off Carl's Heart of Abraxas-enriched essence to help power the Scrivener Boss Guild Council. The Carls are kept on rotation so that all 13 don't die at the same time- an elaborate horological stasis chamber has been derived to keep 3 of the Carls at any one time in suspended animation, sealed in the Ether, and Cancer Carl 13 has been moved to an isolation chamber far from Tzalvas in the Sweetwater Pond labs near Torsche.

Nycene

Nycene is gone. At the start of the Fourth Era (13 F.E.), in response to the slaughter of the Handmaidens at Murdyne, Lisabeth and the White King sunk the whole of Nycene into the sea. Without the leadership of Sun Keep, the Church of Ixus was suddenly crippled. The Ixians attempted to rebuild their home city of Praxis, but ran out of resources. Praxis was abandoned and the construction navy (now called Argosy Prime) became the Ixian stronghold by default.

Argosy Prime

Armada and floating base of the Church of Ixus.

Population: 12,350; 84% human, 12% orc, 4% misc. (demons, giants, simulacrum).

Resources: wealthy, very high magical and technological levels; shipbuilding, fishing, library, magical and military academy.

Religion: Ixian.

Guilds: none.

Government: oppressive; theocratic control by the Church of Ixus, led by the Sun King (illusion), well-trained navy of 10,000.

The complete destruction and sinking of the island of Nycene in 13 F.E. brought a sudden end to all of the events involved in the Second Fall of Irendor and the collapse of Twylos as a whole. All of Nycene now lies on the ocean floor, with some remnants and stone spires sticking up out of the water. The Ixians were almost, but not quite, completely destroyed in this final battle. However, given their immense resources and presence on Twylos, within years the Ixians had rebuilt many of their temples and citadels, and began to attempt a large-scale reconstruction of Nycene itself. They started with Praxis, building what amounted to a massive floating city from 16 to 37 F.E., until lack of progress, depletion of resources, and the futility of the project caused the Church to pull funding from the project.

The fleet used to attempt rebuilding Praxis then, overnight, became the center of Ixian control. This armada, titled the Glorious Argosy of His Majesty the Sun King (but usually just called the Ixian Argosy), consists of 20 massive ships of wood and steel each the size of a small village, and powered by revamped Alchemical steam, photosynthetic, and magical engines. The Argosy serves as a mobile fortress, each ship being heavily armed with cannons and staffed by approximately 500 soldiers and 100 priests. The Ixian Argosy slowly patrols the western sea, and there is a larger squadron of smaller ships, totaling around 100 in number, that scouts from western Tarach to Vasqueray in small fleets of 1 to 10 ships at a time.

The Office of the Apostles: Almost all of the Church leadership was killed in the final battle of the Second Fall at Nycene. The Sun King himself is now just literally an illusion, a magical image of a boy created and maintained by the Office of the Apostles, the group that is really in control of the Ixians. The Apostles are the remains of the heads of the Church, all five of whom were killed during the destruction of

Nycene and were reanimated as lichens: Archbishop Joolus Morgaunte (8th Circle Faith), Archbishop Hiera the Fair (8th Circle Faith), Father Alastair Dhalgang (7th Circle Faith, 5th Circle Hermetic), Mother Aprill-Mirielle Strawberry (7th Circle Faith, 5th Circle Ritual), and Master Ochs Dorv (8th Circle Hermetic, 5th Circle Viral, 3rd Circle Faith). While the heads of the Office sometimes are on board one ship or another, for their own safety they have moved their primary headquarters and personal effects to the Moon.

Saethos

Saethos was, and still remains, under control of the Ixians. After the Second Fall, the Sathar regained some control, and have full sway over the deeper desert. Places like Gossar and Rhaxen remain disputed. With each passing generation, the Sathar become better acquainted and more integrated with the other humanoid races, and much sharing of knowledge and technology has occurred during the Fourth Era. This has had both positive and negative impact.

Vhog

Landmark (greenhouse and chemical laboratory); high difficulty (levels 12+).

In 88 F.E., the Sathar Nobu Su-Gahz was admitted to the Inner Circle of the Suvan Azule at Syeth. Privately shocked by the state of their god Izain, Su-Gahz petitioned the temple for an extended sabbatical, intending to scour Twylos for the means of resuscitating the Dragon King. However, disenchanted with the Suvan Azule, he fell in with the Teauvites of Vhog the following year. Su-Gahz then traveled to Tzalvas and further east, and eventually contacted some of the last students of the Toxicologists. Becoming facile with alchemical processes, he returned to Syeth, studied the schematics of the apparatus keeping Izain alive, and faked his own death. Su-Gahz then headed to Vhog in 97 F.E. and began to incorporate similar life-support technology into K'Teauva's cocoon. After a string of failures, four years later Su-Gahz finished his endeavors.

Within hours of injecting K'Teauva with a complex cocktail of drugs and magical reagents to accelerate her growth, she had doubled in size, eventually exploding, destroying Vhog and flooding the sinkhole that remained with biological goo and swarms of hideous insects. All of the Sathar Teauvites then present at Vhog- 37 in number- were drowned in the remains of K'Teauva, but due to the life-promoting nature of Su-Gahz's cocktail, they all survived. However, these 'Vhog Sathar' as they are now called (see Appendix 2.2.3), were hideously transformed, growing much larger in size and mutating in various horrible ways. Vhog Sathar are monstrous, generally over 12' in height, and cover their bodies with enormous robes and cloaks to hide the insect hives, mandibles, chitin, extra limbs, and grotesque facial features that appear all over their bodies.

The Vhog Sathar all remain alive, including Nobu Su-Gahz (18th level reptilian, 5th Circle Ritual, 5th Circle Hedge, 4th Circle Viral) and believe that collectively, they in fact embody K'Teauva herself. Vhog itself has been transformed as well. Covering the sinkhole with a giant glass and metal dome about 500 feet in diameter, Vhog has become an enormous greenhouse for the cultivation of dozens of species of flora, desert fauna, and insects. These are all used as chemical reagents in the bizarre Vhog Sathars' version of the Alchemists Guild, devoted to the creation of more effective growth and life-giving compounds. Indeed, the Vhog Sathar have succeeded in turning the desert wastes around Vhog into a fertile, verdant paradise. This lush greenery masks the awful secret in the depths of the greenhouse cellars- the giant pit of goo that remains of K'Teauva. However, they have begun operating markets in the oases that have sprung up in the

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

outskirts of their greenhouse, and trade some with Khulek and other Sathar, unaware of the true nature of the greenhouse. The Vhog Sathar continue to use K'Teauva's excrement, along with their own experimental chemical treatments, to produce and transform their own followers. To distinguish them from the original 37 Vhog Sathar, these newly transformed reptilians are called Vat Sathar (see Appendix 2.2.3), as they have been exposed for prolonged periods of time to the biological vats of the inner compound of Vhog. Su-Gahz's personal project is directed, accelerated evolution of Sathar forms, working to construct Vat Sathar that appear more and more human-like in appearance: for example, selecting for smaller, paler, tail-less strains that have body hair.

Grinaldo von Perr used to be an Alchemist employed by the Bone Trade. He had the misfortune to be polymorphed into an acorn in Zolace, and was sold to Sathar botanists. von Perr now grows in the Vhog greenhouses- some of his gardeners know he used to be human, and so he is particularly well-tended and his sap prized.

Tarach

Tarach has suffered almost exactly the same fate as Drohskmere, for similar reasons, but not to quite the extent. Tarach received more exiles from Armech during the Second Fall than Drohskmere, but due to Tarach's proximity to the more stable regions of the world (the Vehrlands and Khaedor), it was able to resist the complete collapse that occurred in the North and East.

Grito

Small village.

Population: 144; 91% human, 9% orc.

Resources: poor, low magical and technological levels; agriculture, woodworking.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran.

Guilds: Alchemists.

Government: relaxed; led by Mayor Martin Jellop (2nd level human), militia of 12.

Grito is a small village about one hundred miles south of Covenach on the Willowood. While Mayor Jellop and his small militia manage day-to-day activities, Guildmaster Rovyg Griller (4th level human, 2nd Circle Hedge) of the small Alchemists compound here is really in charge. In general, Grito is a quiet, somewhat slothful community.

"My Healthy Living- Happiness": Grito was selected as part of the late Third-Era Alchemists Guild project "My Healthy Living". Five small villages across Twylos were secretly chosen for Alchemical experiments on small, somewhat isolated populations. Grito was chosen for "Healthy Living- Happiness". The former, real Guildmaster of the region was based in Covenach and hesitated to implement most of the Healthy Living charges to Grito. However, in the years after the Second Fall, the Alchemists Guild has weakened in prominence and managerial oversight, and *soi-disant* 'Guildmaster' Griller (really a Journeyman rank in the Guild) is operating as somewhat of a free agent.

"Healthy Living- Happiness" involves spiking the underground spring providing the well water of Grito with a resin that slowly releases doses of Potions of Friends (as the 1st Circle Hedge Magic spell) combined with a small amount of the addictive hedonic Crave. Griller, along with his assistant Apprentice Stephen Frunke (1st level human, 1st Circle Hedge), has been treating the waters of Grito for about three years (Griller and Frunke drink only imported mineral water, and have several antidotes on hand for personal use). Jellop himself is given quite a high dose through medicine and personal treatment by the

Guildmaster. Long-term exposure to the waters has made the townsfolk of Grito chronically manic-depressive, and at any given time, some of the villagers are extremely happy and personable, while others are misanthropic, apathetic, and sedate. Griller considers "Healthy Living- Happiness" a success so far, but still a work in progress, as there is considerable difficulty getting the resin to release at a steady rate. Additionally, there is a growing trend in violent outbursts among the locals and a steady decline in productivity and prosperity. More data need to be collected to determine the significance and bases of these observations.

Vasqueray

Vasqueray was also minimally affected by the events around the Second Fall, and if anything, has been revitalized by the decline of the major empires of the Third Era. While not returning to its' Second Era glory, the Sea Kingdoms have become home to many of the wealthiest and most prominent of Twylos' refugees. Foremost among these are the Museum Scholars, who have fled Armech for the Oolvaunt Chapterhouse, now a primary center of learning in Fourth Era Twylos.

Cyndiquist

Major city.

Population: 27,500; 77% human, 10% orc, 9% reptilian, 4% misc. (including demons, faeries, ratkin, ogres, undead).

Resources: wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, fishing, art, shipbuilding, stonework, agriculture and husbandry, metalworking, library.

Religion: Thainist, Ixian, Duuran, Xeres, Aguiere.

Guilds: Slavers, Alchemists, Navigators, Surveyors.

Government: oligarchical; nominal leadership through the Cyndiquist Community Chamber of Commerce, Chaired by Lorenz Feng (4th level human), although the wealthy families of the Queyan Society Club control the C4 financially. Small well-trained militia of 150, large well-trained navy of 440.

Cyndiquist was once the powerful and artistic capital of the Queyan Sea Kingdoms, and while it fell into decline in the Third Era, it was razed in the course of the Second Fall. After the Navigators Guild was defunct, the Ixians decimated Cyndiquist in their mostly successful attempt to conquer Vasqueray and the whole of the South. The rich and somewhat debauched families that had long controlled Cyndiquist scattered throughout Vasqueray, fleeing to Gorgos, Oolvaunt, and numerous small, private Queyan islands and atolls. About twenty years later, however, when the Ixians withdrew to focus on their attempts to rebuild Praxis and raise Nycene, the Cyndiquist families started returning to their beloved homeland. Joining them were many refugees from Tarach and the North, looking to get as far away as possible from the wars and waste that spread across mainland Twylos. Today Cyndiquist enjoys a level of prosperity approximately the same as its pre-Fall period, a rarity among the surviving cities of the Fourth Era. Although many citizens of Cyndiquist are Ixian, they are clear to differentiate themselves from the theocrats of Sun Keep and the Ixian Argosy. Tensions remain high.

"My Healthy Living- Nutrition": Cyndiquist is located at the mouth of a large delta, the Ybres Passage, serving Cyndiquist Island. At the far northern extent of Ybres, within the marshy lowlands, is the now-ruined village of Brellay. Brellay was the site of one of the Alchemists Guild "My Healthy Living" projects. Historically, the people of Brellay survived on crayfish and small marsh amphibians and reptiles; a late Third Era Alchemical report listed Brellay near the bottom of all the locales thus surveyed in terms of nutritional intake. Due to the abundance of alchemically-important marsh fauna, and the belief that it would be easy to manipulate the staples of the Brellayan diet, a secret

Alchemist laboratory was designed within a ramshackle amphibian farm, plainly named The Frog Pond.

The Frog Pond enjoyed early successes bolstering the nutritional content of fish and frogs for the people of Brellay. Longitudinal studies- at first covertly performed, then overtly- documented the enhanced vigor, size, and attitude of the Brellayan townsfolk over the first five years of the Nutrition project. Then, rather suddenly, the Guildmaster in charge of Nutrition, Orbex la-Luwellyn, sent back a hurried report describing a series of horrific events: that the townsfolk of Brellay had changed into abominations, large frog-people, worshipping a fat frog god, and sacrificing or eating the other 'control' humans to curb their monstrous hunger. Brellay was cleansed and Alchemical records of the Nutrition experiments were destroyed.

That isn't exactly what happened. Guildmaster Orbex, wanting only to ensure that he raised four strong, healthy boys (Orbex ley-Luwellyn, Vhannes, Charles, and Munc), believed that 'more is better'. Overfeeding them on the promising Frog Pond compounds, they all grew rapidly to monstrous size and then died. His wife, Peony, subsequently took her life in grief, drowning herself in the Pond. Orbex shut himself up within the laboratory, sealing it from within.

An internal Guild Auditor, Journeyman Clay Meeves, was in Brellay to covertly keep an eye on the project. Meeves was a prodigious Ritual Mage, and animated the corpses of the sons and wife to ask them what happened. Orbex caught wind of the interrogation, storming outside and slaying Meeves before Meeves could end the spell and return the boys and wife to being fully dead. Their hunger unsated, Orbex arranged for a town-hall meeting, in which most townfolk were trapped and fed to his dead family. Orbex then penned his falsified Guild report, and continued his descent into madness, searching for an Alchemical/Hermetic way of reversing the state of his wife and children. Eventually, Orbex himself was eaten. His sons (stats as jotun giants with abilities of zombies) and wife (ghost) remain in the ruins of town, fishing and casting nets into the swamps, trying in vain to quench their cravings from the nutrient-rich fauna of Brellay.

Oolvaunt

Large village.

Population: 3,200; 67% human, 13% reptilian, 12% orc, 8% misc. (including demons, faeries, ogres, ratkin, undead).

Resources: modestly wealthy, high magical and technological levels; trade, library, fishing, shipbuilding, art, stonework, agriculture and husbandry, metalworking.

Religion: Ixian, Thainist, Xeres, Duuran, Aguierre.

Guilds: Slavers, Alchemists, Navigators, Surveyors.

Government: loose; dictatorial control by the Ixians in Queyside, led by Mother Doesa Brielle (11th level human, 4th Circle Faith), small well-trained Ixian army and navy of 100; mostly anarchist in the Tombs.

Oolvaunt is the new face of Vasqueray. A small section of Oolvaunt on the water, called Queyside, is under control of the Church of Ixus, where Oolvaunt serves as a reprovisioning station for patrol ships from the Ixian Argosy. Queyside is well-kept and seemingly the picture of a small, perfectly normal seaside village. Looming over the quaint storefronts and guarded warehouses are the colossi of the Tombs, massive statues of the ancient Sea Kings that have been hollowed out and converted into homes, bars, brothels, temples, and all manner of other sorts of residences and the like. Some colossi have fallen or lean against each other, others are still somewhat intact, but all are overgrown with vines and support newer structures at ground level and in the sky, spanning two or more of these giant statues. The Tombs of Oolvaunt, generally considered by most residents to be Oolvaunt proper, has no structured government per se, but is run by an ever-changing collection of small gangs, merchant groups, and clerical

factions. The Ixians long gave up trying to organize and control the rest of Oolvaunt, and prefer to keep to themselves. Indeed, a large wall spans the length of Q Street, along the main docks, and is heavily patrolled by Ixian Hands.

Oolvaunt Chapterhouse: In the beginning of the Second Fall, the Museum Scholars relocated *en masse* from Armech to Oolvaunt. Their Chapterhouse was destroyed in the Ixian purge, but after the Fall, the Scholars found it surprisingly easy to rebuild and forge new, more positive relationships with the lords of Sun Keep (who had turned towards other targets and were interested in much of the historical archives kept by the Scholars). Two of the Chapterhouse Directors, Fein Augustus and his protégé Anna Maxine du Kraya, successfully navigated the difficult diplomatic waters between the rabble of the Tombs, the paranoid Ixians, the Reconstructed Guild, and the ascendant society families of Vasqueray. Amassing a fortune in funding, du Kraya rebuilt Chapterhouse, dubbed the post-Fall period 'The Fourth Era', and took great pains to ensure that the Museum Scholars and their archives would survive in perpetuity.

Her idea was to create and disperse globally a massive number of incorrect forgeries, subtly wrong in key details. This plan is now continued by the current Director, Gannon Stahlzheng (9th level human, 1st Circle Hermetic, 2nd Circle Hedge, 2nd Circle Viral). du Kraya and Stahlzheng acquired what scribes and scribe-based technology they could find, introduced small errors to their copying apparatus, and set them to work copying volume after volume. This collection is filling a large underground vault, nominally the main Chapterhouse library. In parallel, original works are being destroyed, but only after being reliably encoded into Scholars' flesh-memory by means of Guild of Optics acupunctural memorization techniques. The most valuable works are encrypted into a set of nth-generation Abby clones that Chapterhouse has hidden within its walls. This strategy has proven to be lucrative in practice especially for documents and maps related to old battlegrounds or mining facilities, in which both the Guild and the Ixians have interest, and the routinely reliable information comes not from any single text in Guild or Ixian holdings, but from the research conducted by the Museum Scholars.

Nobbins Bock and "The Chaste Sorcerer": Over all of Muriel's iterations of Twylos, in some cases her brother Ixondr escapes from Thorneskeep and seeks her out. His intentions are usually foiled by other powers-that-be, but sometimes strange accidents occur to keep Ixondr from his prize. In one such case, a group of actors and rogues managed to enter the palace. When they invaded his private quarters, Ixondr slew all but one, an alcoholic and dyslexic writer named Nobbins Bock. In his haste, this version of Ixondr grafted his essence into Bock's body, only to realize his mistake when he discovered Bock could barely speak or think coherent thoughts.

