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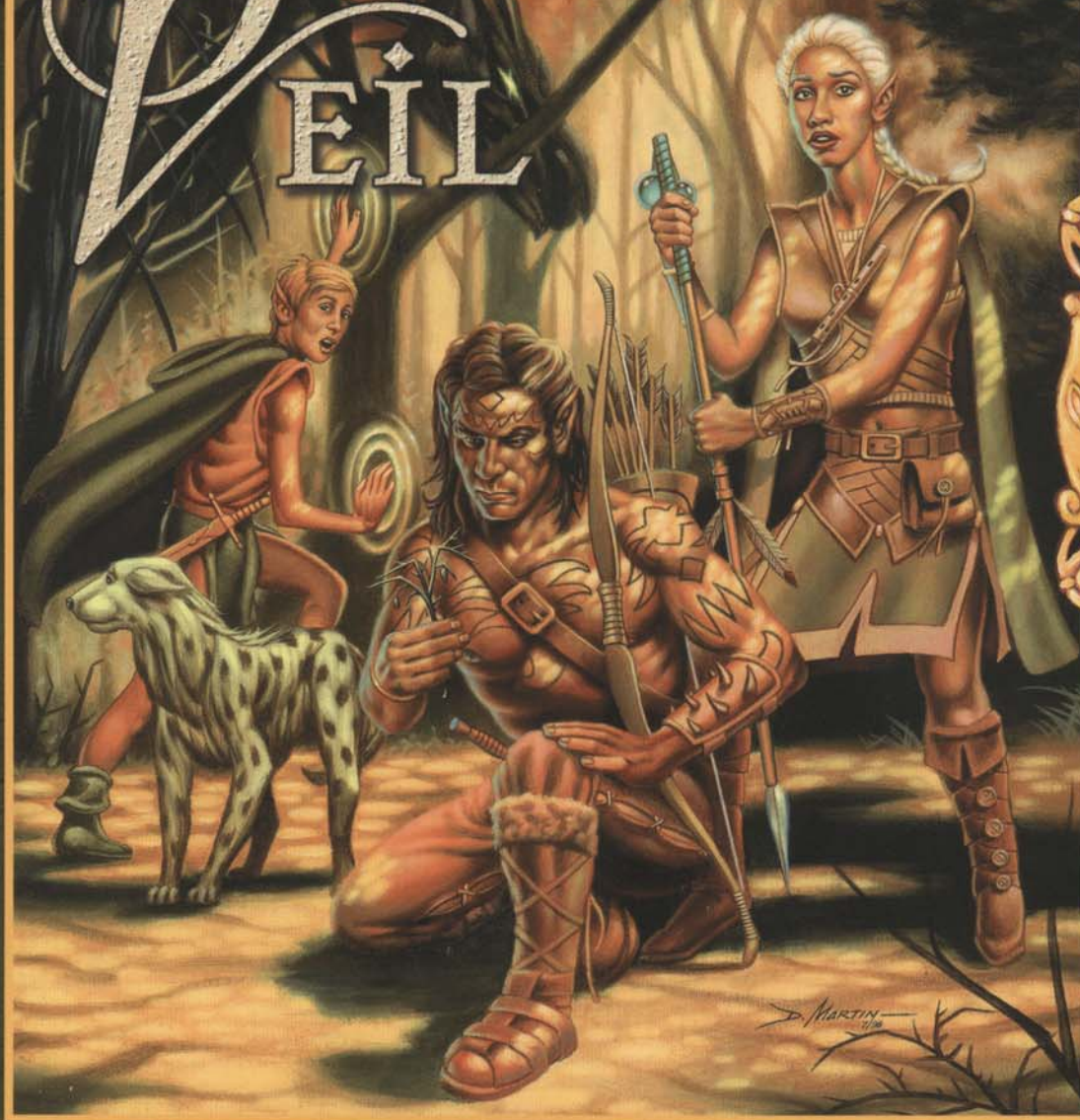
1984

Saga

1999

THE SYLVAN PEIL

A Battle Lines Adventure



WILLIAM W. CONNORS
AND MIRANDA HORNER

SAGA®
GAME RULES

THE RAISING OF THE SHIELD

I remember the day my fellow woodshaper came and whispered in my ear. "Surely you wish the forest to remain safe from the ravages of the outside world? Isn't that why you build defensive hedges—to keep the unwanted ones out?"

He could see the answer in my eyes.

"If I were to tell you of a way to create a barrier to keep every living thing out, you would use it, wouldn't you?" The last he said almost tauntingly. Knowing the answer, he outlined the plan.

Even today, I cringe at the thought of what we did. He gathered eight woodshapers for the ceremony. With joined hands, we stood in a circle around the tree that has grown within a magical shield ever since the Summer of Chaos. He passed around us, dropping a strange amulet over each of our necks. When he finished, we stepped up to the invisible barrier surrounding the tree—and then took a step further. With a silent shimmer of iridescent colors, the barrier fell away from us and rose back into place once we'd passed. We now stood within its boundary.

Kneeling in front of the luminescent tree, we each placed our hands on the trunk and concentrated. As our consciousness linked with it, our wish became known. Shield us, we asked. Spread your protection over the whole of the forest. Seconds passed. Then we sensed the tree's assent.

We took sprigs gathered from one of the barrier hedges and laid them on the tree's gnarled roots. The sprigs wilted and withered into dust before our eyes. That was when we realized what we had done. Though we had sensed that the shielded tree drew on a source of energy for its barrier, we had assumed that light from the sun, moon, and stars sustained it. Now we knew otherwise: It fed on the essence of life. And we had learned this truth too late. The shield was already rapidly spreading outward to encompass the Sivanesti Forest.

Afterward, we woodshapers present at the ceremony would gather periodically to discuss the ramifications of the shield's draining effect. At first, it seemed that the vast well of forest life could sustain it with no ill consequences. However, as the dragons continued to fight overhead and elves, humans, and other races attempted to find a way into the barrier's protection, we saw that the shield drew energy far too quickly for the forest to rebound. As trees withered to ash, we approached our fellow woodshaper to ask how to attune the shield to draw energy from animal life as well as plant life. We hoped by increasing the pool of energy, the drain on any single source would occur slowly enough for each life to continually replenish itself.

He led us to the tree. Once more we formed a circle and he dropped the amulets around our necks. We laid our hands to the tree and linked our awareness to it. Please draw upon animal life force as well, we asked. The trees are dying from your drain. With its assent, we sliced our palms enough to allow blood to flow freely, then touched our palms to the tree for the last time.

After that day, one by one the participating woodshapers grew sick and died of a wasting sickness—helped along, I am sure, by the who led us down this disastrous path. Only those of us at the original ritual can remove the shield from around the forest. I alone remain alive, yet even now I sense the vile woodshaper directing the shield's hunger at me. I weep for the remaining elves and the living forest. Eventually, the tree will kill all life within the shield.

In my death, let there be life,

Padarrin Oakbranch, 223c



A Battle Lines Adventure

THE SYLVAN VEIL

An Epic Adventure
in the Silvanesti Forest

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Special Thanks To Stan! and to Paul B. Thompson, Tonya R. Carter, Douglas Niles,
and Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman, whose novels provided this book
with descriptive quotes to begin certain chapters.

Dedications

For Sue Weinlein Cook and Carrie A. Bebris,
women of beauty, intelligence, and compassion; friends in times good and bad. —WWC
To Shaun Horner, whose unceasing love and support helped me get where I am today. —MH

The authors gratefully acknowledge the original pioneers of Krynn:

Larry Elmore, Jeff Grubb, Harold Johnson, Douglas Niles, Carl Smith, Michael Williams
—and of course, Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman.

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Authors' Foreword

When this product first took form back in the spring of 1997, many changes started happening around the office. The biggest one included the acquisition of TSR by Wizards of the Coast. Not only was someone else running the company now, but many of our colleagues moved to Seattle to continue with the company. During the transition, this book, which was originally supposed to be a complete source box on all of the elves of Krynn, was put on hold.

Another change that occurred with the acquisition was the fact that Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman joined our team as creative consultants. Every six months or so, they meet with the DRAGONLANCE® product group to discuss the direction of the line. In our Summer 1998 meeting, the focus of several products shifted to help prepare the way for the War of Souls story arc. One of these products was the elf project. Our team decided to focus in depth on the Silvanesti elves and their sylvan shield instead of discussing all the elves of Krynn more broadly. Thanks to the deft guidance of Sue Cook, the excellent input of Steve Miller, the lightning-fast prose and conversions of Steve Kenson, and the superlative editorial eye of Carrie Bebris, the adventure that reveals the secrets of the Silvanesti Shield and the events that occurred behind it rests in front of you in its final incarnation.

In a way, it's interesting that while TSR and Wizards of the Coast have unified, the elves of Krynn still have not. Like the humans around them, the elves are splintered. They are not united in the face of the many perils of the Fifth Age. The Great Dragons are aware of this discord and do what they can to foster it. After all, a united elven race would pose a great threat to their power.

This adventure focuses on the Silvanesti elves who live in the town of Sithelnost. Until recently, that town was protected by the great shield that hung over the whole of the Silvanesti Forest. In recent years, however, the shield has begun to falter somewhat. Those who live near its edges have seen the forest gradually wither and die. Whether the shield is poisoning the wilderness in some way, draining the essence of life from it, or otherwise inhibiting the flora and fauna is impossible to say—or at least, that was the case prior to this adventure. In *The Sylvan Veil*, the heroes learn secrets about the Silvanesti, the forest in which they dwell, and the shield that protects them. Indeed, they will learn things that even the Silvanesti do not suspect. Exactly how they use this information after the adventure will help to shape the future of every DRAGONLANCE campaign.

The Sylvan Veil is the first product in the Battle Lines series of books and adventures and serves as a prelude to the War of Souls novels. Readers and players can look forward to more stories—including a new trilogy by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman—about this tumultuous period. Future adventures will focus on more of Krynn's races and how they interact with each other during this critical time.

If you're interested in reading even more about the Silvanesti elves, here is a brief list of the sources we used to flesh out this product:

- ✧ The Elven Nations Trilogy by Paul B. Thompson, Tonya R. Carter, and Douglas Niles
- ✧ *Tree Lords* by John Terra
- ✧ *The Dragons* by Douglas Niles
- ✧ "The Sacrifice" short story in *The Second Generation* anthology by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman

Miranda Hobbes



Table of Contents

Prologue: Shielded Life

Adventure Background	4
A History Lesson	4
Current Events	5
Foreword to Aleaha's Journal ..	6
<i>Sidebar:</i> The Truth About the	
Silvanesti Shield	6
Aleaha's Journal	7
<i>Sidebar:</i> Letter from a Cleric	
of Quenesti-Pah	8
<i>Sidebar:</i>	
Magic Inside the Shield ..	10
Roleplaying a Silvanesti Elf	15
Birth	15
Childhood	15
Adolescence	16
Adulthood	17
Mature Adulthood	19
<i>Sidebar:</i> The Silvanesti	
Social Order	20
Silvanesti Roles and Kits	22
Silvanesti Magic Items	25

Introduction: The Story

Heroes Old and New	29
Roselenna	30
Firemane	31
Ladine Dralathalas	32
Avonathalonus	33
Blackeagle	34
Klen	35
Vorst	36

Act One: Through the Woods

Scene One:	
Meetings in the Woods	36
Scene Two: Refugees	40
Scene Three: Ogre Attack!	42

Scene Four: Trail of Tears	43
<i>Sidebar:</i> The Ashen Wastes ..	46

Interlude: The Town of Sithelnost

Politics	47
Places in Sithelnost	48
People of Sithelnost	50

Color Section

<i>Map:</i> Sithelnost	53
<i>Map:</i> The Irda Tree	54
<i>Map:</i> Silvanost and Environs ..	54
<i>Map:</i> Silvanost	55
<i>Map:</i> Silvanesti Forest	56

Act Two: The Dying Land

Scene One:	
Arrival in Sithelnost	58
<i>Sidebar:</i>	
The Heart of the Irda	60
Scene Two: Against All Hope ..	62
<i>Sidebar:</i> Irda Lore	64
Scene Three: Swift Water	66
Scene Four: Into the Fire	68
Scene Five:	
The Silvanesti Shield	70
Scene Six: Daganee's Tomb ...	72
Scene Seven:	
Final Resting Place	74
Scene Eight: Returning North ..	77
Scene Nine: Back in Sithelnost ..	79

Act Three: Dragon's Pawn

Scene One:	
Murder and Mayhem	80
Scene Two: Brute Force	84
Scene Three: Lifesaving Rite ...	86

Epilogue: A New Chapter

Current Conditions	88
Important Figures of Silvanesti ..	88
Governmental Figures	88
Other Silvanesti Groups	90
Alhana Starbreeze	91
Jahran Kaldeist	93
The Legion of Steel	94
Cyan Bloodbane	94
Dark Knights and Ogres	94
The Sinthal-Elish and Silvanesti	
House System	95
House Structure	95
House Royal	95
House Cleric	96
House Protector	96
House Mystic	97
House Metalline	97
House Advocate	98
House Mason	98
House Gardener	99
House Woodshaper	100
House Servitor	100
Other Houses and Guilds ..	101
Geography of Silvanesti	101
Barrier Hedge	101
The Forest	102
Silvanost	102
<i>Sidebar:</i> Silvanesti Gods ...	104
Other Population Centers ..	105
Elven Artifacts	110
The Diviner of Life	110
The Heart of the Irda	110
The Icon of Truth	110
Mantooth	111
Quinari's Key	111
Redeemer	112

PROLOGUE



Sithas dropped his hands to his hips and looked over the gathering with stern resolve. "But make no mistake! The preservation of our race is of the greatest importance. Not merely the purity of our blood, but the purity of our customs, traditions, and laws..."

—Sithas, addressing
the elven assembly in 2216PC,
Firstborn

For decades, the Sylvan Veil has shielded the Silvanesti from the outside world. In that time, mystery has shrouded the elves' activities, leaving players and Narrators alike to wonder what events transpired behind the shimmering barrier.

This Prologue provides important background details about the Silvanesti's recent past through "A History Lesson," below, as well as through the section called "Aleaha's Journal," ostensibly penned by a high-ranking elven scout with introductions from the journal's transcribers. Information critical for playing a Silvanesti hero—including the stages of elven life, kits and roles, and traditional magical items—appears in later sections. Narrators are encouraged to read this Prologue, sharing appropriate information with their players, before proceeding to the adventure itself. More cultural details about the Silvanesti and seeds for further adventures appear in the Epilogue.

Throughout this Prologue, as well as the rest of this book, game mechanics appear wherever the roleplaying situation calls for a specific rule. SAGA® game rules appear in the running text or in paragraphs preceded by a leaf icon (✻), while rules for the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game appear either in color italic type within curved brackets *{like this}* or in a separate paragraph preceded by a dragon icon (🐉).

Adventure Background

The Sylvan Veil takes place primarily in the town of Sithelnost and the northwestern extents of the Silvanesti Forest. In the course of the story, the heroes travel south nearly as far as the town of Shalost and northwest to the edges of Blöde.

Until lately, this region was protected from the outside world by the Silvanesti Shield. In recent weeks, however, that mystical barrier has begun to shrink. At the start of this adventure, the shield has retracted to

expose Sithelnost. Although this change is unknown to the rest of the world, word has begun to get out—to the elves' ancient enemies, the ogres.

A History Lesson

The regions in and around the Silvanesti Forest have always been a focus of important activity. Because of the isolationist nature of the elves who live there, however, many of these events have passed unnoticed by the outside world.

The roots of this self-imposed solitude date back a thousand years. After the Kinslayer War, when a faction of elves seceded to form the nation of Qualinesti, the land of Silvanesti began a strict isolationist policy that has endured through the ages. Although the Silvanesti could not avoid *all* contact with the rest of Krynn, they did their best.

The Nightmare

The most noteworthy event in recent Silvanesti history is, without a doubt, Lorac's Nightmare. The very mention of it causes the elves to tremble with the memory of a disaster that almost claimed their beloved forest.

Although the elves had defended their land in the Dragon Wars, an attack during the War of the Lance took them unawares. As elves fled, their king, Lorac, sought to destroy the marauding dragons by turning one of their own artifacts, a dragon orb, against them. It was the orb that triumphed, however, taking control of the king. Under the influence of that powerful relic, Lorac was assailed with magical nightmares that twisted his forest into the Bleeding Wood. Ancient trees, each with a name and personality of its own, cracked and rotted as their trunks grew gnarled. The Thon-Thalas River ran thick with ooze and became infested with revolting mutations. The Tower of the Stars withered, as did Lorac's spirit.

Long after the War of the Lance ended and Lorac died, the blight remained. It took twenty years of struggling labor under the leadership of Porthios, monarch of the Qualinesti, to banish the Nightmare and restore the elven wood to its former beauty.

At last, the exiled elves could reclaim their enchanted forest home. The ancient wood once again enjoyed its ancestral beauty. The emerald boughs of the slender trees formed a translucent canopy high above. Shafts of amber sunlight pierced the greenery to sparkle upon the clear, glittering waters of the Thon-Thalas. The elves, with the patient attention for which their race is renowned, reshaped their capital, Silvanost, into the brilliant

citadel of living wood, marble, and crystal it once was. New structures celebrating the rebirth of the forest, mixed with lovingly restored buildings, fairly shone with life. The Tower of the Stars, home of the Silvanesti Speaker and seat of the nation's power, again stood tall.

And then the Chaos War erupted.

The Shield

The horror of the Nightmare years made the elves reluctant to expose their land to new hazards, and they successfully avoided the worst of the Chaos War's destruction—even remaining free of Dark Knight conquest that fateful summer. As the great wyrms warred among themselves in the Dragon Purge that followed the war, the Silvanesti did nothing. When the surviving dragons carved up Ansalon, the elves sought only to avoid their attention. Considering themselves Krynn's superior beings, the elves shunned all other races—whom they held responsible for making a mess of their beloved world.

Through the use of powerful magic and arcane secrets gleaned from sources unknown to the rest of the world, the elves erected a magical field around Silvanesti. The magical barrier prevented all manner of creatures—dragons, beasts, and humans—from entering the enchanted wood. Finally, the long-cherished elven dream of absolute isolation was realized.

Current Events

A number of important factors shape the attitudes of the Silvanesti in the Fifth Age. Many of these are related to the mystical shield.

When the elves created their shield, they unwittingly trapped the green dragon Cyan Bloodbane inside it. Now, the Silvanesti find themselves fighting for their freedom and very survival against a fell creature who considers their forest home his own.