Ixondr-Bock did his best to leave Thorneskeep and travel to Muriel's Dream Realm. However, he entered a mirror portal at precisely the same time as the Zoran Gate opened, wrenching Ixondr-Bock from one version of Twylos into this version described at the time of the Fourth Era, only in 231 T.E. Ixondr-Bock's brain wasting from a lifelong abuse of the drink, he settled in the shade of Oolvaunt to write his memoirs over the next year before he died. This book, "The Chaste Sorcerer", is a deranged and illiterate autobiography, badly mangled by Ixondr-Bock's dementia and multiple aphasia. Aside from the title, a poorly-punned reference to the persecution Ixondr claimed to have felt (not to mention the multiple lives he claimed to be simultaneously experience), almost nothing of Ixondr's life can be gleaned from the bizarre writing. Frankly, Reader, it's terrible; even I could have done a better job.

Since its discovery in 98 Fourth Era, "The Chaste Sorcerer" is maintained as one of Oolvaunt's absurdist comedies. The Tombs contains many small theatres, including one in particularly poor taste

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

called "A Sore For Her". Every year, a new drunkard is named 'Nobbins Bock' and re-writes "The Chaste Sorcerer", sometimes for readability, but sometimes making it worse. Rewriting is historically done directly over the original manuscript, and as such, "The Chaste Sorcerer" is a palimpsest of cartoons, scrawl, alcohol stains, and bad playwriting. Somewhere beneath it all is Ixondr's intent.

Velanieh

A home. Sadly, my friends, Velanieh is empty. Barren of Master like one's elderly nursemaid, these halls no longer ring with the sounds of laughter, gay parties, her lovely voice. Look elsewhere.

The Vehrlands

The Vehrlands never changes. Vehrlenders have seen wars come and go since the beginning of civilization- and while sometimes the Vehrlands has been the primary field of battle, the Vehrlands has maintained a constancy that is somewhat comforting given the chaos and collapse that occurred across Twylos during and after the Second Fall of Irendor. If anything, the rest of Twylos has become more like the Vehrlands has always been- a sparsely populated and loosely organized collection of independent city-states.

Dauble

Small village.

Population: 109; 92% human, 8% orc.

Resources: poor, low magical and technological levels; agriculture, woodworking, stonemasonry.

Religion: Thainist, Duuran.

Guilds: none.

Government: relaxed; led by Baroness Petronella Lorraine (3rd level human), militia of 10.

Dauble is a quiet town, mostly self-sufficient, and far from the concerns of the Ixians and the Guild. It's representative of the numerous Verlainen villages found near the Vehrlands Ocean Road; Dauble itself is several days south of the road, just over the mountains southeast of Couverton.

Best Friends: During the Second Fall, some of the Aea Convent coterie and the Ixian scientists not preoccupied with Viral Magic became excited by new discoveries around Zolace, the ancient tomb of the Duuran Hierophant Petrarch. Horological magic was beginning to be better understood, and a small group of Bone Trade magicians made their way back to Zolace after the Meeks-Huxley debacle of the late Third Era. The Ixians have since taken over that region of Twylos, sealing and carefully guarding Zolace to this day. However, a select group of individuals within the Bone Trade still retain knowledge of its location and entrance requirements, and periodically have sent explorers in mostly-futile attempts to glean more of Petrarch's secrets.

The last group to try- and succeed- in clandestine study of Zolace was a trio of Bone Trade Alchemists: Murphy Gibbons, Urville Oliphant, and Grinaldo von Perr. They were shocked by what the Ixians were constructing in the tomb, and in their attempt to escape, accidentally set off another of Petrarch's traps. All three of them were drastically changed- Oliphant, retaining his humanity, grabbed his two other friends and fled into the Vehrlands, eventually settling here in Dauble where he now has a small cottage on the outskirts of town.

Gibbons was polymorphed into a medium-sized black cat, von Perr was transformed into an acorn, and his Apprentice Oliphant (5th level human, 2nd Circle Hedge, 1 intellect, 2 presence) was mentally crippled and physically disfigured by Petrarch's trap. Oliphant speaks

few words, no longer uses magic, and seems content to tend his small garden of crops and take care of his pet, "Murphy the Cat" (12th level former human, now cat, 5th Circle Hedge). While Oliphant is naïve and good-natured, Murphy has retained most of his intelligence, but is unable to communicate except by meows. His is exceptionally angry and ill-tempered, even for a cat, and spends most of his time glaring into space. von Perr (13th level former human, now oak tree, 4th Circle Hedge, 2nd Circle Faith) was the member of the team with most knowledge of Zolace, including being the sole 'surviving' member of the Bone Trade with understanding of how to safely enter the tomb complex. However, to raise money, Oliphant forgot that his acorn used to be his friend, and sold it to a Sathar trader bound for the Vhog Greenhouses (where von Perr now grows). Murphy, being a cat, watched the transaction but could not stop it.



Murdyne

Landmark (cursed fortress of the Handmaidens).

Murdyne was a village that supported Stonekeep, formerly the bastion of the Handmaidens. Murdyne and Stonekeep played central roles in bringing about the fall of the Ixians and the end of the Second Fall. In what is now the fifth year of the Fourth Era, the Ixian forces razed the village, and forced the remaining Handmaidens into Stonekeep, beginning what they believed would be a long but victorious siege. The Handmaidens had other plans. Under their Arcanos Grandmother, Agatha 16, the Handmaidens committed suicide, obliterating Stonekeep, the Ixian army, and basically all life within a few mile radius of the Keep. To this day, nothing grows in Murdyne, and simply entering the 'dead zone', which is apparent due to the sudden lack of grass and other flora and fauna, will sap Endurance points at the rate of 1/hr.

Accursed Stonekeep: Portions of Stonekeep still stand. Locked in stasis within a glass coffin is Mother Agatha's prize girl, an nth-generation Abby clone dubbed 'Agatha 17', who was to be her heir. Being the personal clone of an Arcanos had its advantages; Agatha 17 effectively knows all Hermetic spells.

Ulmsdeep

Landmark (former fishing village).

Ulmsdeep is one of the fracture points in Twylos, where Muriel's realities tend to diverge. This is due to the confluence of the Duuran subsea station and one of the few Abby clones that survived for long outside the sanctuary of Aea Convent. Now it is a forgotten ruin, just one empty village among many.

"My Healthy Living- I Can Do It": Ulmsdeep was selected as part of the late Third-Era Alchemists Guild project "My Healthy Living". Five small villages across Twylos were secretly chosen for Alchemical experiments on small, somewhat isolated populations. Ulmsdeep was unfortunately chosen for "Healthy Living- I Can Do It", a project designed to empower slaves from the Slavers Guild, and make them simultaneously more effective and more docile. What transpired was disgusting, leading to such an abuse of power- by Slavers, by Alchemists, and by the private civilian slaveowners- that I Can Do It was shut down within a few years of operation, leading to the closure of all the My Healthy Living projects. I'll spare you the details, my friends, but it was nasty.

The Morrilo: The Morrilo are a shamanic group that populate the wilds of Tarach and the northern Vehrlands. Although their origins can be traced back to the Vox Duur, Morrilo reject the basic Duuran tenant of the Voran Cycle. Instead, they see Twylos as a mortal and ailing creature, suffering from the disease of industry and civilization. They uphold the natural reclamation of civilized areas by wilderness as evidence of the true wishes of Twylos.

The Morrilo do not view humans as the disease itself, but believe that humans have become carriers of an impure spirit. This spirit then infects Twylos. As a result, the goal of the Morrilo is self-purification, and then to achieve the same for Twylos. In an effort to align themselves with the will of Twylos, Morrilo take guidance from natural processes, including the behavior of animals. This has given Morrilo a reputation for being apathetic and feral. As an example, Morrilo do not mourn the dead, and have been known to consume the corpses of their fallen enemies. They also associate with more savage races, such as bugbears and gnoles, and will occasionally join these groups in raids upon human settlements and caravans.

The Morrilo identify as a group, but aside from infrequent gatherings, large numbers of members seldom act in concert. Occasionally two or more Morrilo will work towards a common cause, but those encountering each other outside of a planned assembly are as likely to fight as they are to aid one another.

The individual response of Morrilo to settlements varies greatly. Some members take a somewhat passive view of civil infrastructure and rely on natural processes to undo it. On the other hand, some Morrilo actively work to reverse industry, and these have been known to break dams, destroy mills and attack logging operations. Even so, these differences are not a source of contention between Morrilo themselves, as in most matters they are usually more concerned with the ends rather than the means.

The Whaling Guild: Some of the Morrilo have recently become distressed by the surge of Slavers' Guild agents in the wilderlands

around Ulmsdeep. Apparently, the Guild has discovered that peak Third Era navigational technologies may still be safeguarded in the old stronghold of the Whaling Guild, a fringe offshoot of the Navigators.

The Whaling Guild were a group of ex-Navigators in the mid-Third Era who discovered that the waters around Ulmsdeep teemed with life. Splitting off from the Navigators to become a private commercial venture, the Whaling Guild grew wealthy hunting whales and other sea delicacies, and developed better and better seafaring methods to venture into mid-ocean, including deep sea trawlers and fully submersible vessels.

Of course, the prosperity of the Guild was largely due to the presence of the kraken and the Jade Goddess. As the years went on, many of the sailors participating in the furthest, longest, and riskiest voyages witnesses these immense creatures and went mad. Two of the captains, Hendry Goodson and Jania Cloze, commissioned a secret report to confirm the presence of the kraken and jellyfish goddess, and after glimpsing the Goddess herself, were seduced to her worship. Upon returning to Guild headquarters, located about two days' journey north along the rocky cliffs from Ulmsdeep, Captains Goodson and Cloze rallied their supporters, sealed the Guild, and slaughtered the others. From then on, the Whaling Guild became a secretive, Duuran-like cult, worshipping the kraken and the goddess of the merrow, sacrificing many of their own members, and eventually fading into oblivion.

Off-World

The planet of Twylos is only one location in the infinitude of the Tellurian planes. Of course, these planes themselves are only a single instance of the countless creations of Muriel. Some individuals have begun to move off-world to escape the dangers and pathos of Fourth Era Twylos.

The Moon

Landmark (celestial body); high difficulty (levels 10+).

Third Era magicians discovered that teleportation could be used anywhere in the Tellurian plane. As Twylos seemed to be collapsing, several high-Circle casters attempted to leave, heading to the only place they could survive off-world- the Moon. The Astromancer Jonsolon Markov had already constructed several buildings, making it viable to travel, exist, and perform research far from the troubles of Twylos. While several individuals and factions fought over the extremely limited lunar space and resources, eventually a coterie of scientists and mages from Aea Convent, the Church of Ixus, and the Guild of Optics destroyed Markov and other newcomers to establish a small fortress and research center.

However, after the destruction of Nycene, the Sun King and the lords of the Church, the five Apostles, were all destroyed. Due to a set of preventative magical measures, the five lords were resurrected, but incorrectly, and came back as liches. To keep this from happening in the future, the Apostles moved their Office to the Moon, slaughtering the remaining researchers there except for a small team of useful, pro-Ixian Opticians and a number of brainwashed guards. While the five Apostles spend most of their time running the Ixian Argosy, their home and Office is a small metal and brass fortress built into the lunar rock on the remains of the Astromancer's tower.

Rhauxen 5

Landmark (asteroid and last piece of the Horologically-suspended Vausse Academy).

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

Tethered to the Office of the Apostles by the massive, original chain of the Vause Academy is a large asteroid. Suspended in space approximately a mile above the Moon by chain links each two meters in caliber, this is a piece of the Vause Academy, now returned to real time from the Horological loop it was initially suspended in. Once the Opticians realized that the 'comets' that quasi-periodically returned to Twylos were in fact pieces of Rhaxen, they began numbering the identified pieces. This one is number five, and is the last.

The sole inhabitant of Rhaxen 5 is Sterling R. Halifax (16th level Archon, 4th Circle Faith, 3rd Circle Ritual, 2nd Circle Hermetic, 2nd Circle Hedge). Sterling was one of the original Brandmoor mercenaries who convinced Amanda to leave Tarchartus and join the Bone Trade schools. After Amanda disappeared with Aramach Vox Thrauxes, Sterling traveled throughout Twylos and the planes of existence looking for her. Eventually making his way to Rhaxen, Sterling found the remains of Amanda and Aprill, as well as the last of the Archons. Trapped, Sterling made friends with the Archon until, after a timeless period in the Horological suspension, the Archon finally got a little tired and ate Sterling. During the course of this consumption, the Archon has come to believe, fully, that it is Sterling R. Halifax, and for all practical purposes, this is true.

Halifax is struggling to keep his memories intact and scribbles down short reminders to himself in numerous small journals. Periodically, he confronts the last round of a game he played with the original S.R. Halifax called "Hard Questions", a variant of the classic parlor game "20 Questions" in which one player tries to guess which unanswerable philosophical dilemma the other player has in mind. (In this case, the Archon asked "Why are we here?", to which Sterling answered "Because we missed the Sixth Key.")

Among other things, Rhaxen 5 contains the magical portal hall of the Vause Academy. Reconfigured by the Archons to gain access to Muriel's copies of Twylos, the hall extends indefinitely, with giant mirror portals that used to be linked to individual versions of Twylos. All of them have ceased functioning, and most of them are grey and broken. However, a few of them still are tuned to certain worlds, and could be opened with proper application of Mirror Oil. Sterling has been fascinated by these, not quite understanding what they are or why they are here, and has kept records of the existing mirror portals, naming them based on mainly on color.

Note that Sterling has no idea what Muriel has been up to, nor even who she is. With his penned observations he has included short, presumably meaningless quatrains with each Twylos variant (with the poor spelling and grammar equivalents in Zhellan of the mistakes here).

Twylos Green: This is a version of Twylos currently in the Second Era, just prior to Rhaxen's appearance in Saethos.

Sterling's statement:

*Somebodys out there knocking, and now somebodys coming in
Somebodys looking carefully for my purity within
Somebody thinks that somethingelse has stolen it agin
Somebodys right and somethings wrong and suchess kiss and kin*

Twylos Gray: A latter-day Twylos, after the normal apocalypse of Zoran, the Arcanos, the Archons, and Abby. A wasted and empty place. The sole survivors are around 300 humanoids who have made their way to Oredhedron.

Sterling's statement:

*Its quiet and lonely and lovely at last
What things that we wanted have since gone and passed
The violations created, the creations surpassed*

Alone in my nights and my nightmares aghast

Twylos Red: Twylos at the end of the Third Era, immediately after the opening of Zoran. A demonic, Hermetic paradise.

Sterling's statement:

*Its sick and six, malodorous, is there a dr on the call?
Is there some one who can hear me, help me? Some any one at all?
It looks too good its gone too far its waiting just you see
Its waiting, hating, lusting, baiting, its waiting just for me*

Twylos Blue: This is the Twylos of the Fourth Era described here.

Sterling's statement:

*Ive summed all the digits, Ive counted to ten
Derived and despised and told lies now and then
Too early to go back and too late for, wait, when?
Where am I? What is this? Who are you again?*

Twylos Gold: Twylos in the Third Era, just before Amanda Dawson left Tarchartus. Sterling is obsessed with Twylos Gold and visits it periodically, keeping a long series of notes on the minutiae he observes.

Sterling's statement:

*First named and first chaste, the first taste is debased
Then defamed and defaced, and disgraced and displaced
Lain waste in the haste of slain lambs lost and laced
Retraced and replaced til at last we embraced*

Appendix 2.2.1: New Disciplines

Viral Magic Potential: 8 skill points. Either Hedge or Hermetic Magic Potential is required for Viral Magic Potential. Viral Magic Potential is the ability to cast spells related in principle to Hedge Magic, but linked to the blood and essence aspects of Ritual Magic.

Users of Viral Magic, formally called Toxicologists but informally referred to as Viral Mages, appeared late in the Third Era of Twylos, and persisted somewhat into the Fourth Era. Viral Magic was developed as part of a fringe research program of the Alchemists Guild, and could be considered 'higher level' Hedge Magic. Initially called 'Essence Magic', Viral Magic generally involves the analysis and control of the soul. Although Hermetic Magic can also be used as a prerequisite for Viral Magic, in practice most wizards are preoccupied with continuing to study Hermetic Magic itself. Viral Magic is usually but not always obtained after acquiring 5th Circle Hedge Magic. Due to its rarity and recent development, player characters wishing to learn Viral Magic should be expected to seek out a teacher, rather than just acquire it *de novo* on their own. Like Hedge Magic itself, Viral Magic was derived from Hermetic Magic, but due to the extensive modifications required to read and manipulate biological essence, and also because the Toxicologists deliberately worked to obscure what they were doing, Viral Magic Potential is a separate discipline and should be considered its own class of magic.

Viral Magic spells are divided into 5 Circles of spell-power, with spells of the 1st Circle being the weakest, and spells of the 5th Circle the most powerful. Acquiring Viral Magic Potential automatically allows a Toxicologist to cast spells of the 1st Circle. However, the ability to cast spells of higher Circles requires expenditure of additional skill points.

Similar to Hedge Magic, Toxicologists must learn and memorize their spells from books. The Toxicologist may then memorize spells from these pages, allowing them to be cast later. Viral spell formulae are

inscribed in a special script, that only a Toxicologist may comprehend.

The number of spells a Toxicologist may cast of any given Circle per day is equal to 1 plus the number of Circles the Toxicologist has achieved since acquiring that Circle of spell-power. For example, in lieu of any intellect bonuses, a Toxicologist whom may cast 4th Circle Viral Magic, can cast four 1st Circle, three 2nd Circle, two 3rd Circle, and one 4th Circle spells per day. After achieving the 5th Circle of spell-power, the Toxicologist may spend the cost of 5th Circle (12 skill points) again at any time to add one more spell to each Circle of his or her repertoire.

Unlike other spellcasters, Toxicologists have the unique ability to increase the resistance target number of any Viral Magic spell they cast. By expending one health point, the target number is increased by one. For a Viral Magic spell of any Circle, the Toxicologist may expend up to one health point per Circle achieved to increase the target numbers in this manner. For example, a Toxicologist whom may cast 3rd Circle can expend one, two, or three health points to increase the resistance target number by one, two, or three respectively, of Salt Water to Wine. This is cumulative with any other modifiers to target numbers from other disciplines, spells, or enchanted items.

In addition to the normal acquisition of spells, Toxicologists may earn additional spells due to a high intellect score (see the intellect attribute table (Player's Reference Book: pg. 10, treat as Hedge magic).

Spell Circle (Viral): 2 skill points + (2 x Circle). Viral spell Circles may only be purchased by characters with Viral Magic Potential. As Viral Magic Potential includes the 1st Circle spell discipline, the first spell Circle purchased with skill points is 2nd Circle. Spell Circles must be purchased in order. Each time a character buys a new spell Circle, he adds to his repertoire one spell in that Circle, plus one spell in each of his lower Circles. For example, a character buying 2nd Circle Hermetic magic would add one 1st, and one 2nd Circle spell to his or her repertoire.

The skill point cost for Circles increases incrementally. For example, 2nd Circle Viral magic costs 6 skill points, 3rd Circle Viral magic costs 8 skill points, and so on.

Appendix 2.2.2: Viral Magic

This is a description of the new Hedge Magic created by the Sweetwater Pond Toxicologists. Viral Magic is divided into several Schools, including Alteration, Artifice, Essence, and Metamagic

1st Circle Viral Magic Spells

Create Poison: Creates non-magical poisons and substances.

Distillation: Enhances the effectiveness and duration of target poisons and potions by 50%.

Read Aura: Determine the skill level, health, and magical ability of the target.

Induce Seizure: Triggers an epileptic fit in the target.

Poison: Poisons the target.

Remission: Delays the onset of spell effects.

Salt Water to Wine: Variant of 'Water to Wine' that works on biological substances.

Tint: Changes the color and hue of target substance.

Trophic Boost: Variant of 'Growth' with weaker impact but longer duration.

2nd Circle Viral Magic Spells

Affinity Label: Adds a permanent 'tag' to the target's essence, which is propagated to successive targets of the victim's spells.

Affinity Mask: Creates a false aura to conceal spell casting abilities and magical effects.

Create Zeaven: Produces a dose of the hallucinogenic drug Zeaven.

Enhance Construct: Increases the abilities of constructs or summoned creatures.

Lesser Fork: Number of targets of 1st to 3rd Circle spells cast by the Toxicologist increases by 1d2.

Disease: Infects the target.

Morph: Weaker variant of 'Polymorph'.

Randomize: Changes one magical potion randomly into another (only usable once per potion).

Skin Graft: Inflicts 1d8 points of damage to a target and heals the caster by the same amount.

3rd Circle Viral Magic Spells

Affinity Warp: Progressive degradation of target's magical abilities.

Bone Graft: Removes 1d2 points from Agility, Endurance, and Strength from one target and gives them to a second target.

Essence Link: Connects bodies and minds of two targets.

Immunosuppression: Weakens the Physical, Mental, and general magical resistance of the target.

Paralyze: Paralyzes the target.

Purify: Enhances the effectiveness and duration of target poisons and potions by 200%.

Steal Spell: Allows Toxicologist to cast a spell known by the target.

Sublimation: Metamagical spells can be cast simultaneously and covertly together with another spell.

4th Circle Viral Magic Spells

Acceleration: Enhances progression of spell effects either cast by the Toxicologist or specific to a certain target.

Domination: Variant of 'Control' that enables the Toxicologist to maintain control of his own actions as well as those of the target.

Essence Graft: Removes 1d4 points from Intellect and Presence from one target and gives them to a second target.

Essence Screen: Large-scale detection of spellcasting abilities and affinity tagging.

Timestretch: Greatly increases the duration of spells cast by the Toxicologist.

Psychic Surgery: Revises one skill level's worth of skill points for the target.

Psychosomaty: Changes the effects of essence magic to act on Endurance rather than spell casting ability.

Wither: Destroys one of the target's limbs.

5th Circle Viral Magic Spells

Clone 2: Variant of 'Clone' that duplicates any one individual.

Consume: Destroys target; Toxicologist gains that target's remaining health points and known spells.

Create Essence Ring: Creates a magical artifact for imbuing spells or abilities in a subject.

Essence Rot: Infects target with a magical wasting disease.

Greater Fork: Number of targets of spells cast by the Toxicologist increases by 1d4.

Persistence: Makes the effects of any one spell permanent.

Viral Magic Spells Descriptions**Create Poison**

Circle: 1st Resist: None
 Duration: Permanent Casting time: 1 round
 Effect: Special Range: Touch
 School: Artifice Damage type: Special
 Components: V, G, M

From common components, the Viral Mage may construct a single dose of a low-grade poison, as per the GM's Reference Book (page 31). The cost of materials depends on the type of poison made- for caustic, 1 royal; for metabolic, 10 royals; for neurotoxic, 15 royals; and for sedative, 8 royals.

Distillation

Circle: 1st Resist: None
 Duration: 1 hour Casting time: -1
 Effect: 1 potion or dose of poison Range: Touch
 School: Alteration Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G, M

Distillation increases the effects of a single dose of poison or a potion held by the caster. The duration and any applicable features are increased by 50%. Thus a Potion of Levitation would last for (1d10 + 10) * 1.5 minutes and enable the imbiber to ascend at 90' or descend at 180' per round; a Potion of Healing will restore (2d4 + 2) * 1.5 points of health; and a low-grade caustic poison would inflict 3 points of damage.

Induce Seizure

Circle: 1st Resist: Mental 13
 Duration: 1d6 rounds Casting time: -1
 Effect: 1 creature Range: 30'
 School: Essence Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

This spell induces a mild epileptic fit in the target. This imparts a cumulative -1 adjustment to hit, to Agility, and to all proficiency checks per round. For example, if the seizure lasts for four rounds, on round three the target has a -3 adjustment to all of the above.

Poison

Circle: 1st Resist: Physical 13
 Duration: Special Casting time: -1
 Effect: 1 creature Range: 30'
 School: Alteration Damage type: Special
 Components: V, G

Poisons the target. The type of poison is determined by 1d4: 1, caustic; 2, metabolic; 3, neurotoxic; 4, sedative. This acts as a low-grade poison with the same effects as listed in the GM's Reference Book (page 31), although with a Physical Resistance target number of 13.

Read Aura

Circle: 1st Resist: Mental 13
 Duration: Instantaneous Casting time: -1
 Effect: 1 creature Range: 200'
 School: Essence Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

Provides the caster with information about the target: how many health points they have (current and maximum), what skill level they are, what Magic Potentials and Circles they have (if any), and what Viral Magic effects they are afflicted with (if any).

Remission

Circle: 1st Resist: none
 Duration: Up to 1 week Casting time: -1
 Effect: 1 spell effect Range: 30'
 School: Metamagic Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

The Remission spell delays the onset of a single spell effect previously cast by the Viral Mage. Only one target can be affected. This delay can be any duration desired by the caster, from one round to one week. Spell effects that have already occurred, e.g., Force Bolt, cannot be altered by Remission.

Salt Water to Wine

Circle: 1st Resist: Physical 13
 Duration: Permanent Casting time: -1
 Effect: 1 cubic foot of liquid Range: 30'
 School: Alteration Damage type: Special
 Components: V, G

This is a modification of the Water to Wine spell that is part of the Alchemists' canon. Despite the name, there are two main differences between this spell and the Hedge Magic spell: one, this can be used at a distance, and two, it can affect biological substances, including the water and blood of living creatures. Transformed saline inside a living creature inflicts 2d4 points of damage regardless of the exact substance it becomes.

The quality of any liquid created by the Salt Water to Wine spell will be average at best.

Tint

Circle: 1st Resist: Physical 13
 Duration: Permanent Casting time: -1
 Effect: 1 creature or object Range: 10'
 School: Alteration Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

This simple incantation permanently changes the color or hue of a single object or creature. Individual regions of a single object or subject can be colored as well; thus with repeated castings, an object can be shaded or be given several colors.

Trophic Boost

Circle: 1st Resist: Physical 13
 Duration: 1 week Casting time: -1
 Effect: 1 creature Range: Touch
 School: Alteration Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

Trophic Boost increases the target's size and vigor for an extended period of time. Strength and Endurance are both temporarily increased by 1, while Agility, Intellect, and Presence are all reduced by 1. Additional castings of Trophic Boost do not further change the target's attributes.

Affinity Label

Circle: 2nd Resist: Mental 14
 Duration: Permanent Casting time: -2
 Effect: 1 creature Range: 300'
 School: Essence Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

Historically, this was the first of Anopheles' Essence Magic spells. Has no obvious effect, beyond adding an innocuous marker to the 'essence' of the target. This label can be thought of as an additional shade or hue to the target's aura, and it is undetectable and essentially useless without other Viral Magic spells. However, once labeled, the target now will cast Affinity Label on any target of his or her own spells. For example, a priest tagged with an Affinity Label will surreptitiously cast Affinity Label on every target of the priest's healing spells automatically (although the target of the new Label must fail a Mental Resistance check of 14 to be so Labeled themselves).

Affinity Mask

Circle: 2nd Resist: n/a
 Duration: 1 day Casting time: -2
 Effect: 1 creature per Circle of caster Range: 300'
 School: Essence Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

This spell causes an illusory change in the target's essence. In terms of other essence or divination magic, the target now will appear to be a caster of a different type, including a non-caster. Thus a Viral Mage could make himself or another appear to magical detectors to be a Faith Magic practitioner, or a mundane, masking their own ability to cast Hedge, Hermetic, and Viral Magic.

Create Zeaven

Circle: 2nd Resist: n/a
 Duration: Permanent Casting time: -2
 Effect: 1 dose Range: self
 School: Alteration Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

Create Zeaven does exactly that- creates one dose of the drug Zeaven (page 17). The caster rolls 1d20 and adds one per Circle of Viral Magic to determine which kind of Zeaven is created:

1-14: Zeaven Blue
 15-17: Zeaven-7
 18-19: Zeaven Earth
 20+: Zeaven Friendship

Enhance Construct

Circle: 2nd Resist: n/a
 Duration: Permanent Casting time: -2
 Effect: 1 creature or construct Range: 30'
 School: Artifice Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

The target of this spell is a construct or summoned creature, although not necessarily one created or summoned by the same caster. The creature gains a +20% bonus to health points, +1 to Dodge, +1 to Hide/armor absorbance, and +1 modifiers to-hit and to damage. These bonuses are maintained for the construct's or creature's lifetime. A given construct or creature can only be enhanced in this way once.

Lesser Fork

Circle: 2nd Resist: n/a
 Duration: Instantaneous Casting time: n/a
 Effect: 1 spell Range: n/a
 School: Metamagic Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

This spell is cast simultaneously with another 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Circle spell of any type that has one or more targets. The Lesser Fork adds an additional 1d2 targets to the spell. Resistance checks and effects such as damage dealt are determined independently for all targets.

Disease

Circle: 2nd Resist: Physical 14
 Duration: Until cured or dead Casting time: -2
 Effect: 1 creature Range: 30'
 School: Alteration Damage type: Special
 Components: V, G

Disease is a potent spell that infects the target with a gradual wasting disease. Immediately upon infection, the target loses one Endurance point. Every morning thereafter, the target must make a Physical Resistance check (target number 14) or stays sick, losing another Endurance point and must try again to pass the Resistance check the following morning. This continues until the target is dead or has made one successful check, at which time the spell ends and Endurance points recover 1/day. If the target takes no actions and has bed rest for a full day, Resistance Checks are at a +4 bonus and, upon success, Endurance points recover 2/day.

Morph

Circle: 2nd Resist: Physical 14
 Duration: 30 minutes Casting time: -2
 Effect: 1 creature Range: 40'
 School: Alteration Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

The Morph spell is a stripped-down version of the 5th Circle Hermetic Spell 'Polymorph'. The range and duration are shorter than Polymorph, and creatures can only be transmuted into other animals of the same Class, within approximately a 3-fold size difference. For example, a mammal such as a human or bear can be transmuted into another mammal up to three times the size or one-third of the size, or an insect such as a butterfly can be transmuted into a wasp.

Randomize

Circle: 2nd Resist: n/a
 Duration: Permanent Casting time: -2
 Effect: 1 potion Range: Touch
 School: Alteration Damage type: n/a
 Components: V, G

When cast on a potion held by the caster, that potion is instantly transmuted into a different potion. Roll randomly for the potion's new identity on Table 1.3.3 (pg. 47) in the Game Master's Reference Book. The caster may choose to add or subtract up to their grade in Dweomercraft (both Hedge and Hermetic) to this roll after the fact. A potion thus affected may not be Randomized again- casting this spell on a previously Randomized potion causes that potion to turn to dust.

Skin Graft

Circle: 2nd Resist: Physical 14
 Duration: Permanent Casting time: -2

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

Effect: 1 creature
School: Essence
Components: V, G

Range: 100'
Damage type: Special

Skin Graft does 1d8 points of damage to the target, and heals the caster by the same amount. Damage dealt in this fashion is not absorbed by armor.

Affinity Warp

Circle: 3rd
Duration: Permanent
Effect: 1 creature
School: Essence
Components: V, S

Resist: Physical 15
Casting time: -3
Range: 30'
Damage type: Special

Affinity Warp is one of the main spells primarily associated with Viral Magic; this spell in particular was the culmination of the crypto-Ixians' long-term interest in Hedge Magic and the research program of Thomas Anopheles. Upon failing the Physical Resistance check, the target of Affinity Warp gradually loses spellcasting abilities. In effect, the target loses one Discipline point each day, from magic-related skills, starting with augmenting abilities like Prayer or Silent Casting, before losing points from Circles and Magic Potential. As knowledge of a Discipline requires full skillpoint expenditure, the first skillpoint lost for a particular ability removes the target's use of that ability. As each separate Discipline is attacked in turn, the target must make another Physical Resistance check. Success ends the Affinity Warp. Skillpoints thus lost are not regained.

Bone Graft

Circle: 3rd
Duration: 1 day
Effect: 2 targets
School: Essence
Components: V, S

Resist: Physical 15
Casting time: -3
Range: 40'
Damage type: Special

A more powerful version of Skin Graft, this incantation removes 1d2 points from Agility, 1d2 points from Endurance, and 1d2 points from Strength from one target and gives these values to a second target. These adjustments last for 24 hours. No Physical Resistance check is required from a willing donor or recipient.

Essence Link

Circle: 3rd
Duration: 1 day/Circle
Effect: 2 creatures
School: Essence
Components: V, S

Resist: Physical 15
Casting time: -3
Range: 70'
Damage type: Special

Essence Link binds together the flesh and souls of two targets (willing targets do not need to make Physical Resistance checks). This spell must work on both targets to have any effect. Once in place, the Essence Link instantly and bidirectionally communicates damage and/or change from one target to the other. Healing performed on one body will also heal the other (up to the maximum Health Point total), potions imbued by one target have equal effect on the other, etc. Death of one target severs the link and, aside from the cause of death being first communicated (e.g., damage done to Health Points), forces the other target to make another Physical Resistance check of 15 (regardless of whether they were willing or not) or drop to 0 Health Points (if not already there or lower). Once the link is in place, previously-willing targets do not get a new Physical Resistance check to end it if no longer willing.

Immunosuppression

Circle: 3rd
Duration: 1 hour/Circle
Effect: 1 creature
School: Alteration
Components: V, S

Resist: Physical/Mental 15
Casting time: -3
Range: 100'
Damage type: n/a

This spell, if successful, causes the target to make all subsequent Physical and Mental Resistance checks at a -8 penalty. Additionally, Magic Resistance is reduced by 10%/Circle of caster except in intuitive cases (e.g., elementals, undead, and other mindless things cannot be affected by mind magic under any circumstance, and fire elementals will still be immune to heat and fire-based attacks). Both the Physical and Mental resistance checks must be successful for this spell to fail.

Paralyze

Circle: 3rd
Duration: 1 round/Circle
Effect: 1 creature
School: Alteration
Components: V, S

Resist: Physical 15
Casting time: -3
Range: 100'
Damage type: n/a

Paralyze is equivalent to the 3rd Circle Faith spell.

Purify

Circle: 3rd
Duration: Permanent
Effect: 1 dose or potion
School: Alteration
Components: V, S

Resist: n/a
Casting time: -3
Range: Touch
Damage type: n/a

An Alchemical staple, Purify triples the effectiveness and duration of the target poison or potion. Total dice rolled and modifiers added (or subtracted) are all multiplied by three. For example, a Purified Potion of Healing restores 6d4 + 6 Health Points (not (2d4 + 2) * 3), and a Purified low-grade metabolic poison requires a Physical Resistance check of 10 or the victim loses 3d4 + 6 Endurance points (min. 1) for 6 days.

Steal Spell

Circle: 3rd
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: 1 creature
School: Alteration
Components: V, S

Resist: Mental 10 and 15
Casting time: -3
Range: 100'
Damage type: n/a

By means of this spell, the Viral Mage first forces the target to pass a Concentration check (Mental Resistance check of 10 or cannot cast that round). Regardless of the outcome, Steal Spell's true usage is more sinister- if the target fails an additional Mental Resistance check of 15, one spell that the target caster knows is randomly selected, and a number of spell points or a spell of that circle is lost from that target. The Viral Mage can then choose to cast that spell immediately or simply let it be lost. Random spell selection is based off the current availability- e.g., if a Ritual Mage target has no Blood points, no spells involving Blood spellpoints are available to be stolen. Steal Spell has no effect if cast on a mundane or a caster who is currently depleted of all spells or spellpoints.

Sublimation

Circle: 3rd
Duration: 2 hours/Circle
Effect: Self

Resist: n/a
Casting time: -3
Range: Self

School: Metamagic
Components: V, S

Damage type: n/a

Components: S

Sublimation greatly enhances the caster's ability to use metamagic. While in effect, any one metamagic spell can be cast simultaneously and surreptitiously (unless a viewer makes a Magic Acuity check with target number equal to 10 plus the total number of spell Circles being cast) with a second spell of any kind, so long as the metamagic spell applies to this second spell. Moreover, metamagic spells that are already simultaneously cast do not count towards this additional one spell limit, meaning that potentially two or more metamagic spells can be simultaneously cast with a non-metamagic spell. The duration of Sublimation is 2 hours/Circle known, e.g., lasting eight hours when used by a 4th Circle caster.

Acts as 'Read Aura' on all targets in radius and reveals status of all Affinity Labels/Essence Tags to the caster.

Acceleration

Circle: 4th Resist: n/a
Duration: Special Casting time: -4
Effect: 1 target Range: 100'
School: Metamagic Damage type: Special
Components: V, S

The effect of this spell is to speed up the progression of other spell effects currently afflicting a given target. Spells that take less than an hour to progress suddenly affect the target all at once. For example, if the target is under a curse that drains 2 health points per round for ten rounds, and Acceleration is cast on this target in the second round, the target immediately loses 18 health points that round and the spell ends, rather than losing 2 per round for the next nine rounds. Spells that occur over hours are changed to occur over minutes, effects that take days to progress take hours, and effects that initially take longer than days (e.g., lose one Endurance point per month) now evolve over days.

Psychic Surgery

Circle: 4th Resist: Mental 17
Duration: 1 day/permanent Casting time: 1 round
Effect: 1 creature Range: 10'
School: Essence Damage type: n/a
Components: V, S

With this spell, the Viral Mage can subtly manipulate the nervous system of the target, rearranging one skill level's worth of Discipline and Proficiency points. When known, these adjustments must be made to the most recently acquired or improved Disciplines and Proficiencies. When this information is not available, generally the skills with the most requirements will be first affected. For example, 5th Circle potential will be affected before 4th Circle potential. These plastic skill points must be immediately spent. These changes last for one day, at which point the subject must make another Mental Resistance check at 17, or these changes will be permanent. Willing targets do not need to make Mental Resistance checks.