Military Governor Konnal currently rules the Silvanesti Forest. He holds power because most Silvanesti reject Silvanoshei (son of their dark elf queen Alhana Starbreeze and Porthios) as heir to the throne. Those loyal to Alhana, however, see the governor as a usurper and a quisling. They believe that Silvanoshei's rule would unite all of the elf nations again. While these squabbles rage within House Royal, Silvanesti has no Speaker. Perhaps worse, Silvanoshei himself has recently gone missing—should he actually be called upon to assume his birthright, no one would know where to find him.

Despite their efforts at isolation, the Silvanesti have not been forgotten by the outside world. Some sneer

at the elves and consider them cowards, while others attempt to establish contact despite the shield. For example, the Legion of Steel (a military order operating out of the brass dragon Iyesta's realm) seeks a way to pierce the barrier. Working with the exiled Alhana Starbreeze, they champion the cause of elven unity and hope to make the Silvanesti an active force in the East. If the secret of the shield's operation can be uncovered and used to protect other free lands, so much the better.

Foreword to Aleaha's Journal

By Bertrem of the Order of Aesthetics

A few months ago, a young Silvanesti elf calling himself Draline Mistweaver brought a water-logged book to me. He claimed to have found it outside Sithelnost and asked whether I or one of my order would transcribe as much of it as we could. He praised our techniques for handling damaged manuscripts, stating that they would enable him to learn more of what the book held than if he attempted to work with it himself.

Identifying the writing as Silvanesti, I assigned Farana Silvertreth to the task. The sodden text required several weeks of work and careful handling. Farana discovered that the journal's writer, one Aleaha Takmarin, had kept this journal over the course of many years. Although much of the manuscript has been lost to us due to its condition, Farana pieced together events and crafted them into sections for easier reference. While this organization does not reflect a traditional journal style, I have to agree with Farana that in the absence of many specific dates, some method of categorization is necessary. Since Farana has a lyrical bent, she chose colorful section titles.

After she completed the transcription, I returned the resulting manuscript to the young elf. He immediately set about reading it, devouring the text within the space of an hour and rereading numerous sections. When finished, he handed the text back to me, looking angered by what he had read. That's when I finally perceived a familiar mannerism about him. He had reminded me of someone when he first visited me, and his next words confirmed the resemblance.

"I cannot believe those fools have done this to themselves," he said. "I have not seen my forest since shortly after that puppet king Gilthas ascended to the Qualinesti throne, and now I may never see it again." Though his actual words would not have given him away, his delivery did: I believe that Dalamar stood before me in some magical disguise.



The Truth About the Silvanesti Shield

The information in this sidebar is for the Narrator's eyes only.

Exactly how the Silvanesti Shield works is a secret known only to a few Silvanesti. Most remain ignorant of its nature. Yet even those who think they have full knowledge don't truly realize the peril the shield presents.

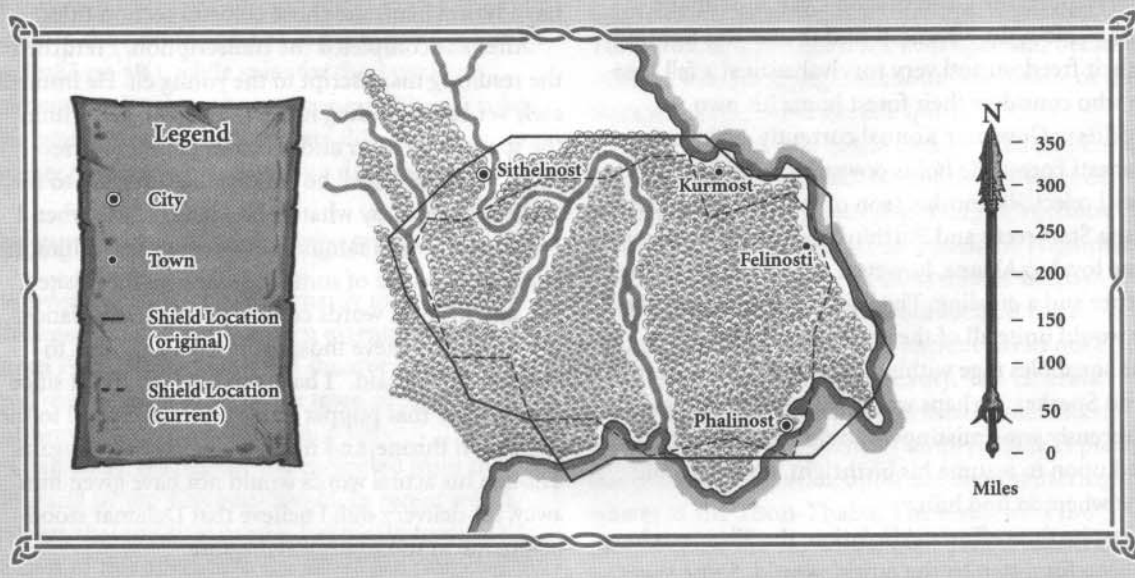
Although most folk believe that the shield is a solid barrier—a force field of sorts—that one could approach and touch, this is not the case. Rather, the shield forms a mystical ward. Those who approach it gradually become convinced that a barrier lies before them that cannot be crossed. Thus, people cannot pierce the shield because they simply *believe* that it is impossible to do so. So strong is this belief that no one conscious of the shield can disbelieve its existence.

Because of the shield's nature, the effects of trying to pierce this mystical barrier vary from person to person. Those who attempt to blast their way through it with brute force (perhaps with lightning bolts or blasting powder) might find their efforts meeting what appears to be an indestructible wall. Persons who try to teleport through it might find themselves transported beyond it, appearing as far from the other side of the shield as they had intended to be within it. In short, Narrators are free to determine the results of any attempt to break the shield, keeping in mind the personalities of the heroes and the methods they employ.

That the shield forms a perfect circular boundary is another common misconception. All reports describe it as hemispherical, and most people envision it as an invisible bubble. While once this image was accurate, recently the shield has become very irregularly shaped. One could approximate the shield's outer edges (prior to this adventure) by locating the Silvanesti cities of Sithelnost, Kurmost, Felinosti, and Phalinost on a map. The outer fringes of the shield, which centers more or less on the town of Silvanost, lie roughly 20 miles past these points. Thus, the shield extends about 275 miles from the elven capital at its greatest extent. In the southwest, the barrier ends much closer, reaching only about 150 miles from Silvanost. Large sections of the elven forest actually lie beyond the shield today, though this was not so twenty years ago.

When the adventure opens, the shield has contracted to exclude the town of Sithelnost from its protection. Those influential in the Silvanesti government know of the shield's mutating shape, but even they don't realize the shield's basic nature is what caused the retraction. The Silvanesti Shield derives its power from the life forces of those whom it protects. In the years since its creation, it has been draining away the spirits and energy of all life forms within it. Because no new living creatures can cross the barrier (thus providing additional sustenance), the shield has reached a point where the remaining life energy of the weakened beings inside can no longer sustain it at its current size. The shield compensated by contracting in tiny amounts around its entire border, but at last had to make a major shift—exposing the town of Sithelnost while its unsuspecting residents slept.

Fueled by life, the Silvanesti Shield has recently taken on a life force of its own. Though not entirely sentient, it has basic instincts and emotions and can be communicated with on a primitive level. In the course of *The Sylvan Veil*, the heroes discover this unsuspected property of the shield—making them the first ones aware of its growing intelligence.



The young elf expounded no more on the subject. "I thank you for your help, Bertrem," he said simply. "You may keep the text for the Library." With that, he left.

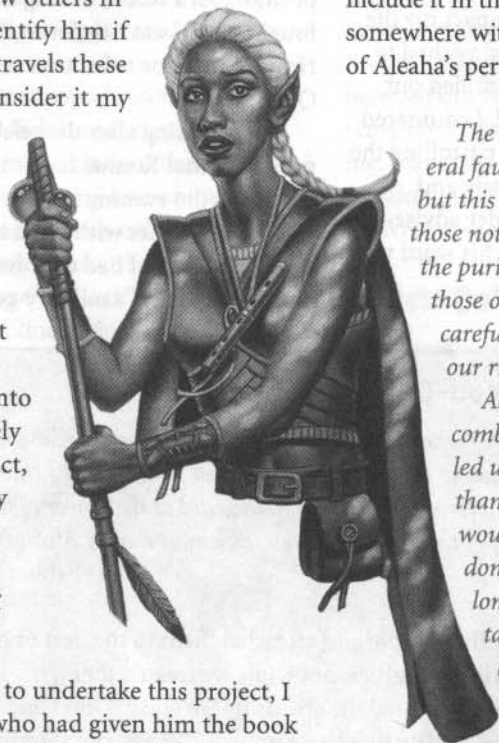
I watched him go, wondering why Dalamar would take such pains to disguise himself. I would like to believe that only one trained to notice everything would have picked up on his disguise, but I know of a few others in Palanthas who could identify him if given a hint that he yet travels these lands. While I do not consider it my place to reveal such a clue, I do believe that I must mention this incident here to give the text perspective. Though I have heard mutterings claiming that Dalamar caused the Silvanesti Shield to come into existence, I now can safely say that he did not. In fact, he disagrees with its very presence.

Transcriber's Note

By Farana Silvertreth

When Bertrem asked me to undertake this project, I gladly accepted. The elf who had given him the book mentioned that it might answer some of the questions everyone has about events behind the Silvanesti Shield. Since I have relatives within the shield's protection, I certainly wanted to know what might be happening to them. I pieced together Aleaha's narrative using my knowledge of the people involved. Since I had spent some time with the kirath (specialized elven scouts) and with Konnal's forces during the effort to clean up the Nightmare, I had some understanding of them going into this project. I never made any judgment calls throughout the manuscript; the views expressed here are solely those of the author.

I have also included other information that has made its way to the Great Library. I added these pieces of the puzzle, found in sidebars throughout the text, to enhance the reader's understanding of the situation in Silvanesti. By the time readers finish this text, they should realize that all is not well behind the shield. The state of affairs looks so grim, in fact, that I am sending copies of this text to Speaker Gilthas and to the Legionnaires at the City of Morning Dew. I hope that Alhana Starbreeze ultimately receives the latter copy, for even those of us in Palanthas know of her efforts to bypass the life-draining shield.



If someone finds a way to bring the shield down or move it back to its source—the strange shield tree in Silvanost—I hope that person lets the rest of the world know. What we find within the Silvanesti Forest may rival the worst nightmares we encountered after the War of the Lance.

I leave off this note with a passage taken whole from Aleaha's journal. I could not find a logical place to include it in the text itself, but I feel it needs to appear somewhere within this book. It gives the reader an idea of Aleaha's perspective on Silvanesti life.

The Silvanesti race, taken as a whole, has several faults. We take great pride in our elvenness, but this pride often leads us to underestimate those not of the Silvanesti. Even worse, we value the purity of our blood so much that we find those only partly of our blood revolting and carefully regulate who marries whom through our rigid House system.

Although we love life above all, this love, in combination with our overweening pride, has led us to choices that often destroy more life than they save. As a long-lived race, one would think that we have gained great wisdom through the ages. Unfortunately, our longevity serves only to make us more resistant to change. This resistance, more than anything, is what causes us to repeat the same mistakes over and over again.

—Aleaha Takmarin

Aleaha's Journal

I write this journal in hope that someone from outside the shield will eventually find and read it. I do not wish for the story of the Silvanesti elves to end without others learning from our folly. Before I go into the events that occurred after the shield rose in the Year of the Spider, 115c, I will touch upon some of the details leading up to the fatal circumstances.

A Tapestry Woven and Unwoven

After the Silvanesti Forest was rid of Lorac's ravaging nightmare, we started the next step in the reclamation process: healing the forest and rebuilding the cities and villages of Silvanesti. As the leader of the kirath, or elf scouts, I was put in charge of ensuring the safety of the woodshapers, gardeners, and mystics who entered the forest to heal it. Although restoring the region proved a long, tedious process, we felt joy at reweaving the tapestry of our civilization. Our people held a great celebration the day the last of the forest healers reentered newly-rebuilt Silvanost. Even I, whose life revolves around the forest more than the city, experienced a certain satisfaction at seeing the



Garden of Astarin and Tower of the Stars restored to their former beauty.

Unfortunately, this peace didn't last. Even as we worked to weave back together the threads of our civilization, our own actions rent them apart.

Threads of Light and Darkness

On the eve of the Reclamation Celebration in 382AC, I learned several things that would later impact my life and all of Silvanesti. First, General Konnal wished to dissolve the kirath. He believed we had fulfilled our purpose and thus were no longer needed. I countered that the kirath could prove invaluable in patrolling the forest for intruders. Konnal listened politely and stated that he would "take the matter under advisement," which left little hope for me since his word was essentially law.

To clear up a common misconception of those outside Silvanesti, I should mention that although Porthios, Qualinesti Speaker of the Sun, married Alhana Starbreeze, daughter of our former Speaker of the Stars, few among the Silvanesti liked Porthios's new title: "Speaker of the Sun and Stars." Though Porthios was the driving force behind the reclamation of the forest, most Silvanesti elves refused to honor his position. As a result, during the twenty years that we fought to reclaim our forest, General Konnal of House Protector ruled over us while Alhana was in Qualinesti.

The morning after the celebration, I learned from my father that Konnal had imprisoned Porthios and Gilthanas the evening before. I also received orders to resume my duties with House Gardener, to which I was born. Konnal had dissolved the kirath and named himself Silvanesti's military governor.

Letter from a Cleric of Quenesti-Pah*

This passage comes from a letter I received when I was a Wildrunner sent into the Silvanesti Forest to help quell the Knights of Takhisis during the Summer of Chaos. We encountered all manner of chaos minions on the day I got this note, but thankfully they came in fewer numbers than they did at the Tower of the High Clerist. I include this letter to enlighten readers about what happened in Silvanost during Aleaha's recovery period.

—Farana Silvertreth, transcriber

We have received more wounded at the Temple and attended them to the best of our ability. Their injuries were not as bad as those of earlier casualties, but while we treated them, the situation outside our walls grew worse. Many strange creatures haunted the streets of Silvanost. Governor Konnal sent the city guard and his reserve Wildrunner forces to dispatch these unusual beings, but they fought more tenaciously than the Dark Knights and had Evil powers of their own. Many of the blows they received did not wound them, and they appeared in different forms to different people. I saw them as a horde of green dragons about to twist Silvanost into a living nightmare again. Others saw invincible knights made of iron, a large squad of dark elves ready to use might and magic against us, walking trees with Evil maws, and even an organized army of kender. The reports the Temple received made no sense, so our High Priestess cast a spell to reveal what we faced. For some reason, it didn't work as she expected. She saw a dark void that swallowed all life and left behind nothing. That vision terrified me more than anything else did.

I've already offered up my thanks to Quenesti-Pah that the Windriders managed to destroy those terrible beings. All over the city, griffins swooped down and their riders swung at the monstrosities with swords blessed by E'li†. For every two Wildrunners and every one Windrider who died, one of the demonic warriors vanished out of existence. In the end, we lost a quarter of our Windrider forces, and half of the city guard and reserve Wildrunner forces. Governor Konnal declared the day a victory but spent the rest of the evening on watch for more of the Evil beings. Thankfully, none came.

I write with yet more disturbing news, however. This very hour, a great mournful wail was heard throughout all of Silvanost and across the Thon-Thalas River. After the last echoes faded, I felt strangely bereft. Since I was tending to more of the wounded, I had cause to call upon the power of Quenesti-Pah to heal them. I found nothing there to call upon. Several other priests and priestesses had the same experience. The sudden entrance of the High Priestess startled us. Tears ran down her face. "The gods have left us," she said.

We bound wounds and used our knowledge of healing and herbs to ensure the survival of the injured. Even now, the High Priestess wanders the Healing Hall, checking on the wounded herself. She sent me away when she realized that I hadn't slept for several days.

Your kinswoman,
Tyrenia Aleraon

* Elven term for the goddess Mishakal

† Elven term for the god Paladine

I returned to my work in the Garden of Astarin[†] with a mixture of reluctance and joy. Though I found the work itself pleasurable, the politics involved made my head ache. The Qualinesti had decided upon Gilthas of House Solostaran as the new Speaker of the Sun. At the same time, Alhana Starbreeze and Porthios were exiled from their respective lands. The constant buzz of conversation throughout the gardens and at home made thinking difficult, so I visited the Temple of Matheri* that evening. Leaving it, I made another intriguing discovery.

As I passed a hooded man, our gazes met briefly. His light brown eyes and dark hair at first made me think of a Kagonesti, but then I realized that he looked familiar. Even as he stepped away, I knew him to be the dark elf Dalamar, who had been exiled from all things Silvanesti (including Silvamori, in Southern Ergoth) just after the War of the Lance. As one of the escorts of the bound and blindfolded new exile years ago, I'd had ample time to watch his movements and learn his form.

Wondering why such a powerful, Evil mage would allow me to see him, I headed home and reported the sighting to my father.

Affronted at the idea that a dark elf would dare enter Silvanesti, he contacted Lord Halverin, leader of House Gardener. The next morning, Lord Halverin requested my presence at his estate. With cool, collected tones, he stated that nonentities such as dark elves could not possibly be in Silvanesti, much less Silvanost. He also ordered me to report to his estate's head gardener.

Although I found working in Lord Halvern's gardens much more pleasant than working in the politically fraught atmosphere of the Garden of Astarin, I was supposed to be devastated at having been demoted away from the palace's gardens.

Later that week I learned Porthios and his retainers had been sent out of Silvanesti. Tanis Half-Elven accompanied the angry man out, probably to help calm the newly-exiled dark elf.

Several days after Porthios left, Konnal reinstated the kirath to scout the forest for outsiders. Although Konnal would not say so, nor would he speak the dark elf's name—I have no such tender sensibilities—I believe he feared that Porthios would attempt to slip back into Silvanesti and garner support from those still loyal to Alhana Starbreeze. Luckily for all of us, the kirath and the Wildrunners—our Silvanesti army—were on patrol when the outside world once again attempted to breach our barriers. Otherwise, unlike our cousins to the west, we might not have

managed to push back the incursion of Dark Knights during that Summer of Flame.

After the Dark Knights mysteriously stopped their attacks, a larger Chaos interrupted our lives. The Father of All and of Nothing walked angrily over Ansalon, causing all manner of destructive events. It is still strange to recall the Wildrunners working together with the ogres of Blödehelm to fight our common foes during that time. Since I suffered injuries in one of the later skirmishes against the Dark Knights, I know little about the battles that occurred between our forces and those of Chaos. I vaguely remember tales about shadow-wights, the seas boiling, and other unusual occurrences, but thankfully, Ansalon pulled through that Second Cataclysm.

What came after was worse for the Silvanesti.