Psychosommatry

Circle: 4th Resist: Physical 17
Duration: Permanent Casting time: -4
Effect: 1 target Range: 30'
School: Essence Damage type: Special
Components: V, S

This peculiar spell only affects targets who suffer from Affinity Warp. Instead of draining Discipline points, they lose Endurance points as they become increasingly sick.

Domination

Circle: 4th Resist: Mental 17
Duration: 1 day/Circle Casting time: -4
Effect: 1 target Range: 30'
School: Charm Damage type: n/a
Components: V, S

This is the same as the 5th Circle Hedge Magic spell 'Control', except for the Resistance check, the duration, and the ability of the caster to be completely functional while telepathically dominating the subject, at any range.

Timestretch

Circle: 4th Resist: n/a
Duration: Special Casting time: -4
Effect: 1 spell Range: 300'
School: Metamagic Damage type: n/a
Components: V

Tripled the duration of an existing spell. For instance, if a target suffers magical paralysis for three rounds, Timestretch extends this to last a total of nine rounds.

Essence Graft

Circle: 4th Resist: Mental 17
Duration: 1 week Casting time: -4
Effect: 2 targets Range: 50'
School: Essence Damage type: n/a
Components: V, S

A more powerful version of Skin Graft, this incantation removes 1d4 points from Intellect and 1d4 points from Presence from one target and gives these values to a second target. These adjustments last for one week in both cases. No Mental Resistance check is required from a willing donor or recipient.

Wither

Circle: 4th Resist: Physical 17
Duration: Permanent Casting time: -4
Effect: 1 target Range: 10'
School: Alteration Damage type: Special
Components: V, S

This horrific spell causes one of the target's limbs to become useless, atrophied, and begin to rot. Immediately upon affliction, the selected limb cannot be used. If untreated, the magical disease progresses over four days before the limb falls off.

Essence Screen

Circle: 4th Resist: Mental 17
Duration: Instant Casting time: -4
Effect: All targets in range Range: 100'/Circle radius
School: Essence Damage type: n/a

Clone 2

Circle: 5th Resist: n/a
Duration: Permanent Casting time: 10 minutes
Effect: 1 clone Range: Touch

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

School: Artifice

Damage type: n/a

Components: V, G, M

As the 5th Circle Hedge Magic spell 'Clone', except that any subject can be cloned (not just the caster), as long as that subject has been Affinity Labeled and some biological material from the subject is at hand (as the material component). The clone has two fewer health points than the original target. At the caster's option, the clone may or may not have the same Affinity Label as the original.

Consume

Circle: 5th

Resist: Physical 18

Duration: Permanent

Casting time: -5

Effect: 1 target

Range: Touch

School: Essence

Damage type: Special

Components: V, G

The Toxicologists' version of Ritual Magic. Destroys target; Toxicologist gains that target's remaining health points and known spells. Health points and spells that exceed the Toxicologist's maximum capacity are gradually lost at the rate of one per hour, until reaching normal maximum values again. If the target is successfully touched and passes their Resistance check, they still lose 1d2 health points per Circle of the Toxicologist, which are transferred to the caster. This spell can only be cast once per day.

Create Essence Ring

Circle: 5th

Resist: Physical 20

Duration: Permanent

Casting time: 1 hour

Effect: 1 target

Range: Touch

School: Essence

Damage type: n/a

Components: V, G, M

This spell extracts the target's essence and embodies it in some object (traditionally a ring). Willing subjects do not need to make Resistance checks. After extraction, subjects gain a +8 modifier to Mental Resistance checks against all spells from the Charm and Essence schools, while the Essence Ring or other object is retained in their possession. This also transfers all Affinity Labels to the Essence Ring. Possession of another's Essence Ring confers a -8 penalty to Resistance checks to Charm and Essence magic on the original owner.

Essence Rot

Circle: 5th

Resist: Physical 14

Duration: Permanent

Casting time: -5

Effect: 1 target

Range: 100'

School: Essence

Damage type: Special

Components: V, G

Essence Rot is the full realization of Anopheles' canonical Viral Magic, essentially combining Remission, Disease, Affinity Label, and Affinity Warp all in one. After failing their Resistance check, the subject acquires a magical disease, whose onset occurs any time from instantaneously to 33 years in the future (caster decides the onset when the spell is first cast). After onset, the target loses one Discipline point and one Endurance point per week. More insidiously, any spell that the subject casts has an additional casting time of -1 and casts 'Essence Rot' on the target of that spell as well (thus propagating the disease). Targets of Essence Rot (either the initial casting, or cryptic casting by subsequent targets) that are already carrying Affinity Labels have a -6 penalty to their Resistance check.

Greater Fork

Circle: 5th

Resist: n/a

Duration: Instantaneous

Casting time: n/a

Effect: 1 spell

Range: n/a

School: Metamagic

Damage type: n/a

Components: V, G

This spell is cast instantly and simultaneously with another 1st through 5th Circle spell of any type that has one or more targets. The Lesser Fork adds an additional 1d3 + 1 targets to the spell. Resistance checks and effects such as damage dealt are determined independently for all targets.

Persistence

Circle: 5th

Resist: n/a

Duration: Permanent

Casting time: -5

Effect: 1 spell

Range: n/a

School: Metamagic

Damage type: n/a

Components: V, G

This is identical to the 8th Circle Hermetic spell Perpetuation, except that the casting time of this spell is slightly shorter (modified by -5 instead of -8).

Appendix 2.2.3: Special Items of Twylos

Artifacts

Essence Rings: Small objects or constructs that contain a portion or entirety of one individual's Essence. In some cases ('Minor Essence Rings'), these rings provide a +2 to +8 modifier to Resistance checks for spells from the Charm or Essence schools. In other cases ('Greater Essence Rings'), provide regenerative abilities or near-immortality.

Stasis Generator: Large life-support devices that keep the wearer in suspended animation. Powered by Viral Essence Magic, these stasis engines appear as a rosy greenish metal harness with three large clasps on the front and two on the back. Once worn, the target must make a Physical Resistance check at 18 or fall into hibernation. Each round it is worn, the target must continue to pass this check. On a natural 1, however, the wearer dies. Once in stasis, the wearer need not make any more checks. The wearer then does not age, and need not eat, drink, or breathe.

Appendix 2.2.4: New Creatures

This is a listing of new creatures and monsters specific to Twylos in the Fourth Era.

ABBY320 (Abby Clone, 3rd Generation)

Dodge: 8

Health points: 6

Intellect: high

Physical Resist: -2

Mental Resist: +6

Average size: 5', 90 lbs.

Attacks: fist: 1 x 1d3 or by weapon

To-hit modifier: +0

Hide/armor: none or by armor

Initiative modifier: +0

Movement rate: 120'

ABBY320 is the last remnant of the 3rd generational Abby clonal line. Much like ABBY431, she has been left behind in Aea Convent's Nursery for protective measures, hidden within the bedrock perimeter, and secured to a magical life support apparatus that successfully resisted her antimagic, a Stasis Generator (see Appendix 2.2.3).

Abilities: 3rd generation clones, including ABBY320, have 50% immunity to any magical spell or effect, and radiate 50% antimagic within 10' around themselves.

Physical description: Time and life support has not been good to this particular clone. Haggard and weak, she appears as a hungry young woman.

ABBY431 (Abby Clone, 4th Generation)

Dodge: 8
 Health points: 12
 Intellect: very high
 Physical Resist: -1
 Mental Resist: +8
 Average size: 5'3", 100 lbs.
 Attacks: fist: 1 x 1d3 or by weapon
 To-hit modifier: +0
 Hide/armor: none or by armor
 Initiative modifier: +0
 Movement rate: 120'

ABBY431, as she is tattooed, is one of the last of the true Abby clones. She was created as part of the 4th generational breeding process in Aea Convent, where she remains effectively in hibernation. Much of the clonal creation was done in a shielded bunker known affectionately as The Nursery, completely isolated 200' underground, accessible only via teleportation. During the closure of The Nursery by Zhillian Maars, ABBY431 was non-magically hypnotized, ordered towards the mirror portal which served as The Nursery's entrance, and then placed in a trance which almost completely stopping her metabolism and aging.

Abilities: 4th generation clones, including ABBY431, are immune to all magical spells or effects and emit full 100% antimagic in a 10' radius around themselves. Despite her non-magical nature, ABBY431 has been programmed with an enormous amount of magical information, conferring a +8 modifier to Arcane Knowledge, Dweomercraft (Hedge and Hermetic), and Extra-planar Knowledge checks, and effectively lowering the complexity of spell and magic item creation by one Circle (that is, so long as she remains more than 10' away, but within sight and earshot).

Physical description: ABBY431 is the spitting image of Lady Muriel Kallanday, a lovely but somewhat plain and somber woman with elegant features, shoulder length blond hair, and dark eyes.

Abby Clone, nth Generation

Dodge: 12
 Health points: 13 + 2d10 (23)
 Intellect: high to exceptional
 Physical Resist: +4
 Mental Resist: +10
 Average size: 5' to 5'3" tall, 100 to 120 lbs.
 Attacks: fist: 1 x 1d4 or by weapon
 To-hit modifier: +2
 Hide/armor: none or by armor
 Initiative modifier: +2
 Movement rate: 120'

After decades of distillation, breeding, and magical experimentation, the original simulacrum of Aprill Dawson were refined into potent general-purpose tools by Aea Convent. The first 30 copies of Aprill have almost all been destroyed, and the finest specimen of the 2nd generation, Abby, was used by the crypto-Ixians of Aea Convent to produce several newer generations of clone. The 3rd and 4th generations proved to be critical components of the Ixians' defense against the Arcanos during the Second Fall. In the process of their creation, researchers all across Twylos- in Barrowsreich, at Sweetwater Pond, in Thenzor Deep, and in various Guild safehouses- worked and reworked the clones (now called Abby clones), until it was almost impossible to keep track of which clone came from which progenitor line. After the Second Fall, almost all Aprill/Abby clones were decimated or retired, except for one particularly hardy line that came to be called by the Toxicologists the 'nth-generation'. The nth-generation Abby clones were stripped of their own will, imbued with powerful magical resistance and regenerative capabilities, and acted as living Hermetic spellbooks. They rarely speak or act of their own volition, but carry out their assigned tasks with an intense, somewhat malicious fervor.

Abilities: The nth-generation clones do not possess the high magical shielding of the 2nd-4th generation clones, as these girls were designed to cast spells themselves. However, each clone has 30% immunity to any magical spell or effect. Individual clones have Hermetic, Hedge, and/or Viral Magic Potential and a number of Circles depending on how it was prepared. In general, though, clones have 3rd to 5th Circle casting abilities. Spells can be implanted in a clone with a procedure similar to spellbook transcription, allowing the clones to be used in a manner similar to magical wands, although the exact details of this process have been lost or left behind in the ruins of the Sweetwater Pond and Aea Convent research facilities. The hallmark of the nth-generation clones is an incredible physical resilience. Clones are immune to poison, paralysis, disease, and mental spells and effects. They are also immune to Viral Magic that acts on essence, as they have none. Any damage received by a clone triggers a long-range effect comparable to the 2nd Circle Viral Magic spell Skin Graft: the attacker (or nearest living creature, if no one can be considered an attacker, e.g., if a clone falls off a cliff) must make a Physical Resistance check (target number 15) or take 1d8 points of damage. The clone is then automatically healed by this amount. Furthermore, nth-generation clones regenerate one health point per combat round even after reaching 0 health points or lower, unless the essence ring implanted in the base of their spine is destroyed. For the nth-generation clones, the essence rings have been shaped to look like pieces of spine, hiding their identity. Often, this regeneration is not obvious, and some of the escaped nth-generation clones have been 'killed' numerous times, learning to play dead and allowing their biological processes to kick in so that they may escape.

Physical description: Given that different strains of nth-generation clones were prepared in separate labs across Twylos, each set of clones looks somewhat distinct, and have gradually shifted in appearance from the original Aprills. In general, the Abby clones appear as plain young women, with a vacant and somewhat unpleasant look in their faces.

Breeder, Aea Convent

Dodge: 2
 Health points: 50 + 5d8 (72)
 Intellect: low
 Physical Resist: +5
 Mental Resist: +5
 Average size: 16', 1000 lbs.
 Attacks: fist: 1 x 3d4 + 8 and disease
 To-hit modifier: +0
 Hide/armor: 1d6

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

Initiative modifier: +0

Movement rate: 120'

Breeders were developed and rapidly evolved within Aea Convent. They were biological growth chambers to aid in the generation of the Abby clones, selected from the 1st and subsequent generations of clones themselves. As Breeders became larger and larger, clones would remain in the birth chambers until entirely formed and life-size. Breeders were generally brainless or catatonic, but could be prone to seizures and sudden fits of intense rage.

Abilities: Breeders tended to confer some of the initial magical immunity on Abby clones they birthed. Breeders have 30% immunity to any spell or magical effect, are completely immune to poison, disease, and mind magic. Breeders also possess a limited but surprisingly broad set of magical abilities, having 2nd Circle prowess in all forms of magic (Faith, Hedge, Hermetic, Ritual, and Viral). The touch or bite of a Breeder can be exceedingly toxic, and should be treated as the Viral Magic spell Disease.

Physical description: The Aea Convent Breeders appear as grossly malformed, elephantine humanoid females, looking something like a cross between an albino giantess and an enormous grub.

Demon, Olipox

Dodge: 10

Health points: 10 + 2d8 (18)

Intellect: average

Physical Resist: +1

Mental Resist: +1

Average size: 5'8", 150 lbs.

Attacks: fist: 1 x 1d4 or by weapon

To-hit modifier: +2

Hide/armor: none

Initiative modifier: +0

Movement rate: 120'

Olipox demons are shapeshifters who tend to take on a single form, assuming the skills, knowledge, and identity of their cannibalized victims. Unlike doppelgangers, who generally pretend to become other individuals, olipox fully believe that they are that individual, body and soul.

Abilities: Whomever they eat, they become. All stats, abilities, known spells, and the like are assumed after consumption.

Physical description: Oh, nothing special. These guys look like you and me.

Sathar, Vat

Dodge: 13

Health points: 20 + 3d8 (33)

Intellect: very low to very high

Physical Resist: +7

Mental Resist: +2

Average size: 8'-12' tall, 300-500 lbs.

Attacks: fist: 1 to 4 x 1d6 + 4 or by weapon + 4

To-hit modifier: +4

Hide/armor: 1d2 + 1 or by armor

Initiative modifier: +2

Movement rate: 120'

Vat Sathar are reptilians captured or bought from the Slavers and taken to Vhog. Once there, they are exposed to K'Teauva's remains and experimented on, the details of which depend on the current project of

the individual Vhog Sathar scientist in charge of the slave. In general, the Vat Sathar are the lackeys and assistants for the original Vhog Sathar. Fearful of straying too far from K'Teauva, the Vhog Sathar stay at Vhog, preferring instead to send their vat creations into the deserts and cities of Saethos- and points further- to collect information and specimens.

Abilities: The Vat Sathar are not nearly as fearsome as the original Vhog Sathar. However, exposure to the Teauvite Vats of Vhog and additional biochemical experimentation has given the Vat Sathar a number of additional features. Vat Sathar should each be considered to have Hedge or Ritual Magic Potential and 1st to 3rd Circle spell-casting ability. Vat Sathar are immune to poison and disease. Due to their heightened sensory systems, Vat Sathar should be considered to have the Blindfighting discipline. Vat Sathar are extremely hardy and also have the Last Stand discipline with an effective Endurance score of 16. Vat Sathar have the Perception and Stealth proficiencies at Grade II.

Physical description: Vat Sathar appear as awful caricatures of reptilians. Individual Vat Sathar may have partial exoskeletons, grossly overdeveloped heads or arms, or other more noticeable mutations such as additional limbs.

Sathar, Vhog

Dodge: 11

Health points: 50 + 4d8 (68)

Intellect: high to exceptional

Physical Resist: +8

Mental Resist: +6

Average size: 12' tall, 500 lbs.

Attacks: fist: 1 to 4 x 1d6 + 6 or by weapon + 6

To-hit modifier: +6

Hide/armor: 1d4 + 2 or by armor

Initiative modifier: +4

Movement rate: 90'

Vhog Sathar are the 37 reptilians who were present at Vhog when Nobu Su-Gahz's biochemical cocktail was injected into K'Teauva, destroying her and all of the surrounding area. They were transformed into insectoid-reptilian hybrids with immense strength and regenerative capabilities due to the number of potent growth factors that flooded and warped their physiology. The Vhog Sathar have grown increasingly paranoid in the century or so since the 'Vhog Heresy' of Su-Gahz, preferring to stay at Vhog and letting their Vat Sathar slaves perform their tasks. The 37 Vhog Sathar do not like each other, although they are bound by a deep feeling that they are, together, K'Teauva herself. In the decades that followed the Vhog Heresy, cults of personality have grown up around certain of the Teauvites, leading to obscene works of art or baroque sacrificial rituals performed by Vat Sathar, dedicated to specific members of the Vhog.

Abilities: Vhog Sathar are imbued with considerable magical abilities and should each be considered to have Ritual Magic Potential at 4th Circle, as well as Hedge, Faith, and/or Hermetic Potential to some degree. Vhog Sathar are immune to poison, disease, paralysis, heat, cold, and mental spells and effects. Vhog Sathar are unimpeded by darkness and silence, and can navigate fully based on electro- and mechanosensation. Vhog Sathar regenerate 1d4 health points per round and require complete destruction of 50% or more of their mortal form to prevent regenerating back from death. Vhog Sathar have Perception, Magic Acuity, and various knowledge proficiencies such as Herbaslism, Agriculture, and Religious Knowledge at Grades III and IV.

Physical description: Vhog Sathar are disgusting monsters. They cover their bodies with large robes and cloaks. Standing almost twice the size of normal Sathar (12' or sometimes larger), they appear to

shamble somewhat clumsily around their oversized laboratories. Underneath their cloaks, each of the 37 Vhog Sathar have unique deformities- some constantly secrete insect larvae from cocoons emitting from their open chest cavities, others have four arms or a second head. Some have the bodies of insects, such as feathery moth wings or a set of scorpion legs.