A New Pattern Emerges

Recuperating from a nasty head wound, I found myself in a new age. The kirath and Wildrunners continued to patrol the borders and forests of Silvanesti. Evidently, Governor Konnal still harbored anxiety that Alhana and Porthios would come back to haunt him. At the same time, he headed off those concerned about the lack of a Speaker by saying that he had a candidate in mind—but that unfortunately, this candidate was young and needed to be tempered by the fire of command before taking on his duties. Members of the Sinthal-Elish, including our House head, speculated that Kiryn, the son of Rythas Caladon of House Royal (Alhana's distant cousin), was the unnamed candidate. Priests of Matheri are currently training Kiryn.

Before I could resume my duties leading the kirath, however, my healer insisted that I spend another week rebuilding my strength. Following orders, I wandered about the Garden of Astarin and while there overheard two people talking. One of them postulated that the Silvanesti could create a shield around the realm to keep the outside world out. The other voice, which I recognized as Konnal's, asked how such a device would work. Before I could hear anything more, however, one of my former fellow gardeners spotted and greeted me.


After that day, things settled down considerably. Damage done to Silvanost and its environs needed repair. While wandering through the garden in the days that followed, I noted several oddities. Flowers had changed colors—bright hues turned dark and vice versa. Several of the intertwined trees grew at an amazing pace, causing one area of the garden to become impassable to all but woodshapers. Finally,



[†] Elven term for the god Branchala

* Elven term for the god Majere





one of the trees growing in the center of the garden turned oddly luminescent and developed a strange invisible shield that wouldn't allow anyone near it for a radius of about seven feet. I believe it was this tree that gave Konnal and his friend the idea for the shield that now covers us.

Woven Borders

In the second year after Chaos walked Ansalon, we saw the first of the Great Dragons. The awe-inspiring sight warned us that our brief peace was at an end. News of the Kender Flight, the continued rule of Dark Knights in Qualinesti, and the dragons' takeover of various lands and peoples came to us via the Herald and Quevalin Soth. When the Citadel of Light was

built, several of the priests expressed to Konnal an interest in visiting it, but the governor forbade the journey, stressing that all Silvanesti were needed in their homeland.

Much of this news came from travelers seeking refuge in our forests. They spoke of large dragons fighting each other and taking over land. They warned that these dragons seemed capable of shaping the land to their will, much more so than elves have ever been able to effect. Specifically, these travelers cautioned us that a large black dragon had taken over New Coast and Blödehelm and was changing the region into a swamp. Each time the kirath received news such as this, we penned it to Konnal and sent the travelers on their way—for nobody except elves ever received permission to stay in Silvanesti.

Magic Inside the Shield

After transcribing this journal, I wondered whether the elves inside the shield know about the type of magic Palin Majere teaches. The text did not say. I had an opportunity to ask the Herald many questions about Silvanesti within the last year, and though I didn't know it at the time, he answered this question for me in a roundabout way. I include the tale he told me here.

—Farana Silvertreth, transcriber

I know not of things behind the shield, but I can tell you a tale of one soldier accidentally caught outside it. Geranath Alorean once belonged to House Mystic, but he made the difficult decision to become a Wildrunner when the gods of magic left Krynn. He soon discovered that he loved spending time on patrol, knowing that he stood between the threat of dragon breath or Dark Knight incursions and his homeland. Most of all, however, he loved the feel of his homeland. It stood free from dragon control. It no longer held the nightmares that both Chaos and Speaker Lorac had brought to it. It had a magic all of its own.

One day, while patrolling the border with his brothers- and sisters-at-arms, he looked back at his beloved forest and meditated on one question: Would he be able to protect his forest homeland should one of the large dragons attack? The travelers whom he and his squad turned back told many tales of the Great Dragons who have taken over land to rule, and he feared for the forest and his people. He pondered this question longer than he normally concentrated on anything, except the spells that he used to cast in the days before the gods left. In answer, he experienced a vision that suggested he was powerless to protect his homeland.

Afterward, depression gripped him. He told his friends what had happened. Some mentioned that they had experienced similar incidents—weird flukes of luck that one could call magic if one didn't know better. None of them, however, could alleviate his feeling of helplessness.

Geranath did his best to protect his land but now feared his best wasn't good enough. He continued patrolling with his squad, concentrated on his surroundings more than ever. Perhaps because of this increased alertness, he was able to warn his fellows several times of approaching danger well before it came.

His commander noted this gift and assigned Geranath to patrol near the black dragon Sable's land. In this remote region, the Silvanesti's call to return home did not reach him. One day, he suddenly saw a great wave of energy spread over the forest. He watched as it swept over the forest near him and stopped at the barrier hedge. Most of his squad stood with him outside the barrier of the forest, but one stood within. They tried to move toward each other, but found that a magical force blocked their way. Geranath and his fellow Wildrunners were trapped outside the forest.

According to the Herald, Geranath eventually heard about an Academy of Sorcery and traveled there for training. He now uses divination, transmutation, and enchantment magic in attempts to penetrate the shield. The Herald further mentioned that Geranath had been using divination magic instinctively all along to warn his fellows of impending danger.

Dark Threads Converge

Nine years after Chaos walked the land, the kirath first saw a green dragon among our trees. After making several reports to Konnal and receiving no response, I decided to return to Silvanost and talk with him personally. I sent word ahead and made my way back alone. The forest and I knew each other well by now, so I reached the city in just a few days' time.

After being welcomed formally by my family, I made my way to the Palace of Quinari to request an interview with Konnal. Unfortunately, he couldn't see me until the next day, so I headed to the Garden of Astarin for a brief visit. There, a strange sight greeted me.

In the years since Chaos reached into our realm, the gardeners and woodshapers had been at work. Aside from one spot, the garden appeared in all its former glory. When I passed near the area where the shielded tree grew, however, I noticed a change. The tree still glowed luminescently, but it obstructed those who wished to pass ten feet away instead of the seven it once had. Also, from outside the shield, the plants that grew within appeared dimmer, their leaves smaller than normal. Passing off the sight as a visual distortion caused by the shield, I walked on. I should have known better.

The next day, I met with Military Governor Konnal and his protégé Kiryn. After a cool reception, I reported to him the recent happenings in the forest. When I spoke of the green dragon, Konnal said merely, "That matter will be taken care of shortly. We will not be troubled by dragons." He disregarded any further questions and dismissed me back to the forest.

A Tapestry Completed?

Discouraged that my visit had yielded no results, I returned to the forest to stay for as long as the kirath remained in service. The years passed while we escorted travelers out of our realm, banded with the Wildrunners to keep a few green dragons out of our forests, helped lucky survivors of several dragon battles, and generally protected our land from any not of our race.

As time wore on, however, Konnal sent fewer recruits for the kirath and Wildrunners. He even drew the Wildrunners back to the hedge border of the forest instead of allowing them to patrol our outer perimeter. Finally, word came via the Wildrunners that no Silvanesti elves were allowed to leave the forest, and a call went out to those abroad to return home with all haste. This edict angered several elf merchants, who kept attempting to sneak past our patrols and those of the Wildrunners to continue their transactions. Because of the merchants' heedlessness, several Wildrunner patrols had to break their directive

and work outside of the forest's border to bring back the recalcitrant traders.

Before long, the reason for Konnal's isolationist policies became clear. One day, a strange sensation passed over our whole camp, as if some force had pushed through us. Later that day, one of the Wildrunners rushed in. "They're trapped!" he exclaimed.

The young elf had been patrolling with a few of his company when he, too, experienced the strange sensation. Turning to remark on it, he noticed that his fellows appeared to waver, as if seen through the heat of a campfire. They also seemed to have been pushed out of the forest, for they stood outside the forest proper, separated by the bony branches of the formerly verdant hedge. The young elf yelled to them and they appeared to call back, but he couldn't be sure, for no sound reached him. He motioned for them to come closer, but when they tried, they could not. After an hour or two of remaining within sight of each other and attempting to find a spot where they could reach each other, the elf decided to report the whole situation to the nearest camp.

We alerted all nearby kirath and Wildrunners to the problem, then went together to investigate this phenomenon. Several companies had been closed out, we discovered. As our investigation continued, we realized that someone or something must have erected this strange shield that seemed to follow the borders of the forest. Aided by those with the power to control the air, we discovered that the shield formed a dome overhead, barely above the treetops. Those with the power to control earth reported that the shield ran deep below the ground as well. We speculated that even dwarves couldn't work their way far enough down to gain access within.

Wildrunner Lieutenant Torian Harrunner and I sent reports to Silvanost. While awaiting a response, we hypothesized that the strange feeling we had experienced probably coincided with the shield's formation. We also discovered that the forest lay completely encased in the shield—even the shoreline had a boundary. In fact, the shield followed exactly the hedge border the woodshapers had crafted around the coast and forest. However, the entire hedge had changed from a lush, green plant into a towering border of skeletal branches that eventually dissolved into ashen nothingness. The image that came to my head is that we stood encased in a magical bubble. It flowed with the lines of our land, curving inward and outward again.

We finally received a response from Silvanost; it took several days to catch up with us since we kept moving our base camp as the exploration continued. It recalled the kirath, saying that we were no longer needed. The shield we had discovered was an intentional act of mages and clerics to defend the Silvanesti Forest and its people from the dragons warring out-



side. Its magical nature allowed in sunlight, air, rain, and other such essential elements, but no living beings could pass through it.