Scrivener Boss

Dodge: 14
 Health points: 36
 Intellect: high to very high
 Physical Resist: +8
 Mental Resist: n/a
 Average size: 7' tall, 300 lbs.
 Attacks: arms: 2 x 1d6 + 6
 To-hit modifier: +8
 Hide/armor: 1d4
 Initiative modifier: +6
 Movement rate: 120'

Officially, Scriveners are old Ixian constructs from the First Era, built by members of the Church of Ixus to help them copy manuscripts and perform difficult labor. The 'Create Scrivener' Hedge Magic spell is named for these ancient automata, although the rickety constructs created by that low-level magic pale in comparison with the real thing; these creatures are more akin to golems than to wooden writing contraptions. Towards the end of the Third Era, and continuing into the Fourth Era, the art of Scrivener construction has been relearned, and both the Guilds and the Ixians are producing Scriveners and related automata in greater numbers with each passing year. Scrivener Bosses are a recent model of Scrivener. Bosses are generally put in charge of larger teams of other Scrivener drones to control and organize them. As they are infused with intelligence and a limited form of Hedge Magic, the construction of Scrivener Bosses is substantially more complicated- and risky- than the creation of drones, and the first Boss prototypes all had to be destroyed.

Abilities: Scriveners are completely immune to all magical spells and effects, and are completely immune to any effect requiring a Mental Resistance check. They take half damage from fire and cold, and are immune to poison, paralysis, and disease. Scrivener Bosses generally have one or two Proficiencies at Grade II or III and can use Hedge Magic as a 1st to 3rd Circle caster. Bosses generally speak one or two languages with a limited grammar and vocabulary.

Physical description: Scrivener Bosses are humanoid in appearance. They are usually clearly artificial, appearing as thin, ungainly men made of brass or tin. Newer models are enchanted to appear completely human.

Wet Nurse, Aea Convent

Dodge: 16
 Health points: 20 + 2d8 (29)
 Intellect: high
 Physical Resist: +6
 Mental Resist: +6
 Average size: 2', 100 lbs.
 Attacks: pneumatic armature: up to 4 x 1d4 + 4 and poison
 To-hit modifier: +6
 Hide/armor: 1d4 + 2
 Initiative modifier: +5
 Movement rate: 160' (levitation)

Wet Nurses, as they were colorfully called, are small, floating variants of Scriveners. Appearing as a spherical set of metal gears and tubes,

surrounded by a collection of hoses and cables, the Aea Convent Wet Nurses were support systems designed to monitor and enhance the growth of various Abby clones. While magically constructed, their operation once built was entirely non-magical, instead relying on sophisticated Alchemy and engineering to function in the face of the Abby clones' powerful, persistent antimagic.

Abilities: Wet Nurses are immune to biological effects such as poison and disease, and all mind magic. Wet Nurses are generally attuned to specific individuals, and have a number of Alchemical and Viral substances at hand to aid in their protection and life support. Four such devices can be used each round, either for attack (doing 1d4 + 4 points of damage, plus high-grade poison/sedative: roll 1d4, 1: caustic, 2: metabolic, 3: neurotoxic, 4: sedative), defense (providing a +2 bonus to Mental and Physical Resistance checks and a +1 modifier to a specific ability), or regeneration (healing 2d4 +3 health points to the target).

Physical description: The Wet Nurses are metallic spheres that hover approximately 6' off the ground. A number of small cable and medical device systems dangle beneath them, but can be readily brought to bear in case of combat.

Appendix 2.2.5: Glossary

Abby Clones, 1st-Generation: A misnomer, leading to the confusion in generational numbering of the simulacrum derived from Aprill Dawson. Abby herself was a 2nd-generation Aprill clone, and her success led to her being used as the template for future generations. Strictly speaking, the 1st-generation Abby clones were the first Aprill clones distilled from Abby. Unofficially, the term '1st-generation Abby clone' was used to refer to the original Aprill clones built by Aea Convent.

Abby Clones, 2nd-Generation: Following the confusing Aea Convent terminology, these were the copies of Abby used by the Church of Ixus to survive the Second Fall and destroy the mortal forms of the six Arcanos.

Abby Clones, 3rd- and 4th-Generation: The plethora of Abby clones that were built by various research labs during the early Fourth Era.

Abby Clones, nth-Generation: The current batch of Abby clones. The Sweetwater Pond Toxicologists, fed up with the confusing reports of various Aprill/Abby clones under development across Twylos, started referring to all of them, sarcastically, as 'nth-generation' clones. The name stuck. When most research labs ceased operations during the Second Fall and Fourth Era decline, the only clones that survived were hybrids that had been fortified with regenerative abilities.

ABBY320: Last of the 3rd generation Abby clones and seal for Nursery Chamber VIII.

ABBY431: Last of the 4th generation Abby clones and door lock of the Aea Convent Nursery.

Anopheles, Dr. Thomas: Student of Edrac Reeves, inventor of Viral Magic, and first and last of the Toxicologists.

Apostles, The: The lichlords of the reformed Church of Ixus.

Apostles, Office of the: The Ixian Moon base.

Argosy Prime: The Glorious Argosy of His Majesty the Sun King, a fleet of immense warships in the western sea that is the new Sun Keep.

Bock, Nobbins: A brain-damaged drunk possessed by Ixondr in another variant of Twylos.

Cancer Carl: Informal name for the 13 clones of Captain Carl Dopsin, owner of the Heart of Abraxas, and power source for the Guild Reticulum.

"Chaste Sorcerer, The": Formally, the unreadable autobiography of the other Ixondr written by Nobbins Bock. Unofficially, the title of a performance put on by the absurdist comics of A Sore For Her in Oolvaunt.

2.2 Twylos: The Fourth Era

Dulaine, Rogan: Historically, the infamous Second Era High Priest of Sun Keep, discoverer of Rhaxen, author of "Gardens of Zil", possibly driven mad by Xeres. Currently, the name given to the principal component of the Reticulum- acting head and voice of the Guild Council, a Scrivener Boss of impressive capabilities.

Essence Rings: Toxicologist devices to enable spell-casting and other abilities to the wearer. Generally embedded in the spine or brain.

Guild Protectorate: The combined army and navy of the Reconstructed Guild, numbering approximately the same size (10,000) as the Ixian Argosy. Home militia of Tzalvas and international peace-keeping force on behalf of the Guild.

Guild, Reconstructed: See Reconstruction.

Halifax, Sterling R.: Friend of Amanda Dawson, killed by and in possession of the Rhaxen 5 Archon.

Learning Tree, The: Rheyana publishing house specializing in colorful but cheaply-printed children's books.

Maars, Zhillian: Minor noblewoman of former House Maars and custodian of the Aea Nursery. Killed and buried within the Tzoultentomb of Gayla.

"My Healthy Living": Alchemist research project in the late Third Era to study the sociological effects of wide-scale alchemical manipulation in five select villages. The five projects were Happiness, I Can Do It, Industry, Longevity, and Nutrition.

Nursery Chamber VIII: Partially operational clonal breeding chamber in Aea Convent.

Ogers Gold: A base camp for the Ogers Gold ogre mining company near Lhondoss and Venoshua. Very lucrative.

Oolvaunt Chapterhouse: The new Mother Church of the School of Names.

Reconstruction: Merging of the four Third Era Guilds into one massive conglomerate in 181 F.E.

Reticulum, The: A network of Scrivener Bosses in Barrowsreich that runs the Reconstructed Guild and is powered by Cancer Carl.

Rhaxen 5: Asteroid tethered to the Office of the Apostles, containing the last remnant of the Vause Academy.

Sathar, Vat: Sathar slaves biochemically and magically altered to serve the Vhog Sathar.

Sathar, Vhog: The 37 Teauvites that were exposed directly to the explosion of K'Teauva and destruction of Vhog.

Scrivener: Anachronistic name for a large class of automata currently being created by the Ixians and the Guild for combat, labor, and managerial purposes. Scriveners are Hedge Magic and technological constructs, as opposed to Golems, which are Hermetic and Faith-based constructs. The name derives from their original use in the First Era to help copy manuscripts.

Second Fall, The: Strictly, the collapse of Armech at the end of the Third Era. Loosely, refers to the wide-scale decline of Twylos throughout the late Third Era and into the Fourth Era.

Su-Gahz, Nobu: Sathar Toxicologist who accelerated and brought about K'Teauva's emergence on Twylos.

Sweetwater Pond Research Laboratory: Final research base of the Toxicologists, just outside Torsche.

Torsche Council on Toxicology: Citizens' action group in mid-Third Era Torsche that controlled Zeaven manufacture and trade in the East. Origins of the Guaran Tower, Alchemists Guild, and Sweetwater Pond Toxicologists.

Toxicologist: See Viral Mage.

Toxicology: See Viral Magic.

Typhon, Sixth Key of: A curious observation by Sterling R. Halifax made before he was eaten.

Venoshua: (VEN-shwa or VEN-shoo-wa) Duuran temple predating the First Era; one of the first sites of Breyanic worship. Now currently occupied by Ixian necromancers, and one of three operating stations of the Longiron Railroad.

Vhog Heresy: The explosion of K'Teauva by Nobu Su-Gahz, and transformation of Vhog and the Vhog Sathar.

Viral Mage: A practitioner of Viral Magic. Divided philosophically into three Schools: Red, Black, and Gray.

Viral Magic: Arcane and high-Circle Hedge Magic. Initially developed as anti-mage magic, but ended up becoming a set of magical diseases that afflicted and killed much of Northeastern Twylos.

Water of Life: A clone's dream.

White King, The: The Arcanos Arcades Shavaat; teacher of Ixondr, Muriel, and Amanda Dawson, and husband to Lisabeth.

Afterword, by G. Vrill

Hello dear Reader. I appreciate your purchase and curiosity; however, I wanted to add a personal touch to this final chapter of Twylos. And that is to say, please disregard.

Never you mind such conceits as 'Abby clones' and 'viral magic'. You, you as Game Master, should know that these elements are as disruptive and destructive to the game world of Twylos just as they were to the world of Twylos as conceived above. The world, any world you might wish to construct, is only sustainable for as long as it seems endless, limitless, and virginal. Your players want none of this. Keep everything hidden- anything precious and interesting. Let them fight goblins and loot chests, return to the village and spend their skillpoints, to repeat with bigger goblins and brighter chests. Meanwhile, as the world around them decays in silence, your funny psychopaths are blissfully comfortable in the tropes that they know. Just you and I, Reader, get to peek underneath these tattered Renaissance Faire skirts at the poison within.

I urge you again: lie to them. Let everything you say be deceptive, in some small way, just as I have lied to you.





SPECIAL APPENDIX: THE LODGE OF THE BRONZE KNIGHT

Some time ago, a unique and lively group began to post their exploits on the YOGC forums. To recognize their contributions to the community, and their influence upon the game, we asked the Lodge of the Bronze Knight to contribute to this revision of the World of Twylos.

The Lodge of the Bronze Knight

There was a slight chill to the air just before dawn, and night still held Llesendor in its shadowy cloak. A thin fog and an eerie stillness filled the streets of the town. This silence was broken by the clip-clop of horses plodding down the street. In front of a decrepit manor, a large wagon emerged from the mist, its wheels creaking and groaning under a massive weight. The wagon's cargo was an oversized crate that extended out from the back of the wagon by several feet. Its two drivers steered up to the gates of the abandoned mansion. Once a hub of activity, this lodge had been silent and still for almost fifty years. One of the drivers climbed down and approached the large double gate. Tiny hands reached up and pushed on the gates lightly. With a gesture that should not have been able to move the rusted iron bars, the little figure opened the gate without effort or noise. Swiftly, the other driver pulled the wagon through the gates and into the dilapidated courtyard. The wagon followed a wide cobbled walk leading up to the manor's entrance. The rough path was missing stones, and those that remained threatened to crumble under the heavy load.

A tarnished metal dais, some four feet across stood next to the pathway. In unison, each of the small figures brandished a small iron crowbar and climbed onto the enormous crate. Once up top, they removed their hooded cloaks and tossed them to the ground below. The first driver was a gnome, the second was a haubit. Methodically, they set to work, prying the top of the crate open.

With great effort, the two drivers pushed the large cover off of the box revealing its contents: a huge metal statue of an armored knight with a broad sword and shield. The two inspected the statue briefly. Matching the dais, the metal of the statue was tarnished with age. Satisfied, the two exchanged glances and climbed back down to the ground. They took up positions on either side of the dais, reached into their tunics and pull out two golden medallions. These twin golden symbols appeared to shine even in the dark gloom that surrounded them. The gnome and haubit lowered their heads in concentration. A quiet minute passed where nothing stirred in the dark courtyard.

Suddenly, the wagon groaned as the great crate began to shudder. Then, the back of the crate exploded in splinters as large metal legs kicked out and quickly bent downward. The metal knight rose up into a sitting position, and the wagon nearly buckled under the shift. Then, standing on its massive legs, the knight stepped forward. The statue stood almost fifteen feet tall, and towered over the wagon and horses.

1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos

Although made of metal, the massive knight moved without a sound. Three giant steps took it to the metal dais. The haubit and the gnome did not raise their heads as the statue stepped between them and onto the platform. The statue turned and faced the gate. It took a stance as if on guard, and then, it fell motionless.

The two friends looked up and smiled at one another. They quickly cleaned up the shattered wood and walked the horses into the run-down stables. Secured their horses, they walked back to the entrance of the mansion. The gnome produced a large key and unlocked the door. They entered and the closed the door behind them.

The sun rose. The first glints of light hit the statue. The metal no longer had the dark tarnish of age, but reflected the sunlight, brightly illuminating the dais it stood on. The Bronze Knight had returned at long last.

...

Rhodaban and Grealis sat at the table across from each other, their drinks sat untouched, and they considered their options given the latest tragedy. A few years had passed since they returned the Bronze Knight to its rightful place and the Lodge had enjoyed a brief renaissance. Repairs on the mansion were still underway.

The last group to depart consisted mainly of the council of the Lodge of the Bronze Knight, and they had left three days ago. None had returned and there was no one left to send. As the Keeper's of the Lodge granted Rhodaban and Grealis certain insights, and those insights told them that all members were dead, only the two of them were left.

Rhodaban risked his life to retrieve as many of the Lodge seals as he could. Then the two Keepers sent out the seals he had recovered to replenish the ranks of the Lodge of the Bronze Knight. Some recipients were heirs, some were apprentices or protégés of former members, others were chosen somewhat randomly, and a few were left to the gods themselves. It was a month later before the first of them began to arrive. They trickled in one at a time or in small groups. Grealis met each one, answered their questions and explained the rules and expectations of the Lodge. Then they were asked to sign their agreement and shown to their rooms as their seal ranking denoted. There were all manner of beings. Never before had the Lodge of the Bronze Knight had such a diverse population, but then again, the Lodge had never before faced such a wholesale replacement of its members. Those bearing the seals of the council were some of the last to arrive.

The new council faced many trials, not the least of which was the murders and loss of the previous members that had led to their new positions. The Lodge was up to the task and more. They have operated for four years now, facing demons, doppelgangers and even entire armies. Changes have come to the Lodge. Expansion and restructure have created a stronger mercenary company that is beginning to rival even the great guilds of Twylos. There are now three bases of operation for the Lodge of the Bronze Knight.

The Main Lodge

Location: Llesendor

Established: 200 S.E.

Mascot/Symbol: Bronze Knight with sword & shield

Construction type: 2 Story building with 2 lower levels

Commander: Razzeel, Platinum Seal (current Master of the Lodge)

Membership Type: By invitation only

Current Membership: 100 Registered Seals; 3 Platinum Seals, 3 Gold Seals, 7 Silver Seals, 7 Copper Seals, 6 Bronze Seals, and 24 Tin Seals are currently active

Benefits: Members are citizen of Llesendor, taxes, dues and guild fees are paid for by the Order.

Free Company: Registered with the ruling house of Llesendor as the Order of the Bronze Knight. Members of the Lodge of the Bronze Knight are referred to as Guardians of the Bronze Knight. The Order of the Bronze Knight happens to be one of the oldest active Free Companies on record.

The Order of the Bronze Knight was once a revered order, and its members took an active role in the business interests in Llesendor. The Order was a force to be reckoned with. Over the previous decade active membership dwindled, predominately due to adventuring hazards. During the past four years, however, new faces have come to Llesendor, claiming their respective stations within the Order. The halls once again are filled with laughter and continuous activity. Guardians doing business within the city of Llesendor receive a +2 reaction bonus due to the Order's reputation.

The statue of the Bronze Knight, the name sake of the order, is actually a greater bronze golem that protects the main entrance to the Lodge. The Bronze Knight will activate if someone tries to enter without a Seal of the Guardians or unless escorted by a member of the Bronze Knight. Who and how the Bronze Knight was created is lost to history. The Bronze Knight has a mystic quality, and can detect those who do not belong. Many have tried to trick the stoic guardian, but retribution was swift and the ill-willed tricksters have paid the price for their trickery with blood.

Membership is a lifetime appointment. Only a few members in the history of the Order have been banished by the council, and of those banished from the Order, few made it out of the city alive. Resignation is uncommon but has happened over the centuries. Group leadership is usually fluid; the person who is the most skilled for the situation is usually the de facto leader. This system works well and tends to extend the members life spans.

The Order of the Bronze Knights current tenants are as follows:

1. The Lodge of The Bronze Knight must endure.
2. Guardians' rights to room, board, secured belongings.
3. A share of monetary treasure and items (need before greed, one per person unless special exception made by group) guaranteed.
4. Legal council provided, however, financial support of the Lodge is a guardian's duty.
5. Guardians are accountable for their own actions.
6. Formal internal disputes resolved by three person tribunal of uninvolved members.
7. Freedom to worship or serve others as long as it brings no harm to the Lodge.
8. The Order's tenants are not regulated due to boundaries or distance from the Lodge.
9. All Guardians missions are considered sanctioned unless otherwise stated by the council.
10. New chapter houses must have a platinum seal member as a sponsor.
11. New seals and promotions handed out by nomination and subsequent approval by a platinum seal (or the entire platinum council in case of a new or promoted platinum seal)
12. Alcoholic beverages from the cellar must be signed out by the Quarter Master.

The current Treasurer is Rhodaban Felekos, a gnome well past his prime; some say he was once an accomplished illusionist. He claims

that this is nonsense. He is meticulous with his charge. He can recite entries in the accounting ledger at will. He has a dry sense of humor and harmlessly scolds people if they get in his way: "Get out of the way you young whipper-snapper, don't you have anything better to do than stand around and take up space? If all the guardians dolled around, there wouldn't be any coins to fix the roof that was damaged by the storm last week!"

The current Quarter Master is Grealis Proudfoot, a middle-aged Haubit. He is very meticulous and quite an accomplished cook. He is quite the conversationalist and can go on for hours about the various ingredients that he combines to make his treats. He has an uncanny way of knowing when a new guardian is about to arrive, and rushes around makes sure everything is ready in order for him to greet the new arrival. Grealis always opens the door inviting the newly arrived guardian in by rank and name. He then witnesses the signing of the Order of the Bronze Knight Ledger, gives the new guardian the grand tour of his beloved Lodge, and then shows him to his quarters, with a quick overview of the rules to follow.