In the meantime, however, two kirath had found the trail of a dragon in the forest—with tracks fresher than the onset of the shield. How could the kirath return to the capital with such a threat at large? I assigned several scouts the job of ascertaining its location and sent off yet another report to Governor Konnal.

The Darkness Behind the Light

Before Konnal's response could reach me, the kirath confirmed that a green dragon indeed roamed inside the shield. In fact, we learned that this dragon is Cyan Bloodbane, one of the most pernicious green wyrms to exist. This creature prefers to sneak around and work from behind the scenes. As a result, once he realized that we knew of his presence, the evil dragon took great pains to cover his trail (unless he wished to draw us into one of his traps—he occasionally has a craving for elf, we discovered).

After receiving my report, Konnal requested my return to Silvanost. I sensed bad news coming. Since we had heard rumors about mysterious deaths in Silvanost, I decided to take no chances. I told those I trusted where I would be and what to do should something happen to me. Knowing that my intuition usually proved accurate (it had helped save several elves from dying in Cyan's clutches), my subordinates readied the kirath. With two junior members accompanying me, I made my way to Silvanost.

Konnal, Kiryn, and several members of the Sinthal-Elish met me in the Hall of Balif. My juniors were taken elsewhere for a debriefing while I reported our recent activities to Konnal. He thanked me for my service to the Silvanesti and once again disbanded the kirath, stating that the Wildrunners alone could handle the dragon threat. Before I left, Konnal said he had already sent runners to the kirath camps with the news.

This decision disturbed me. Aside from disagreeing with Konnal about the Wildrunners' ability to "handle" the dragon (they could fight him effectively, but they had to find him first!), I believed we had other uses the governor had either overlooked or wished to thwart. For example, the kirath occasionally found strange remnants of Chaos throughout the forest. Not all of them were obvious at first, such as the carnivorous

plant that bloomed (and fed) in 15sc. Several of the kirath were stationed with Wildrunner troops to help them deal with or avoid dangerous situations such as Cyan's traps, Chaos remnants that the priests and mages hadn't yet figured out how to disperse, and so on. Our numbers weren't great, but we provided many services to the Silvanesti.

When I spoke to my father that evening, he informed me that our old House leader had died of a wasting illness several weeks before. His son, who knew the kirath had been dissolved, wished for me to take up the position of Head Gardener of the Garden of Astarin. Although I accepted this new challenge with enthusiasm and determination to succeed, I became cautious after learning that several of the senior gardeners had died from the same wasting illness as our House head.

Light Threads Snagged

As months passed in the garden, I learned more about the current political situation in Silvanost, as well as some news about outlying villages.



The Government

Although Konnal served as the military governor and Kiryn was being groomed as the next Speaker of the Stars, rumor said that both Konnal and Kiryn had fallen under some dark person's influence. This mysterious individual counseled the two on decisions instead of the Sinthal-Elish.

Also, the Sinthal-Elish was no longer allowed to convene. When several of the House heads, including that of House

Gardener, gathered informally to discuss this issue, several Wildrunners arrived to break up the meeting. Days later those present at the meeting died of a strange wasting sickness.

The Wasting Sickness

The healers in the city could not cure victims of the wasting sickness. It strikes people slowly, sapping their energy over the course of several days until they find themselves too weak to leave their beds. Soon the sufferer falls asleep, never to wake again. Only the treatment of mystic healers seems to help victims: The mystics can stave off the sickness for a few days by giving of their own energy. Unfortunately, it took a healer's death before these caregivers realized that they could impart too much life force for no good cause—the victim eventually would die despite the aid.

The Garden of Astarin

I also learned more about the Garden of Astarin the first day I returned to work there. Although the plants and trees within the garden appear normal and full of life, they look so because the gardeners and woodshapers constantly attend them. Since my previous tenure, the staff at the garden had tripled in size to keep the plants and trees alive. Some of the gardeners and woodshapers told me that a year ago the garden had been in even worse condition. Evidently, the whole garden had started weakening in 11sc. Last year, however, the garden died in the space of one evening—and no one could explain why. Curiously, the head gardener and woodshaper had also died that evening in their sleep.

After drawing from their personal gardens to replace the dead plants and trees, Houses Gardener and Woodshaper labored nonstop to preserve the Garden. The very soil was leached of life-sustaining nutrients. Over the last year, the gardeners and woodshapers have worked to enrich the soil so that the plants and trees can one day sustain themselves again.

On a final note, I discovered that the luminescent tree that had once grown in the garden no longer had a strange barrier around it. Upon inquiring, I learned that the barrier had disappeared in 11sc. I knew then with certainty that this unusual tree had something to do with the shield around Silvanesti. I resolved to investigate further.

A Threadbare Tapestry

After my appointment as head gardener, I uncovered more mysteries. First, I overheard the two voices again: Konnal's, and another that I still do not recognize. The unknown speaker told Konnal that Kiryn was proving intractable and needed discipline. Konnal agreed to talk to the youth. Since I wanted to maintain a low profile, I could only watch as they walked away.

I noticed, as I worked in the Garden, that I started feeling weaker. Wondering whether I was coming down with the wasting sickness, I consulted a priest of Quenesti-Pah. He took me to a small room where a healer I had once seen looked me over. Whispering, she told me that I should return to the forest before I became yet another victim of the sickness. She had sent others in my condition into the forest in the hopes of getting them away from the Evil influence centered in the Garden of Astarin. Although she couldn't answer any other questions, she did say that she sensed the problem behind the sickness lay in the Garden and that distance seemed to lessen the impact. Several of those whom she sent to the forest still survived.

Not wishing to leave Silvanost without attending to the proper procedures, I returned to my father's residence. One of my former kirath lieutenants, Lareth

Thlorendil, waited there. Although he had once been a staunch supporter of isolating the Silvanesti from the rest of the world—and actually smiled when he realized the shield's function—his beliefs had been shaken of late. While making his way back to Silvanost (per Konnal's orders), he passed through one of the Wild-runner border stations for supplies. Since this station lay within view of the shield, he could see the state of the trees in the area. They were not green, as they should be, but a dull brown. Some of them had fallen over, their dried husks unable to support the dead branches any longer.

Appalled, he walked the shield border for several miles and observed the same phenomenon everywhere: The trees were dying. Eyes opened by this horror, he headed toward the city, finding that the farther away from the shield he traveled, the stronger the trees appeared. However, even the healthiest trees seemed weaker than they were several years ago.

With a sense of growing dread, I looked back at the clues I had uncovered over the past several years. The shield, in protecting us from death by dragonbreath, seemed to be leaching the life from those it "protected." I could only wonder: Who had made the decision that a slow death for all was better than a fast death for some?


Rending the Dark Tapestry

I left Silvanost. With the realization that the shield was slowly killing all life within it, I decided to summon the kirath and direct a new mission: destroying the shield. Those kirath who had remained in the forest after their units disbanded helped me send messages to other former scouts. Once enough of us had gathered, I ordered missions in the forest and in Silvanost. Those in the forest were to assess its overall state and watch for anything unusual. Those sent to the city were to approach woodshapers and healers about joining the kirath, or observe the palace and its environs for unusual events. If possible, the latter were also to talk with members of the Sinthal-Elish to determine whether they could help find a solution to the plague.

As time passed, we gained numbers and garnered more knowledge of the situation that affected all of Silvanesti. The wood kirath determined that although the shield initially drew on everything equally, its drain later became patchy. In other words, various groves in the forest developed into what we call "ashen wastes." In these areas, the shield has drained all life and life-giving elements, causing them to take on a parched, gray look.

The kirath assigned to Silvanost reported equally disturbing news. As evidence mounted that the forest outside the city (as well as the gardens within) lay





dying, the elves turned to Konnal for help. Konnal gave a speech stating that he had already looked into the situation and had discovered a way to remedy it.

Soon after, the shield started drawing upon the people of Silvanost instead of the forest. Within weeks of that speech, many of the chronically ill, very old, or newborn elves died of the wasting sickness. The kirath, too, reported a loss of energy.

However, they managed to confirm that the tree in the Garden of Astarin held the key to the shield. One of them overheard Konnal and a stranger talking about controlling the “shield tree” so that it drew upon animal life force instead of vegetable. This kirath even discovered that the unknown elf had the ability to focus the draining powers upon individuals. After receiving this news, I withdrew my forces from the palace area. I had felt the impact of that drain just before I left the city and sought to spare my followers.

As our force grew, word reached Konnal that we had re-organized. He—or his dark advisor—took measures to prevent us from helping those struck with the wasting sickness. He even used Wildrunners to prevent the healers and woodshapers who joined our cause from aiding the forest or victims of the shield. Although several groups of Wildrunners refused to kill us (for they understood we were aiding our people), we do have our enemies.

Death Interwoven

Before the winter of 33sc, we had established several kirath camps throughout the forest. Although we lost numbers to the Wildrunners, we usually gained enough new recruits to make up for losses. However, as this past winter crept up on us, those in the deep woods felt the shield’s drain.

We heard news that more were dying in Silvanost. As the very ill, elderly, or young elves died, the drain on those remaining increased, causing a terrible attrition. In the coldest months of winter, when the forest slept deeply, the deaths in Silvanost rose to appalling levels. Those with the slightest health complication or sickness (including mothers giving birth or going through a pregnancy) died. Even the healthy felt weakened. Of course, this effect compounded the problem by allowing more mundane sickness to spread among the weak, with death closely in its wake. From our estimates, those living in the forest lost a quarter of their numbers; those in the city lost half.