Structurally, the Lodge is well-maintained. The Lodges furnishings are sparse at best; the food is actually quite good, and always a pot of hot stew, warm bread and a cup of ale are at the ready. The lawn, the courtyard by the Pool of the Renowned, and the garden area, are well manicured. Construction has been completed on the livery stable, the corral, and the walls surrounding the Lodge.

The hearth room is warm and inviting, and it is the usual center for conversation. The dining hall, which is a multipurpose room, is connected to the hearth room just off of the kitchen. It is relegated for banquets and other large gatherings. The council chamber is on the second floor adjacent the study and library. Fresh linens and warm blankets accompany each of the private suites along the balconied perimeter. Each member has a private privy and tub, as well as a bed, a desk and dresser, and a wash basin. Private sleeping quarters have a bed, a desk and dresser, and a wash basin. General sleeping quarters consist of a main hall partitioned with semi-private individual open rooms that each have a bed, a night stand, and a foot locker. The bunk house sleeping area is on the basement level on the east end of the Lodge, it can be accessed by the cellar door if need be. This large room consists of bunk beds with foot lockers at the end of them. Fresh blankets, linens and pillows can be found in the laundry room on the first floor.

River Watch

Location: One days ride south of Bourigansbaine

Established: 214 T.E.

Construction: Restored keep sitting inside the fork of a large river.

Commander: Vlad Zarek, Platinum Seal

The keep is known as River Watch. It was a holding early in the second age in the southern reaches of the Old Irendor Empire during the first colonization of Tarach. The land south of the river was comprised of rocky hills that were always mist covered. It is now the Khiriss swamp. The last ruler of the area (before the Lodge stepped in) was Lord Villnus II. The family also had holdings in Turth. The family symbol was a yellow background with a black griffon. The last stories from that area tell of a town around River Watch that revolted against Villnus and sealed him in the bottom of the keep. Villnus was known to have had a distinguished military career and a small cadre of trusted soldiers.

The Lodge of the Bronze Knight took over and cleansed River Watch of its undead. It is now a restored keep that sports high walls and a large central building (two stories and square). The armory for the Lodge is set up in the northwest corner of the keep. It is here that Jye and

Abaddon make the fantastic armor and weapons that are quickly becoming standard for the Lodge. Grumm has set up an extensive garden of the rarest herbs and also maintains a menagerie of animals. The southern end has a set of rooms constructed as part of the walls around the keep. Grimm and Grumm have become fascinated with the idea of a "dungeon" and have begun construction of several underground levels accessible from a secret door inside the rooms at the south side of the keep. It is said that Grumm keeps his trophy bone collection there and is working on giant spiders that one can ride, but those are just rumors.

Around the keep are farms and a small settlement. It is quickly becoming the town of River Watch, not just a fortified outpost. A few dark elves are spotted now and then around the area as the Lodge has established a working relationship with a faction that has a subterranean entrance in the swamp nearby. There is also a mirror portal that leads to Llesendor that allows the Lodge to respond quickly to events at its current furthest chapterhouse.

Aerie Fortress

Location: Short plateau 6 days east of Llesendor

Established: 215 T.E.

Construction: Fortified keep taking up entire (albeit small) plateau. Comprised of two towers and several underground levels.

Commander: Hargrim Ironheart, Platinum Seal

It's been a few years since Hargrim left the main Lodge in Llesendor. He passed through Badgers Mill and some outlying farmsteads acquiring people and gear as he went. He collected soldiers, farmers and craftsmen of various types to set the outpost at Eagles Nest on its way to efficiency and self sufficiency.

Among the roster of the outpost are twenty soldiers of various races to hold the walls secure. Craftsmen have worked diligently and have restored the outpost to good working order. A few farmers, and even merchants, ply their trades in the area. A master weapon smith and armor smith are on site, each with an apprentice. It is an efficient outpost, but boredom must be endured.

Being one of the original members of the Lodge to fight around and inside the outpost, Hargrim knows the warriors required out here need to be of a special sort. Not many line fighters are needed though a few are always handy. The post requires men who are at ease in the greenwood as well as upon the plains or cliff sides. These men have to be well-traveled and acclimated to the rigors of the road, for they are sent out on patrol for many days, weeks, or sometimes even months, at a time. This type of outpost makes a straight payment schedule hard to comply with. This is always a major topic of discussion in the enlistment of each of the wardens. Even so, payment is always made. Hargrim may be strict, but his word is good and he knows unpaid soldiers don't tend to stay around long. He knows that loyalty must be shown from both sides of the rank structure.

Laws of the Outpost

The penalty of any offense is harsh and can include anything up to and including the death penalty.

- 1) Never steal from the Order or a member of the outpost community. Trust is paramount between people so far from the security of the nations.
- 2) Never willingly do harm to a lady or child of the community. Your position is that of protector not pillager or molester. This does not include a female soldier as she has foresworn her status of lady and

1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos

taken the mantle of warrior. Good luck to you if you choose to be rude to a female warrior.

3) Sleeping on guard duty puts all at risk. You will be put to death.

4) If you start a private war with a neighboring community, make sure it is a just cause before you drag it back to the outpost, or you may be delivered to those you upset. The outpost is here to serve the Lodge and you to serve it. It is not here to settle contests between egos. Any legitimate strife will be dealt with in an efficient and forward manner. We do not support tomfoolery, but we will not flee from honorable combat. Death is a part of the Vornian cycle, we will return again one day to right a wrong death.



Lodge Members

Razzeel

Skill Level: 12

Race: Reptilian

A: 15, E: 10, I: 10, P: 10, S: 12

Magic: Faith (8th) (Tellurgy, Damnation, Benefaction)

Dodge: 15

Health points: 42

Physical Resist: +5

Mental Resist: +1

Armor: 2d2 + 2 (superior studded leather, magic ring, iron skin)

Initiative modifier: +2

Run/ swim: 150'/20'

Skill points: 120, DP: 0, PP: 0

1 x superior morning star (+1, +1): 1d10 + 1

1 x superior long bow (+1, +1): 1d8 + 1

Disciplines: Faith Magic Potential (8th), Increased Intellect (9, 10), Increased Physical Resist I, Increased Mental Resist I, Iron Skin, Language: Ceyneian, Literacy

Proficiencies: Acrobatics I, Climbing I, Jumping I, Leadership IV, Local Knowledge: Llesendor II, Martial Knowledge II, Perception III, Persuasion II, Regional Knowledge: Saethos II, Religious Knowledge III, Riding I, Running III, Search II, Wilderness Lore III

Equipment: superior studded leather, superior morning star, long bow, quiver: 20 arrows, backpack, signal mirror, 3 torches, potion of invulnerability, ring of absorption (1d2), Platinum seal and Councilman's clothes from the Lodge of the Bronze Knight, superior light war horse, belt pouch: (62 sc)

Background: This is a record of the beginnings of the life of Razzeel. His mother's name is S'liss, his father will remain nameless. Reptilians are hatched from eggs with each clutch being between four to a dozen eggs. They are most commonly laid in the home then brought to the Warming Grounds, sands blessed by the Dragon King. The eggs are a light yellow color at clutching, and after a day on the warming sands, they become a golden color. The eggs are tended by the elder females of the tribe or village.

S'liss was overjoyed to be pregnant with her first clutch. Her husband was proud as well and doted on his mate. However, during clutching she produced but a single white egg. Believing her to be cursed, her mate and the elders cast her out of the village with her unusual offspring. S'liss wandered the desert fearing for her life and the life of her egg. Without the village's Warming Grounds her egg had no chance of living. She walked far into the night finally collapsing onto the sand under an outcropping of rock. She curled around her egg to keep it warm. She slept through the day, but the chill of night finally woke her again. S'liss feared her lone egg would never hatch, but then noticed the ground around her was unnaturally warm. The Dragon King had not abandoned her as had her people. The egg was changing from the stark white to burnished silver. She guarded the egg, afraid to leave it even to gather food and water. The cacti nearby could provide the water, and to her amazement the warm sands that saved her egg also attracted wildlife at night with its heat, and thus she was able to eat.

Inside the egg, Razzeel was already dreaming although, without understanding; but he would have the dream again and again to this day. After several weeks he hatched, and his mother rejoiced. She taught him to survive in the desert, but not about his people who had exiled them. He grew and learned, from his mother in the day, and in his dreams at night, where the Dragon King spoke to him, teaching him many other things. He was only four years old when S'liss was bitten by a deadly serpent while foraging for food. Hidden in the sand it struck her as she passed. S'liss drug herself back to the outcropping they called home. Razzeel did as she asked, and brought her water. He fell asleep, exhausted at her side sometime during the wee morning hours. In his dreams he called to the Dragon King over and over again and finally, He answered Razz. Razz wanted his mother back, but the Dragon King remained silent. He begged and pleaded, and finally when he offered himself in her place, the Dragon King spoke. "I will claim her as mine if you will serve me." He said, "She will be reborn and you will bring her to me when the time is right. Go now into the

desert, head south and watch for signs and I will show you the way to me."

Razzeel woke to find himself beside a giant egg, half buried in the sand. Razzeel was scared and afraid to leave the egg, believing it contained his mother, and for the first time he heard the Dragon King in his waking mind. "Go, and I will bury the egg, she will be safe until you come for her. When I call you again you must come and retrieve her and bring her to me." The wind began to blow and sand piled up around the egg. Razzeel covered his face and walked south into the blinding wind.

When Razzeel emerged from the storm he found himself before a shrine. He entered quietly, passing guardians and a great beast as he went deeper into the temple. They were but shadows, not perceiving the visitor that wandered by. Hidden deep below was a great wyrm. The dragon was enormous and it was asleep. Strange devices were everywhere. All that Razzeel had passed before was shadow, but the Dragon King was real, solid, and sleeping. Yet he spoke, "I am Izain. Now you must go from here and not return until I call. You must not speak of this place, ever."

Razzeel went from the temple and walked for many days, surviving as his mother had taught him. He arrived at a city of the Sathar people, his people. He was tired and worn thin from his difficult travel. He fell at the feet of a priest, and was taken to local temple to recover. He knew the ways of this temple from his dreams. He was allowed to stay and became a priest of the Dragon. More than two decades passed and no call, but a strange letter arrived asking for his presence in Ulsendor, a place that long denied any part in the human wars. The Lodge of the Bronze Knight wanted him to sit on its council. He was hesitant, but that night his mother's voice came to him, "Go and see what the world has become. Grow in knowledge and power. Only then will you hear the call."

Razzeel quickly became the leader of the first group that set out to restore the Lodge's holdings and legend. As the stories and rumors of the restored Lodge increased, so did the reputation of the new priest of the Dragon-King.

Razzeel's power grows as he waits for the call of his god to return. He tends to ignore the whispers and rumors surrounding him. He is only interested in being a good priest. He has outgrown the xenophobic and human-hating tendencies of his race. He leads the Lodge with an open mind and a firm hand.

Razzeel behaves in many ways similar to a dragon. For example, he collects treasure and sleeps upon a hoard of coin and gems just as a dragon would. This hoard contains: 54 pc, 92 gc, 600 sc, 971 cc, 10 emeralds (75 sc each), 15 rubies (50 sc each), and 50 pearls (25 sc each).

Vlad Zarek

Skill Level: 10

Race: Half Orc

A: 14, E: 12, I: 10, P: 12, S: 12

Magic: Faith (3rd) (Benefaction, Revelation, Tellurgy)

Dodge: 15

Health Points: 44

Physical Resist: +2

Mental Resist: +3

Armor: Master Quality Chain and Shield

Initiative Modifier: +2

Run/Swim: 160/20

Skill Points: 100, DP: 0, PP: 0

2 x master quality scimitar (+5, +3): 2d4

1 x master quality dagger (+3, +2): 1d6

1 x short comp bow (+3, +1): 1d8

Disciplines: Faith (3), Weapon Mastery Class E II, Multiple Attacks Class E II, Improved Dodge I, Armor Use II, Increased Mental Resistance II, Resilience, Increased Strength (11, 12), Increased Agility (12, 13, 14), Points to Proficiencies(9), Literacy, Languages: Taran, Ceyneian

Proficiencies: Ride II, Run IV, Stealth I, Heraldry III, Contacts II, Trade Skill: Cooking II, Perception II, Search I, Persuasion III, Leadership II, Healing II, Animal Handling: Equine I, Regional Knowledge: Tarach II, Regional Knowledge: Vehrlands I, Magic Acuity I, Religious Knowledge I

Equipment: Traveling Pack, Rope, Cooking Equipment, Spyglass, Prayer Book, Holy Symbol, Healers Kit, Superior Light Warhorse Gold Crowns 10, Silver Royals 66, Copper Leptons 8

Background: Only child of Kos Zarek, a retired mercenary sergeant and Talia Malkov, a cook. Kos served many years in the Mercenary Band Weldryns Shields. Talia is cook, server, and owner at the Cackling Crow Inn, located about 3 days west of Vesbridge on the Vehrlands Ocean Road. Weldryns Shields are the primary source of guards for the few trade caravans that ran from Vesbridge to Couverton and Mask. The Inn is one of the few fortified areas to stay at along the road and Kos made it a point to stay there as often as he could. Kos and Talia were married in the Spring of 192 during the Rejuvenation Festival of Lady Kithain.

Not long after becoming an ordained priest of Kithain, I received a platinum medallion and an invitation to Ulsendor to join the Lodge of the Bronze Knights. I was to become a council member of the Lodge. After many adventures and trials within the Lodge, I founded the chapterhouse of the Lodge near Bourgangsbaire, Riverwatch.

Hargrim Ironheart

Skill Level: 12

Race: Dwarf

A: 14, E: 14, I: 10, P: 10, S: 10

Magic: Faith (5th) (Tellurgy, Revelation, Benefaction)

Dodge: 14

Health points: 62

Physical resist: +4

Mental resist: +5

Armor: 1d3 + 1(masterwork chainmail), 1d6 - 1(masterwork kite shield)

Initiative modifier: +2

Run/swim: 120'/20'

Skill points: 120, DP: 0, PP: 0

2 x "Stryker" magic maul (+3, +4) 1d8+1

2 x masterwork mace (+4, +4) 2d4

Disciplines: Armor Use II, Faith Magic Potential (5th), Increased Agility (14), Increased Intellect (8, 9, 10), Increased Presence (8, 9, 10), Increased Mental Resistance IV, Increased Physical Resistance I, Language: Andukar, Literacy, Multiple Attack (E) II, Weapon Mastery (E) II

Proficiencies: Contacts II, Engineering III, Heraldry III, Leadership IV, Magic Acuity I, Martial Knowledge IV, Perception III, Persuasion III, Riding I, Rope Use I, Search II, Trade Skills: Blacksmith III, Carpentry III, Masonry III

1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos

Equipment: masterwork mace (+1, +1), masterwork chainmail (1d3 + 1/str 13), masterwork kite shield (1d6 - 1, imp 2), "Stryker" magic maul (+2, +2), hand axe, hammer, heavy crossbow, LBK Council clothes, superior war horse.

Background: Hargrim is a disciplined, professional soldier – very quiet and reserved until annoyed. He is from a secluded dwarven realm named Daerlonig, a militant isolationist theocracy.

Hargrim is in control of the Eagle's Nest fortress. A magical explosion during the exploration and retaking of the fortress left Hargrim bound to the throne that sits underneath it. He is able to see a radius around the fortress with a magnification of x10 while sitting upon the throne. He has no sense of humor, or patience for those that do. A retinue of 4 soldiers from Daerlonig and a personal Bloodguard named Grimshield are with him at the fortress. Grimshield uses a claymore and wears chainmail. Two of the soldiers wield axe and shield, while the other two are archers. Hargrim is 5' tall and weighs 170 lbs. He has gray eyes and black hair.

Binklesnirt Hammerspike

Skill Level: 9

Race: Gnome

A: 10, E: 10, I: 18, P: 10, S: 8

Magic: Hermetic (6th)

Dodge: 10

Health Points: 31

Physical Resist: -1

Mental Resist: +2

Armor: none

Initiative Modifier: 0

Run/swim: 120'/20'

Skill Points: 90, DP: 7, PP: 0

1 x knife (0, -1): 1d4

Disciplines: Hermetic Magic Potential (6th), Increased Intellect (18), Language: Andukar, Irendi, Queyan, Taran, Verlainen, Vussan, Zelan; Literacy, Magic Potency I

Proficiencies: Ancient History I, Arcane Knowledge II, Contacts (diplomatic) III, Dweomercraft Hermetic I, Extra Planar Knowledge I, Magic Acuity II, Perception II, Search I, World Knowledge III

Equipment: calligraphy set, courtly garb, magic Bag of Holding, Staff of Magic Potency, set of complete Hermetic spell lists (in Bag of Holding and kept secret), mining overalls for travel.

Background: Bink's family had been miners and gem cutters for generations creating hundreds of years of tradition. Bink, however, wasn't interested in mining or gems. His passion lay with books, languages and magic. By five years of age, he had already mastered two languages. His family was not poor by any means, and hired a tutor for him. They were fortunate in their choice beyond measure; the tutor was an old wizard, masquerading as a local sage.

The sage used his library to teach Bink many more languages, and discovered the Bink had a talent for illumination, the art of drawing fancy letters. He set Bink to translating and copying various books, throwing in a basic spell book to see how Bink would react. At first Bink didn't realize what he was looking at, but soon the light dawned upon him, it was magic! The old tutor exacted a promise of secrecy from Bink and began his lessons as a wizard. Fifteen years passed and the old man (who hadn't aged a day) told Bink it was time for him to move on. He handed Bink a letter, a box, and a book. It was his first book of spells, a letter from the Lodge of the Bronze Knight, and a

small magical medallion. Bink read the letter and took his master's suggestion to follow up on it. He then bid his family farewell and headed out into the world. He was always careful to conceal his magical abilities. Bink made his way translating and copying texts until he reached Llesendor.

The Lodge of the Bronze Knight put Bink in charge of the Lodge library and gave him a special golden seal. The seal bound him to the Lodge in a way different from the others. He aged at a much slower rate and became the Keeper of Records. His magical knowledge expanded as the library contained almost every spell known. His study has taken him far, but he wants to get out into the world and put his magic to use.

Jye

Skill Level: 8

Race: Ogre

A: 13, E: 16, I: 10, P: 10, S: 18

Magic: none

Dodge: 13

Health Points: 60

Physical Resist: +4

Mental Resist: +2

Armor: 1d8 + 3 (masterwork full plate)

Initiative Modifier: +1

Run/swim: 160'/20'

Skill Points: 82, DP: 0, PP: 0

2 x masterwork "Meteor Maul" (+4, +6) 1d8 + 3

Disciplines: Armor Use II, Critical Hit, Increased Accuracy I, Increased Agility (8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13), Increased Intellect (8, 9, 10), Increased Presence (8, 9, 10), Multiple Attack (B) II, Weapon Mastery (B) III

Proficiencies: Armor Making IV, Heraldry III, Intimidate II, Local Knowledge I, Martial Knowledge II, Perception II, Running IV, Search II, Wilderness Lore I

Equipment: masterwork maul (0, +3), masterwork armor (+3, str 18), superior armor making tools (+1), ring of Heat Resistance

Background: Northwest of Bourgangsbaïne, past the Rookroost forest at the base of the mountains lays a village of ogres. There are around fifty in the village. They mine and quarry the mountains and ship the stone and metal around Rookroost to other towns and cities. It was late September when an outsider stumbled into the village. He was Jek, an ogre soldier, and he was terribly wounded. His armor was rent, torn and blood soaked. He was quickly taken in by one of the elders of the tribe. The elder's granddaughter, Meena, tended Jek throughout the fall and into winter. Jek was grateful for the aid and anyone could see that Meena and Jek had fallen for one another. Jek was a dedicated soldier though, and said he had to leave to get back to the war. He would not say where it was or who was fighting, but he had to get back. He left, and Meena waited. Almost a year went by before Jek returned. It was once again September. This time he was not wounded and in dire straits, but jovial and open-hearted. Meena and Jek were married that winter. Once again as the new year came about, Jek had to leave. Meena was not sad, he promised to return again in the fall.

Summer was long, mostly because of Meena's pregnancy. She carried long and it was on the same day Jek returned that she gave birth to Jye, their son. Jek could not have been more pleased with his new family; to come home on the day of birth was surely a good omen.

Five years pass, with Jek leaving every new year and returning in the fall. Jye grew quickly, but though he was physically very strong and large, his mind was slow and he was very quiet. Jye was easy to take

care of and his elder grandfather would watch him while Meena took food and water to the miners every day. Meena would come home then and play with her son, slowly, so very slowly teaching him what little she could. During the fall and winter, Jek would get Jye to help him repair his armor. Jek's armor always needed repair. Whatever war he fought in took its toll, sometimes more on Jek than his armor. He was not a gruff soldier, or jaded. He was patient and great-hearted. Jye spent every minute he could with his father while he was there, but never cried when he left. Jye would hold the tools that his father used to fix his armor. Sometimes Meena would bring metal back from the mine for Jek to smelt and hammer into new pieces. Jye was always there. This continued until Jye is eleven years old. That fall, Jek did not come home, however. Meena and Jye both took to waiting at the village edge, peering into the night or day, waiting for their loved one to come home.

Winter came. Meena began to work at the mine, knowing that staring into the distance waiting will only drive her mad. Jye was content to wait, he was as large as most fully grown ogres already, but still his mind prevented him from most work. On a particularly wintry day, snow falling and wind howling, the village was quiet and everyone was home parked in front of their fires. Jye went out to wait as always. The winter seemed not to bother him. He was about to go back, cold and still alone, when he saw a figure walking through the wintry mix. It was almost tall enough to be Jek, but as the stranger got closer Jye could see that it was not. The stranger asked Jye, "Where is Meena?"

Jye took the stranger into the village and announced to his mother as they walked in, "Mother, man in funny cloak." Meena looked up from her place at the fire. One look was all she needed understand the meaning of the stranger's presence. "He's gone, isn't he?" she asked.

"Yes, he fought for me." the stranger said softly. "He was only a soldier, not a general, not a commander or leader", but his words were not derogatory, they were spoken with respect. "For all these years his life was mine to command as were all the others. Some would complain, others would be silent, and a few would stand the line shouting, but not Jek. He fought with dedication and loyalty. Even in a place so far from his home, he would smile and take up his weapons and armor to follow every order.", the stranger's eyes were beginning to tear, the light in the room seem to focus on him alone. "Jek fought because he believed in my purpose with a pure heart. I was not as grateful for him as I should have been, until now, when it is too late. We had fought through the enemy to their last stronghold. It was there that we lost Jek. But even in his loss he gave us victory. The battle was going very badly, the troops were losing numbers and morale. The enemy's generals were on the field and they were terribly efficient. Just as it seemed all was lost, Jek rallied and strode across the battlefield towards the enemy generals. He was a juggernaut. Nothing slowed him down. Scores fell to his great hammer as he marched forward. He met the generals, five to one. They surrounded him.", the stranger paused, wiping great tears from his eyes and taking a deep breath, he continued. "The five threw magicks at Jek. They struck at him with wicked weapons, but your father withstood them all." He seemed to speak only to Jye now. "One at a time, your father struck them down. He fought alone. The other soldiers stood watched the unbelievable conflict. Even the enemy ceased to fight and watch their leader's engagement. As each of the generals fell, it was obvious they were tied to the stronghold by some magical binding. Finally only one stood against Jek. A foul beast of a creature, it fought desperately, but I think it knew it was doomed. Jek was at the end of his endurance, but raised his hammer mightily to deliver the final strike. The creature laughed as the weapon fell and delivered the blow. There was a flash of unholy red light, and the stronghold cracked like thunder rolling across a plain. It fell into great piles of rubble. The rest of my army stood, now alone. The enemy was banished back to twisted realms, and Jek was gone, annihilated in that vile burst of light. He was only a soldier, but

that day he was as a hundred men. I cannot bring you his armor, or his weapon, not even his body. They were all destroyed, utterly."

Jye sat in silence. Meena was crying. The light in the room seemed to dim, after a short time Jye finally spoke. "No more fixing dad's armor? No more dad?" Jye was obviously confused.

The elder, Jye's grandfather, explained to the stranger, "He's very strong. He has his father's heart, but his mind is slow."

"Jek spoke often of his family, but never of anything unpleasant." The stranger spoke as he placed a comforting hand upon Jek's head. "You will not always be so, young one, and I will teach you to make the armor that you helped your father with." The light seemed brighter, and then the stranger was gone.

The first year after Jek's death went slowly, September arrived and so did the stranger just as he said he would. Jek ran to his mother, "Mom, the man with the funny cloak is back." Meena was still very sad over their loss and only nodded in response.

That fall and winter the stranger began to teach Jye about armorsmithing. Jye was not a fast learner, but the stranger showed nothing but patience and wisdom. The following years did not go well for Jye. The next year, his grandfather passed on, and the year after that his mother, Meena, was killed in a mine collapse. Jye was alone in his hut. The village saw to his needs, but only the fall and winter brought any kind of meaning for Jye. In the tenth year of his instruction, the now familiar face of his mentor grew sad once more. "It is time for me to leave you, Jye. You are twenty-one years old and need to leave the village." "Leave?" asked Jye. He was only starting to show promise, he was learning and he knew it. "I don't want to leave, for you to leave!" Jye was upset. Everyone he cared for was gone. He didn't want to be alone.

"You have to go, if you stay here you will never be more than you are now." his mentor told him. Jye was head and shoulders taller than every ogre he had ever seen. He didn't know how he was supposed to "grow" more. "When the time comes you will know to go." The man with the funny cloak turned and began to walk away. "You will be worthy of your father tenfold times!" he said, and with that the mighty angel spread his wings and soared into the sky.

When the message arrived to call Jye to Bourgangsaine to join the Lodge of the Bronze Knight, Jye gathered his things and left his home. He would prove to his father's memory and to Lord Aguierre that he was indeed worthy. He has worked very hard to improve himself over the years. Jye epitomizes his giant ancestry and stands 9' tall and weighs over 700lbs.

Riverwatch is the Lodge location that houses the armory where Jye works. With his great strength and a magic ring he can work the metal with his bare hands. Jye has made armor for many members of the Lodge of the Bronze Knight, providing them with a source of superior items that give them a distinct advantage as a mercenary company. He never charges Lodge members more than the material cost, but everyone makes sure Jye has whatever he needs.

Gaius Osric Deagan (G.O.D.)

Skill Level: 11

Race: Human

A: 17, E: 11, I: 10, P: 9, S: 10

Magic: none

Dodge: 19

Health Points: 33

Physical Resist: +2

1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos

Mental Resist: +0

Armor: 1d2+2 (Magic Studded Leather)

Initiative Modifier: +3

Run/swim: 150'/40'

Skill Points: 112, DP: 0, PP: 0

5/2 x long sword, on-hand (+8, +2): 1d10

1 x short sword, off-hand (-1, +2): 1d6 + 1

2 x pistol (+2, +0): 1d8

1 x Composite Short Bow (+2, +0): 1d8

Disciplines: Back Stab I, Blind Fighting, Critical Hit, Feint, Improved Dodge I, Increased Accuracy I, Increased Agility (17), Increased Endurance (11), Language: Ceyneian/Ixian, Taran/Tarachian; Literacy, Multiple Attacks (E) III, Parry, Quick Draw, Resilience, Weapon Mastery (E) IV

Proficiencies: Acrobatics II, Climbing II, Contacts I, Disguise II, Heraldry II, Jumping II, Local Knowledge I, Lock Picking II, Magic Acuity I, Martial Knowledge I, Perception III, Search II, Performance I, Persuasion I, Regional Knowledge I, Riding III, Running III, Sleight of Hand II, Stealth III, Swimming II, Tracking II, Wilderness Lore II, World Knowledge II

Weapons: Magic Long Sword (+1/+0, Hilt is a Griffon), Master Worked Short Sword (+1/+2), Dagger, Pistol (2) +2 to-hit mod. 1d10 damage Range: 20/100/400 WC: P Rate of Fire: ½ Loads: 2 each, Drow Made Composite Short Bow, Quiver w/ 20 arrows.

Equipment: Hooded Black Cloak (Drow: +1 Hide in Shadows), Bracers of Agility (+1), *Double Struck Platinum Orb, Gold Coin (Black Rose Symbol), Signet Ring (Knight of Bourgangsaine), Spy Glass, Belt w/ Small Belt Pouch, Smoking pouch (contains: pipe & tobacco) Lock pick Set, Small Mirror, Flask, Gloves, Calf-high Soft Leather Boots, Water Skin, Finely Carved Wooden Cup, Back Pack (contains: small magnifying glass, Bed Roll, Hammock, Blanket, 1 weeks' worth of trail rations, Small Water-proof Sack (containing 2 sets of extra clothes, Small Journal, Quill & ink, Flint & Tender) 50' rope, (Lucky) Brown & Black 5-year old gelding (Double D Llesendor Superior Thoroughbred), Saddle, Saddle Bags, Blanket, Bit & Bridle (Hit Points: 30, Dodge: 13, Movement Rate: 280')

Healing Items: (3) Extra Healing Potion (3d4 + 3), (3) Potion of Healing (1d8), (4) White Healing Salve (+3 Healing Check & Cure Minor Disease), (4) Green Healing Salve (+3 Healing Check & +1 Health point Recovery)

Background: I never knew my biological father. Some whispered he was one of the local nobles. A silver seal with the relief of a stoic knight on one side, and my name inscribed on the other, is the only evidence I have of my heritage. Merrick Alistair, the man I called "father", purchased my mother's freedom when I was an infant, and raised me as his own. His talent as a swordsmith in Reyes provided me with a roof over my head and a warm bed. My younger brother (the big oaf), has followed in our father's footsteps and is quite accomplished in making fine blades himself. I, on the other hand, did not share their passion.

I have found that a fine blade's true potential comes from the one wielding it. This statement of fact has gotten me into more trouble than I care to remember. While delivering one of my father's fine blades, I was accosted by a local thug and his minions. One gave up a hand and the other's running days were over. The local magistrate, eyeing his nephew's bloody stump, was not impressed with my story of self defense. So began my indentured servitude; the look of sadness on my parents face is the last living memory I have of them.

I was put into the service of Master Irwin Stark, a trader of rare antiquities, and assigned to his henchman, Blake Canard. Many viewed Canard as a callous and cold-hearted killer. I found him to be a disciplined man with a strict code of honor. He taught me the art of hiding in plain sight, the act of a righteous kill, and most importantly, how to survive. My childhood, now a distant memory, has been replaced with learning the ways of business. My studies often take place outside the confines of the law, in shady taverns, warehouses, and in encampments throughout the middle lands of Twylos.

On a winter night in Moorcrest, Master Stark's double-dealings finally caught up with him. This was the eve of fulfilling my contractual obligations to Stark. He requested that my last service be the same as my first, a simple delivery.

Returning late from the errand (due to a minor complication with the local authorities) I found Stark's body lying on the floor in a pool of blood. Canard was dead too, his hand grasping the goblet that sealed his fate. Frustrated at the sight of Stark's empty coffer, I gathered a few meager belongings, set fire to the warehouse, and slipped past the distracted guards at the gate. With my contract with Stark fulfilled, and the Vehrlands Ocean Road beneath my feet, I set out to avenge my mentors' honor, and to regain the symbol of my heritage: one double-struck platinum orb that was rightfully mine.

I discovered my quarry's name in Tarchartus. Tiberius Landers, my mark's trail led me to Llesendor. Vengeance was served, and my inheritance was recovered. I then took my rightful place among the ranks of my brethren, as a Captain in the Order of the Lodge of the Bronze Knight.

After a few years of service within the Order of the Bronze Knight, I am happy to say that I am alive and doing well. Within the Lodge, you just need to find out which strings to pull, and how hard you can pull them, without breaking them or getting you killed.

To be honest, the gods above provide me with life's essentials, and my skills grant me the rest. I travel light. I have traveled near and far and sewn my oats along the way. It has been whispered that I have sired lord and urchin alike. The tales of my adventures and fame are recited in most every tavern and inn in the Vehrlands. Long ago, I discovered that perception is reality, and one should never let minor facts get in the way of a good story. I deal in the realm of information. The one that controls the message wields true power. I have become a successful merchant of knowledge. Knowledge is power and I demand a high price for my craft. I like the good things in life: a good meal, a stout drink, a fine pipe weed, a soft woman to warm my bed, and the endless possibilities that each sunrise brings. I am an eternal optimist. I am not inhibited by lines drawn on a map, or by oaths of fealty. I go and do as I please, and I rarely answer to anyone other than the council of my Order. I am fortunate to be a distinguished member in the Order of the Bronze Knight. It does come with some responsibilities, but they are miniscule in comparison to the benefits of the Order.

I don't worry about protecting a vast wealth, hereditary lands or dependents. I live off of the excess of others. If I need money, a contract is always readily available. These things I would like to make clear: Start negotiations with 10 times more than you want so when a bargain is struck you get at least as much as you wanted. If it looks like you are going to lose, change the rules in order to win. Always keep everyone guessing. Plan everything, and once something is decided, move forward without regret. Be malleable and fluid in your decision making. Never admit anything; pass the blame to others if at all possible. Most importantly, always have an exit strategy. With regard to material wealth, when the heat is on, keep only the things that don't slow you down.

Abaddon Bloodstone

Skill Level: 8
 Race: Cambion
 A: 12, E: 12, I: 10, P: 14, S: 12
 Magic: Faith (5th) (Benefaction, Damnation)
 Dodge: 12
 Health Points: 40
 Physical Resist: +2
 Mental Resist: +4
 Armor: 1d3 + 2 (masterwork chain), 1d6 - 2 (magic kite shield)
 Initiative Modifier: +1
 Run/swim: 130'/20'
 Skill Points: 82, DP: 0, PP: 0

3/2 x masterwork falchion (+4, +4): 2d4 + 1
 1 x dagger (0, +1): 1d6
 ¼ x hand cannon: 3d6
 ½ x (2) pistols: 1d10

Disciplines: Armor Use I, Blind fighting, Faith Magic (5th), Increased Intellect (8, 9, 10), Increased Strength (11, 12), Language: Taran, Valan, Verlyhne; Literacy, Multiple Attacks (E) I, Weapon Mastery (E) II

Proficiencies: Climbing I, Engineering I, Healing II, Herbalism I, Leadership II, Magic Acuity I, Martial Knowledge I, Perception I, Persuasion I, Religious Knowledge I, Riding I, Running I, Search I, Stealth I, Weapon Making III, Wilderness Lore I

Equipment: masterwork chainmail (+2, str 12), magic shield (+1, +1), masterwork falchion (+2, +2), Drow cloak (+1 hide), Potion of Earth-walking

Background: They say cambions are half demon and half human. I think I believe that. It would explain the inner turmoil I suffer on a daily basis. Don't get me wrong, I have come to enjoy the conflict within. It has given me my dark sense of sarcastic humor that few enjoy (besides me, of course). Unfortunately for others, it also causes me to have a lack of forgiveness. I don't believe in revenge or getting even. I believe in making people pay over and over for their transgressions against me. Killing them would be, well, too easy on them, and certainly not as much fun. In my travels I found the one true focus that seems to ease the turmoil, weapon-making.

Creating lethal works of art takes focus, and it is something I have great skill at. I am not on par with my friend Jye, but I do consider myself more than capable. I have also found another calling which fits my unique personality: the priesthood of Zhol. It fits my yin-yang personality perfectly: Benefaction and Damnation, a wonderful combination. I will either heal you or kill you; it is for Zhol to decide. For my friends of the Bronze Knight, they will always be on the side of Benefaction. For the rest of Twylos, a flip of the coin decides whether I heal you, or help you move on. That might sound a little cold-hearted, but Zhol and Twylos can be cruel. And yet, they can also be a source of great wonder, not unlike me.

Conn Grimstone

Skill Level: 10
 Race: Orc
 A: 18, E: 14, I: 8, P: 8, S: 14
 Magic: none
 Dodge: 19
 Health Points: 56
 Physical Resist: +4
 Mental Resist: 0
 Armor: 1d3+1 (magic chain)
 Initiative: +4

Run/swim: 150'/40'
 Skill Points: 107, DP: 0, PP: 0

2 x magic composite bow (+6 /+8 hit, +3 dam) 1d8 + 1
 1 x Ninvalir Acidtongue (+4/+5 hit, +4 dam) 1d6 + 1
 1 x masterwork hand axe (+4, +3) 1d6 + 1
 1 x masterwork daggers (2) (+5, +4) 1d6

Disciplines: Backstab II, Blind Fighting, Combat Archery, Improved Dodge I, Increased Accuracy I, Increased Agility (17, 18), Increased Intellect (8), Increased Presence (7, 8), Increased Strength (13, 14), Languages: Ceyneian, Irendi, Taran; Literacy, Multiple Attack (J) II, Quick Draw, Quick Shot, Resilience, Weapon Mastery (C) I, Weapon Mastery (J) III

Proficiencies: Acrobatics I, Climbing II, Contacts I, Healing I, Leadership I, Magic Acuity I, Perception III, Riding II, Rope Use I, Running III, Search III, Stealth III, Swimming II, Tracking III, Trade Skill Leather Working I, Weapon Making I, Wilderness Lore III

Equipment: magic composite bow (+2, 0), magic quiver (40 arrows refills 1/15 minutes unless empty then 24 hrs), master work hand axe (+1, +1), 2 masterwork daggers (+1, +1), Ninvalir Acidtongue magic dagger 1d6 + 1 (1d6 acid damage + physical save of 10 or take 1 pt/rnd for 1d6 rnds)

Background: I was born in a small mountain village of miners and hunters along the Zhellan Traderoad, near Brandmoor. It is a tough land, where only the strong survive. My father and mother, Connel and Brena Grimstone, instructed me in the arts of survival and hunting in the harsh lands of Khaedor, maybe too well. Even at a young age I would sneak off into the mountains for days, testing myself. When I returned home with my furs, I would accept my punishment from my mother for making her worry, but I could see that my father was proud of his son. It was worth the beatings I would receive.