Since the forest seems to be regaining some of its former health and beauty, we hypothesize that the shield drains mainly from elves now. At first, the signs of reforestation were easy to miss, but as more elves died from the wasting sickness, we noticed that more

trees regained their verdant boughs. During the forest’s winter dormancy, few ashen wastes appeared. We believe these zones occur when several people die at once. A kind of retributive flas occurs, randomly striking some portion of the forest. Thankfully, these areas aren’t created overnight, so our woodshapers have a chance to offset the problem before another ashen waste forms.

Several dangers exist in these wastes. Since all the life has been sapped from the area, nothing else will grow there unless someone willingly sacrifices several years of his or her life to build up the soil again. As a result, dead trees crumble into a powdery ash (some while remaining upright!). If one does not pass through these areas slowly and cautiously, an ashen tree can fall down on the victim, causing him or her to choke on the ash. Even without ashen trees falling over, stirring up the dust causes temporary blindness. Also, since no life exists within these areas, they tend to draw ghosts and other undead.

The area just inside the shield’s boundary also suffers from the ashen zone syndrome, with one exception. In a spot near the Thon-Rishas River, life has started growing outward into the forest. We cannot identify the source of this life because of the shield’s strange distortion effect, but we give thanks that hope still exists. I anticipate sending someone to investigate that spot within a few weeks.

Another unusual phenomenon occurred after the hard winter. As if in answer to our prayers for it to relinquish its death grip around the throats of all Silvanesti elves, the shield retracted. Several bands of kirath and Wildrunners now live outside the shield, free of its life-draining grasp. Those of us within the shield still suffer from the drain, but it now draws less energy. While we don’t know why this change occurred, I can only hope that those controlling the shield have started questioning their actions.

Throughout all of these events, however, Cyan Bloodbane has proven a random factor. Not only does he attack kirath in the deep forest, but he also attacks the Wildrunners who search for us. As yet, we haven’t found his lair. The health of the forest must take precedence over any efforts to find and destroy the evil creature.

The Tattered Remains

I must end this journal on a sad note: Should no one find a way to destroy the shield, I fear the Silvanesti will perish within a few years. Sadly, most of our people don’t know the true cause of their suffering, as Konnal and his faction spread misinformation and portray the kirath as renegades. Let us hope that the Silvanesti belief in the purity of our blood and traditions does not cause an end to our race.

Roleplaying a Silvanesti Elf

One of the first races in Ansalon, the Silvanesti are a long-lived, tradition-bound people. They believe strongly in the purity of bloodlines and harbor an extreme love of nature. Both of these elements, engendered in them during their formative years, manifest in their attitude toward all life and, specifically, other races.

Throughout their lifetimes, Silvanesti elves must follow many strict traditions. Each stage of life includes rites to observe, many difficult decisions, and a few events to enjoy or dread—depending upon the individual's outlook. This section details for players and Narrators alike the typical milestones in Silvanesti life. Journal and diary entries provide additional information about the specific ceremonies or rites of passage that elves undergo. This information should provide players with the background they need to play the events in *The Sylvan Veil*. For extended campaigns, further details about the Silvanesti appear in the Epilogue.

Birth

When a Silvanesti female gives birth, she usually has two others present with her: a healer from House Cleric and a seer from House Mystic. The healer not only helps deliver the baby, but also officially witnesses the birth for the kingdom's records. The seer stands aside during the process, hoping to gain impressions of the life ahead for the newborn. If none are gained by the time the healer slaps the infant to make it cry, the seer quotes the rote prophecy, "*Thriane Silvanesti kirynas hanalhan fayrinth-rihan*," or "May the blood of Silvanesti run true."

Most mothers experience joy at hearing these words, for they mean that their children should fulfill all the functions of their role in Silvanesti life. Should a child be destined for great Good or Evil, however, the seer pronounces a prophecy over the newborn. Regardless of the result, the healer makes note for the kingdom's records, allowing her superiors to puzzle over new prophecies at their leisure. Should a prophecy's meaning ever make itself known, House Cleric notifies the child (if Good) or the Speaker and the head of the relevant House (if Evil).

The Birth of Lianella

—an excerpt from a new mother's diary
I originally wanted to keep a diary of the birth of my daughter so that I could share it with her when she turned forty. Now, however, I don't think I should share it with Lianella until she is married and about to have a child of her own.

The birthing itself proceeded normally. When little Lianella emerged, the healer slapped her, and I heard my daughter's cries for the first time.

Once the healer put my new daughter in my arms, we both turned to the seer.

The healer washed her hands and gathered her record book to write down the relevant details of the birthing. When the seer didn't speak right away, the healer frowned, and I started worrying. I knew that if the seer didn't immediately say the time-honored words, something truly great or truly ominous would come of my child.

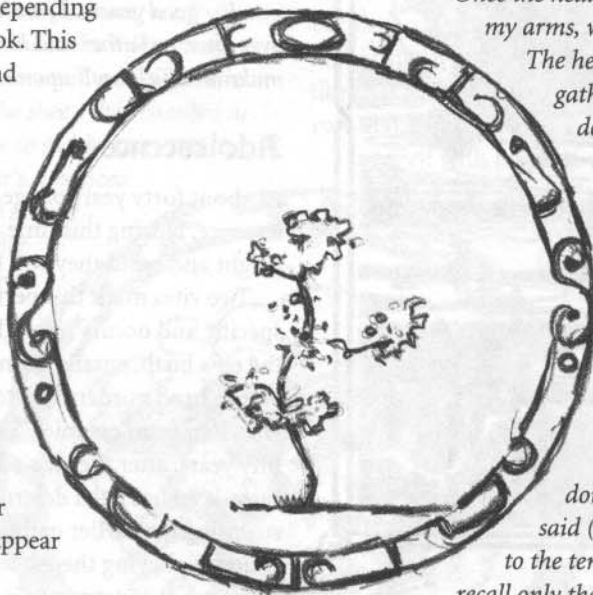
Finally, the seer spoke. I don't remember everything she said (though if I want to, I can go to the temple and find out). Instead, I recall only the impressions I received. The

seer's words painted fire and opals in my mind—a vision of darkness, and of certainty, of truth, of great change, and of family strife. Despite all of these images, the words ended on a positive note, describing love setting forth a new fire burning within the breast of those who seek it.

Childhood

A Silvanesti elf spends early childhood in a manner appropriate for his or her status and House. Children in House Servitor complete chores under their parents' supervision. Those in House Protector act as pages to others in their House, learn the care of weapons, and play athletic games. House Royal and House Cleric children spend time in lessons and also act as pages.

Although duties and chores constitute part of Silvanesti children's lives, they also have time to play, interact with other children within their castes and Houses, and touch upon all of the Silvanesti arts. During this period, a child's parents start to sound out others in their House for marriage alliances and possible advancement to a higher position within the House.





A Marriage Arrangement

—an excerpt from Lianella's diary

Today I began my formal training in magic. I can't believe that Father found a tutor for me in only two days. Of course, he had motivation—who would have guessed that my fit of anger could cause Mother's favorite tapestry to burn, revealing my potential? She still hasn't spoken to me. If her anger could cause a fire, I think this whole tower would burn down.

My tutor, Lysius Bellarian of House Mystic, is refined and soft-spoken. At first I couldn't believe that someone so gentle in his ways could control powerful magic. He's much different than that loud boy Cyrhan, whom I'm supposed to marry in a couple of decades. I don't know how I will put up with such an obnoxious brat. Yes, I know. I'm the same age as he, but Cyrhan has so much farther to go to gain the decorum necessary for one of his station. Father tried to explain to me that as a high-ranking member of House Protector, Cyrhan needs a loud voice to project orders to those under his command. Well, I think that there's a time and a place for projecting one's voice, and he certainly chose poorly when he decided to do so in the middle of his sister's music recital.

Father told me this morning that I should hold my head high in pride because the marriage arrangement he proposed to Cyrhan's father came through. I'll be the first of his daughters to rise to such status within House

Protector. Though he has told me repeatedly that I must marry well to serve my family and my House, I don't like Cyrhan. I want to talk to Mother about it, but she probably wouldn't listen now.

I should go to Mother's parlor soon and start working on a new tapestry—my aunt has determined that replacing the one I burned should be my next project. The pattern looks hard, but I should be able to complete it with my aunt's help. Besides, since Mother loves the image of graceful silver dragons fighting the Evil forces of the Dragon Queen, weaving it should help me get back into her good graces. I just hope Cyrhan doesn't come over later, as Father said he might. I don't want him to make an official call upon me now.

Adolescence

At about forty years of age, Silvanesti elves enter adolescence. During this time, they attain the slender height and build they will keep for most of their lives.

Two rites mark this period. One, which is House-specific and occurs upon the fortieth anniversary of the elf's birth, entails taking an oath to obey the House head's orders and to protect the House and the kingdom from enemies. The other rite is performed at fifty years, after the elf's adult path within his or her caste-level has been determined. This rite involves renewing the earlier oath and invoking a new one that includes obeying the adolescent's new instructor. Although the instructor is often one of the elf's parents, the rite formalizes this new relationship.