My favorite uncle, Brendor, who grew up with my father, would visit the village from time to time. Although he never said where he was off too, he brought me wonderful presents when he visited. He always said that I was exactly like my father when he was my age: straight-forward, strong-willed, independent, but sometimes a little too harsh and serious for a young orc. I guess things never change, except now I am older. But then again, you have to be harsh and serious when you grew up in the wilderness.

On my 14th birthday my uncle handed me a gold inlaid wooden box. He made me promise him that I would not open it until the right time, and that I would know when that time was.

That next year a group of mercenaries came into the village looking for a guide. They were hunting brigands. Against my mother and father's wishes, I volunteered to go with them. I grew to like traveling and exploring the world of Twylos. It was then that I understood why my uncle didn't stay in the village. Traveling gave me opportunities to continually test myself. I spent 3 years with the mercenaries. While I was with the group, I honed my skills and picked up some new deadly ones. Unfortunately, as the days passed, the group began to become more and more violent. They started doing things that I didn't agree with, and they thought they were the Law. One night, the group entered a small village against my warnings. I knew the village, and they murdered all the people, claiming that they were sheltering brigands. Before the attack, they stabbed me in the back and left me for dead. That was the last mistake they would ever make. After I awoke and saw what they had done and I began to hunt them. One by one, they "disappeared".

1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos

When I was done, I returned to my village. It felt good to be home. Shortly after my return, a rider came into the village bearing my uncle's belongings. I knew it was time to open the box. Inside was a silver medallion with the words "Lodge of the Bronze Knight" engraved on it. That is when my mother told me that he was a member. My father and mother told me that they would be honored if I took his place in the Order. The next morning, I said farewell to my parents, and rode off to join the Order. To this day, I live by a set of rules that my parents instilled in me: First, respect must be earned by actions and deeds, not words. Second, always be prepared. The wilderness never gives you a second chance. Third, in the wilderness, equipment is more important than gold, always purchase the best equipment that you can afford. Fourth, only take what you can use, anything more weakens the group. Fifth, never tell someone to do a job that I can do myself, usually better. Sixth, always be honest and direct, it eliminates misunderstandings. Seventh, enemies are only a problem if they are alive. Eight, never cross an orc. These rules have always served me well. You would be wise to follow them in my presence.



Legar Sleth

Skill Level: 9

Race: Orc

A: 11, E: 14, I: 8, P: 8, S: 16 (18)

Magic: none

Dodge: 9

Health Points: 53

Physical Resist: +3

Mental Resist: 0

Armor: 1d8 (full plate), 1d6 - 2 (tower shield), +1 iron skin

Initiative: 0

Run/swim: 100/0

Skill Points: 90, DP: 2, PP: 0

2 x magic broad sword (+5, +7) 1d8 + 1

2 x dagger (+4, +6) 1d6

¼ hand cannon (+1, 0) 3d6

1 x heavy crossbow (+1, 0) 2d4 + 1

Disciplines: Advanced Weapon Mastery (melee) III, Armor Use III, Critical Hit, Increased Accuracy I, Increased Intellect (8) Increased Physical Resist I, Iron Skin, Language: Ceyneaine, Zhellan; Last Stand, Literacy, Multiple Attacks II, Resilience

Proficiencies: Contacts (Llesendor) III, Gambling II, Healing I, Heraldry I, Local Knowledge (Tzalvas) I, Local Knowledge (Llesendor) I, Lock Picking I, Perception II, Persuasion I, Regional Knowledge (Vehrlands) I, Ride III, Search I, Stealth I, Track II, Wilderness Lore II

Equipment: magic broad sword (+1, +1), hand cannon shot (20), crossbow bolts (14), spyglass, fine boots, hooded cloak, satchel (rope, grappling hook, rations), 3 white healing salves, bracers of might +2, heavy warhorse, plate barding

Background: Legar Sleth came from an awful part of Tzalvas. An abusive father beat him and his mother, and she died while he was very young. By the time Legar was twelve, he could take the thrashings no more. He wasn't yet as big and mean as his father, so he took the best option that he saw: Legar stowed away in a caravan leaving heading for Vesbridge.

Legar stayed low and remained hidden easily, scrounging what he could and staying out of sight. Over time, he developed trust and he joined the caravan openly, serving as a scout and a hunter. Over time, other caravans hired him, and Legar eventually gained a great deal of knowledge about the open road and the surrounding wilds.

That didn't last. Not long after Legar turned 24, the caravan he was scouting for was ambushed and pillaged by raiders. The caravan had been too slow and he was too far ahead to warn or defend them.

While burying the murdered travelers, Legar found a bit of silver and other coin, as well as a seal that belonged to the Lodge of the Bronze Knight.

Legar is an outspoken member of the Lodge, fearless of men, and of the consequences of his actions.

Turok Lakor

Skill Level: 9

Race: Reptilian

A: 16, E: 12, I: 8, P: 7, S: 14

Magic: none

Dodge: 17

Health Points: 42

Physical Resist: +3

Mental Resist: 0

Armor: 1d3 + 2 (masterwork chain)

Initiative: +3

Run/swim: 150/20

Skill Points: 93, DP: 2, PP: 0

5/2 x satharian claymore (+7, +6) 3d4

5/2 x short sword (+5, +4) 1d6 + 1

5/2 x dagger (+5, +4) 1d6

1 x composite long bow (+2, +1) 1d8 + 1

Disciplines: Advanced Weapon Mastery (melee) III, Blind Fighting, Critical Hit, Improved Dodge I, Increased Accuracy I, Increased Agility (15, 16), Increased Mental Resist I, Language: Gossik, Taran; Multiple Attack III, Resilience, Split Attack

Proficiencies: Acrobatics I, Animal Handling (canine) II, Climbing II, Jumping I, Local Knowledge II, Perception II, Riding I, Rope Use I, Running III, Search I, Stealth II, Tracking II, Wilderness Lore I

Equipment: magic satharian claymore (+2, +2), 40 arrows, half-wolf guard dog, 4 healing potions (2d4 + 2), spyglass, 100' rope, grappling hook, fur coat, climbing gear

Background: Turok is a warrior, plain and simple. He is not fettered by the prejudices common to his race. He likes a good drink and the occasional practical joke (be it at his or someone else's expense). There is a well-established superstition evolving around Turok: if he is lying down when a fight begins, everything will go well, however if he is awake and ready, the fight will be rough and possibly go badly. Turok was first interested in the Lodge because of Razeel, the dragon priest, who supposedly led the Lodge.

Grimm

Skill Level: 7

Race: Goblin

A: 16, E: 12, I: 14, P: 8, S: 10

Magic: Hermetic (4th)

Dodge: 17

Health Points: 37

Physical Resist: +2/+4 vs. toxins

Mental Resist: +1

Armor: 1d2 + 1 (superior studded leather)

Initiative: +3

Run/swim: 130'/30'

Skill Points: 77, DP: 0, PP: 0

1 x mace (+5, +2) 2d4

1 x hand axe (+3, +1) 1d6 + 1

1 x dagger (+2, 0) 1d6

1 x short bow (+2, 0) 1d8

Disciplines: Backstab I, Blind Fighting, Hermetic Magic Potential (4th), Improved Accuracy I, Improved Dodge I, Increased Presence (8), Language: Ceyneian, Valan, Taran; Literacy, Quick Draw, Weapon Mastery (A) I

Proficiencies: Acrobatics II, Animal Handling (primate) I, Animal Handling (griffin), Arcane Knowledge I, Engineering I, Lock Picking I, Magic Acuity I, Perception II, Riding I, Rope Use I, Running I, Search II, Sleight of Hand I, Stealth II, Tracking I, Wilderness Lore I

Equipment: superior studded leather (+1), masterwork mace (+2, +1), Drow silk cloak (+1 concealment in the dark), 2 potions of healing (2d4 + 2), 1 potion of healing (3d4 + 3), a raven (Storm), a spider monkey (Hugo), half war dog-half dire wolf (Loki)

Grumm

Skill Level: 7

Race: Goblin

A: 10, E: 12, I: 10, P: 14, S: 9

Magic: Ritual (3rd), Hedge (3rd)

Dodge: 10

Health Points: 37

Physical Resist: +1/+3 vs. toxins (+1 additional vs. magic)

Mental Resist: +2/+3 vs. magic

Armor: none

Initiative: 0

Run/swim: 120'/20'

Skill Points: 77, DP: 3, PP: 0

Disciplines: Extra Spell Point (2), Hedge Magic Potential (3rd), Increased Mental Resist I, Increased Physical Resist I, Languages: Taran, Ny'ryeth; Literacy, Magic Potency II, Magic Resistance I, Proficiencies (2), Ritual Magic Potential (3rd)

Proficiencies: Dweomecraft Hedge I, Healing IV, Herbalism IV, Local Knowledge I, Perception I, Search I, Stealth I, Tracking I, Trade Skills: Agriculture II, Butcher II, Cook, II, Bone craft II; Wilderness Lore I

Background: It was a bright moonlit night when the twin goblins were born. Their family gathered to celebrate the unusual birth. At the moment Grimm was born the night was split by lightning and thunder (which was odd, because there was not a cloud in the sky). Grumm followed closely after and every animal, domestic and wild, cried out at once (whether in tribute or terror is unknown). The two are chaos incarnate. The brothers Grimm and Grumm have a flare for the magical, but their other skills are equally impressive. They are nearly inseparable, and neither can sit still for long. However, when focused on an objective, they are a force to be reckoned with, and the gods help anyone who harms either of them.

Ivan

Skill Level: 8

Race: Human

A: 10, E: 12, I: 10, P: 14, S: 10

Magic: Ritual (5th)

Dodge: 11 (7)

Health Points: 45

Physical Resist: +1, +3 vs. magic

Mental Resist: +4, +6 vs. magic

Armor: 1d3 + 1 (superior chain), 1d6 - 3 (shield)

Initiative: +2

Run/swim: 120'/20'

Skill Points: 80, DP: 0, PP: 0

1 x magic dagger (+2, +2) 1d6

Disciplines: Armor Use II, Extra Hit Point (4), Extra Spell Point (4), Improved Dodge I, Improved Initiative 2, Increased Mental Resist II, Increased Physical Resist I, Magic Potency II, Magic Resist II, Ritual Magic Potential (5th)

Proficiencies: Artistic (sculpture) IV, Contacts (Vehrlands) II, Leadership III, Magic Acuity II, Perception III, Persuasion II, Search II, Trade Skill (gem cutting) III

Equipment: superior chain mail (+1, 0), shield, magic dagger (+2, +2), fine riding horse, traveling shrine of bones, gems, talismans, etc; familiar – Spike the weasel.

Background: Ivan is a Duuran. He is from a clan of wanderer-traders that can be found anywhere between Mask and Vesbridge, usually no more than twenty miles from the Verhlands Ocean Road. His grandfather is a highly-regarded shaman in the clan, and although Ivan doesn't understand all the details, he believes his grandfather underwent the guarded ritual to become a Duuran Bloodlord long ago. The clan has about 70 people that call it home, but at any given time, an extended family or two are visiting, with friends or offspring who previously left the clan. Ivan's clan gathers herbs and hunts animals, both common and exotic. They eat the meat and trade the animal parts, which occasionally are more prized than the finest herbs. They

1.2 A Player's Guide to Twylos

primarily trade with the humans on the road or in the towns along the road, but they also trade with nearby goblin and gnoles tribes. Many that encounter them regard them as gypsies or hunters, and some zealous orcs might even describe them as barbarians. The clansmen speak the Duuran tongue amongst one another, but they are all fluent with Verlainen as well, which is the language they use when trading along the road.

Ivan's father departed from the clan when he was very young. His father had a knack for finding the finest herbs, and he found that he could get much more for them if he personally ventured to the great city of Llesendor to trade them. In Llesendor Ivan's father enjoyed the city life greatly, and although he frequently went back to the clan, over time the city became his full-time home. When Ivan was nine his father convinced his mother to bring the rest of the family to the city. Ivan was sent to a tutor who would teach him to speak, read, and write in Ceyneian.

The tutor was a Duuran and introduced Ivan to the druids at the temple of Vorn. His mother couldn't accept the city life and separation from her family. After just over a year she returned with Ivan's youngest brother who was only two years old. His sister stayed on until his father's next visit to the clan, when an older boy their demonstrated his desire to court her. She then determined to stay with her mom. The separation of Ivan's mother and father's was not due to ill-will, but because they simply could not tolerate permanently living in the same places. Eventually, Ivan's mother took another man within the clan.

Ivan spent much of his time in Llesendor with his tutor or at the temple with the druids. His father was usually preoccupied with his business and other associations. Still, Ivan's favorite times were traveling with his father, who continued to journey at least twice a year to visit the clan, trading along the way. Together, they would be on the road for as much as two months of each year. In addition to finding fine herbs, his father had the gift of gab. He could trade anything to anybody it seemed. Yet, what Ivan particularly liked, were the morning and evening meals on the road. His father would drop business and talk about the old times. He told stories of his own father and grandfather. He even discussed ancient legends. (No mention of the naturalists or the gnoles was ever made). A couple of times Ivan stayed with the clan for a few months while his father traveled about on business. While there, he discussed the temple of Vorn with his grandfather. His grandfather also taught him to create small figurines and sculptures with bones, rocks, and wood.

As the years passed, Ivan's ability to create totems and figurines became modestly impressive. He also began incorporating precious gems into his work. His father was somewhat amused by this, and took the opportunity to teach Ivan how to trade the work, and how to solicit the desires of patrons to get the highest price. His father was less amused with Ivan's decision to use his funds to purchase armor and a shield. However, this proved irrelevant; upon returning from the north recently, Ivan learned that his father disappeared. He had not been seen or heard from for many weeks.

Ivan is adept with Ritual magic. It was a good fit, his following the old Duuran ways. The elemental and primal lords of the wild, and even the archonic and demonic beings of the many planes, better understand the way of Vorn, more so than the humanoid found in the Vehrland (Ivan's own personal traveling shrine of totems and figurines are dominated by elementals). Ivan understands that all have their place. He feels no animosity towards the followers of other gods. He even respects those of the Church of Winter. He feels that they are only doing their part in the cycle that is Vorn. Unfortunately Ivan has encountered a lot of animosity in this world. Contempt and disdain based in prejudice dominate the behavior of most beings. Because of this, Ivan usually dislikes all humanoids that aren't a part of the clan.

As this attitude wouldn't allow him to do well in Llesendor, he has learned to use the persuasive charm his father taught him, most of the time. However, many would not want to know what thoughts are occurring behind his greetings. It is rare, but sometimes a being will demonstrate his prejudices with such poor behavior that Ivan simply cannot stand it. He retaliates not by scolding and correcting these ignorant fools, but by mocking their prejudice with his own, with which he casts out with a sharp tongue.

Ivan the Mildly Annoyed... From the meager background of a traveling gypsy, Ivan followed his father south to learn the mercantile trade, and after his father's death, succeeded him as a council member of the Lodge of the Bronze Knight. Since taking a demotion to a Journeyman (copper seal) Ivan has focused his efforts on his mercantile store (which is just down the street from the Lodge). He has a business partnership with Gabriel, the collector of antiquities. Ivan is a persuasive leader, as well as a superior gem cutter, and grand master sculptor. Ivan erected a shrine in a corner at the Lodge, and sometimes invites other members to learn more of his god. He keeps what his gypsy grandfather taught him of ritual magicks to himself. Ivan has a very ornamental dagger, and the basement of his store has 3 zombies and 1 mummy.

Sperkol O'Brien

Skill Level: 10

Race: Gnome

A: 14, E: 12, I: 10, P: 14, S: 10

Magic: Faith (6th)

Dodge: 16

Health Points: 43

Physical Resist: +2

Mental Resist: +2

Armor: 1d2 + 1 (masterwork std. leather) 1d6 - 2 (masterwork shield)

Initiative: +2

Run/swim: 120'/30'

Skill Points: 100, DP: 0, PP: 0

1 x masterwork mace (+2, +1) 2d4

1 x short bow (+1, 0) 1d8

Disciplines: Armor Use I, Faith Magic Potential (6th), Improved Dodge I, Increased Agility (13, 14), Increased Presence (13, 14)

Proficiencies: Ancient History I, Extra Planar Knowledge I, Heraldry II, Leadership III, Performance (storytelling) IV, Perception II, Persuasion IV, Religious Knowledge IV, Riding II, Search II, Swimming I, Wilderness Lore I

Equipment: masterwork studded leather (dyed bright green) (+1, 0), masterwork shield (image of Kithain) (+1, +1), Plumed hat, ioun stone (quartz +1 dodge), pony with studded leather barding

Background: Sperkol O'Brien is every adventurer's dream companion; at least, he likes to think so. He fancies himself to be everyone's friend and long-loved companion. Rarely is he proven otherwise. Giving every stranger the benefit of the doubt is no small task, but whom better for the job than a three foot ego-giant, packed with stories of adventure, of demons and their slayers, of dragons and their kinsman, of races long thought lost only to resurface again, of mythical weaponry uncovered, and of ancient tombs and their secrets revealed! Sperkol has seen it all and has laid witness to greatness! At least he'll convince you of it with a flashy story and an overwhelming charm that could make a rabid boar snuggle close by the fire. After all, Sperkol relies upon his silver tongue for survival; combat is such a silly way to end the possibility of a friendship with someone! We all know: "Everything in life deserves a chance... except gnoles, of course, the foul beasties..." "Oh! That reminds me of a tale..."



Welcome to the World of Twylos.

Featuring a dark and vivid history, Gregory Vrill's World of Twylos campaign setting provides provocative descriptions of locations, personalities, items, creatures, folklore, religions, organizations, and works of art.

Game Masters and Players of the Wayfarers Fantasy Roleplaying Game are invited to explore the vast secrets of Twylos, ...and possibly to alter its fate.

Wayfarers™
The World of Twylos
∞
PDF Version

<http://yoldegamingcompany.com>