Upon the elf's sixtieth anniversary, the Ceremony of Starlight occurs. Under the full moon of (Solinari in earlier ages), the elf lies on white linen in the family's garden. There, under the stars, she or he sleeps and hopes to dream. If a dream occurs, the elf usually remembers two things: a vague sense of having seen the person one is to marry, and a clear image of the shape that one's starjewel must take. Starjewels are pairs of brooches that elves exchange at their betrothal ceremonies to bind them together, heart and soul (although they have been known to be given in friendship as well). Although the identical pins must each feature at least one gem, these jewels vary from pin to pin. Until a starjewel is given to another, it looks like a normal pin. However, at the moment of bestowal, both parts of the set shimmer as brilliantly as stars in a clear night sky. Should one of the betrothed elves die, the starjewels dull in response.

Other rituals, ceremonies, or events that may occur during adolescence include marriage-bond promises, loyalty oaths to a representative of the Speaker's household if in House Servitor or House Protector, or rewards for great deeds performed before training is complete.

During these years, an elf begins a general education within his or her House. In most cases, one is

trained to take up a position similar to that of one's father or mother. If an elf is needed elsewhere and his or her talents warrant it, however, the House head can assign the elf to study under a different master. Once one's daily training is complete, the adolescent may pursue personal own interests (artistic pursuits, meditation, and so on).

The Ceremony of Starlight

—an excerpt from Lianella's diary

I had my Ceremony of Starlight last night! I shall write down every last detail, but no one else must see it. The priests of each temple laid out the white linen sheet between the two oak trees in our small garden here in Silvamori. As I sat down on the sheet, they chanted to each of the gods, asking for me to see the starjewel that would bind my life to another's. I noticed that they didn't ask for me to see my future husband, though. Father must have spoken to them about Cyrhan.

When their chants became gentle, I stretched out and stared at the stars. I could see Solinari at its fullest, and the stars seemed so bright. The priests must have left when I fell asleep; they probably had several other ceremonies to attend to that evening.

At first I didn't know I was dreaming. The stars in the sky pulsed. Then one in particular became brighter, until I could discern its details.

A fire opal formed its hexagonal center, surrounded by small black opals in a steel backing. Finally, six rays of water opal radiated from the center stones. It was beautiful!

Then, unexpectedly, I saw a man's face form in the stars. It wasn't that of Cyrhan, thankfully. He is such a domineering man that I still can't see myself bound to him. No, I saw Lysius. He is such the opposite of Cyrhan. If only my father realized that Lysius would make an excellent match for me, despite the fact that he is of a different House. Since Lysius is a tutor in House Mystic, he must maintain a distant demeanor so as not to cause his students to fancy him. I didn't want to see him in my dream, but somehow, I knew I would. I simply can't marry Cyrhan now.

After I saw Lysius, the starjewel in the sky flared and I woke. The predawn light brightened even as I sat up. The dew had settled on me—I don't think I moved the whole time I slept. Mother and Aunt Selindia asked me what I had seen; a woman from House Mason stood by to sketch what I said. As I described my starjewel, she rapidly drew

and colored the sketch for it. Amazingly, she caught it exactly. When I nodded, she left to talk to my father about the contract to make my pair of brooches.

Mother and Aunt Selindia waited for me to pray to each of the gods in thanks. I did so, then stood and stepped off the sheet. They held the sheet between them and took it to be dried. The sheet will serve as one of the sheets on my marriage bed. The other will be my partner's.

Adulthood

Upon the eightieth anniversary of one's birth, an elf becomes an adult. The elf enters his or her adult name and position into the records of various temple libraries and also assumes the full responsibility of the role that the House head has chosen for him or her.

An elf with high enough status is presented to the Speaker to take up duties.

At this time, elves become responsible for their own livelihood. No longer do their parents support them, speak for them, or take responsibility for punishing wrong actions. Often, elves marry before the age of ninety and must find towers of their own.


Upon reaching eighty years, males become fully fertile. Females may experience their first fertile period anywhere between the ages of eighty and ninety. Throughout their adult lives, females are fertile only six to eight times; each occurrence lasts one to two days. Unfortunately, a woman cannot predict when these fertile periods will fall. If she continually visits a priest of Quenesti-Pah, she may have two days' warning. Otherwise, she knows only when the time is upon her.

A Student's Progress

—an excerpt from Lysius's missive to House Mystic
I'm concerned about Lianella. She exhibited her talent at an early age, and the use of her skills came easy to her. Now that I've been merely checking up on her occasionally, I find a disturbing pattern to her behavior. I shall allow you to make your own judgments based on the following facts.

I visited Lianella to see whether she had made any progress on the unique fire spell I told you about a few years ago. She didn't seem interested in that spell anymore, though she appeared excited about the starjewels commissioned for her. The war and ensuing cleansing of the forest made finding all the necessary gemstones difficult.





After she told me about her starjewels, she asked whether I had given a starjewel to anyone. She wanted to see one of the brooches. I showed it to her, and excitement flashed across her face. She almost touched it, but I put it away. Her expression grew distant, and she asked if I had formally bound myself to anyone yet. Before I could answer, she revealed that once her starjewel was finished, a binding ceremony between her and Cyrhan Vahnesti would take place. She told me, sounding very sure of herself, that this was not her destiny.

I left shortly afterward. Despite having always worked with her in a dispassionate manner, I sensed that she had fixated on me for some reason.

My next visit came at the behest of her father. In his message, he claimed to be worried about his daughter and the impending binding ceremony between her and Cyrhan. He didn't tell me everything, though. I learned the next facts the hard way.

When I entered the family's tower, it seemed too silent. The servant, who looked nervous, pointed to the study door and left hastily. I entered the study, expecting to find only Lianella's father, but discovered him and the rest of his family there, appearing quite shaken. Lianella stood in front of them all, holding her starjewel. Around the room I could see the charred evidence of a recently cast fire spell.

I asked what was going on. Lianella told me that we were to be bound together as her dream during the Ceremony of Starlight had foretold. When I tried to talk to her father, he simply shook his head. Apparently, Lianella had threatened her family into compliance. She said she didn't intend anyone harm, but that she couldn't marry Cyrhan because of what she had seen during the Ceremony of Starlight. She would use her magic to prevent such a thing from happening.

I could tell that she didn't like threatening her relatives. Appealing to her better nature, I eventually managed to talk her out of further rash behavior. When I come to see you, I'll share more details. In the meantime, though, please prepare the Circle of Darkness for Lianella. Also, have someone check her birth records for any unusual prophecy. Her willingness to use magic for such misbegotten ends should be investigated.

The Ceremony of Darkness

From time to time, the elves of Silvanesti find someone on their hands who has committed a deed so terrible that they can no longer permit that person to remain within Silvanesti. The individual may have practiced dark or neutral magical or priestly rites, committed treason, or performed an abominable act like the murder of innocents. Silvanos, in his wisdom, decreed that such matters should lead to the banishment of the offender. For this purpose, he charged the mages of House Mystic and the priests of House Cleric with creating a ceremony to facilitate exile in a just manner: the Ceremony of Darkness.

The ceremony takes place in a special room in the Temple of E'li called the Circle of Darkness. Within this room lies a platinum chain that forms an unbroke circle when laid out properly. Also, shined platinum mirrors line the walls and door of this small chamber. Dim light glows above, enabling occupants to see faint images of themselves in the mirrors.

The accused (possibly restrained) is brought into the room, followed by the Council of Truth. Normally the council consists of high-caste members of House Mystic (in the case of an accused mage), leaders of the local temples (in the case of an Evil or neutral priest), or high-caste members involved in the investigation of wrongdoing (in all other cases). The council members create a circle with the chain, lay it down, and instruct the accused to step into the middle of the circle. The leader of the group then declares the alleged crime. Then the Council of Truth leaves the room and does not return for twelve hours.

Once the mirrored door to the Circle of Darkness closes, the accused is alone. The act of stepping within the chain renders one unable to move; the accused can only stand and look at the reflections in the mirrors. As time passes, the images in the mirrors shift and change, forming visions of what the future holds for the elf if he continues along his current path. If the accused is innocent of the charges the Council of Truth has brought against him, then only the visions result. However, if the defendant is justly accused, the chain that encircles him moves inward to bind the criminal.

When the council members return, they see the truth. Innocents may leave after relating their visions to the council. The guilty continue into the next stage of the Ceremony of Darkness.

The council leader turns over the wrongdoer to a group of specialized priests, mages, and warriors called the Dark Escort. This group is blessed in the name of E'li to carry out the exiling of the criminal. The wrongdoer must stand in front of the Dark Escort and the current Speaker (or, today, the military governor) and hear the official reason for his exile. Once the sentence has been pronounced within the Tower of the Stars, the Dark Escort takes the newly designated dark elf out of the Silvanesti Forest forever. Along the way, the Escort cries out the crime of the dark elf for all to hear and remember so that no one will welcome the elf back to the forest. After that, House Cleric strikes the dark elf's name from all documents within Silvanesti except for the birth record. This record is copied over to the books that the Temple of E'li keeps on dark elves, then is magically erased from society's birth documents. From that point on, nobody can acknowledge a dark elf's existence except to deny him the land in which he once dwelled.

Tradition or Truth?

—an excerpt from Lysius's private journal

I find it extraordinary that the Circle of Darkness still works despite the Nightmare to which Lorac's misguided judgment subjected the Silvanesti Forest. The Circle worked even when the gods left our world during the Time of Darkness. Its powers surely will last for many centuries. From what the priests at the Temple of E'li tell me, all one truly needs to perform the full Ceremony of Darkness is the chain and a mirrored room. The chain itself holds the enchantment, which is why we could continue to perform justice during our time in Silvamori. No wonder it remains heavily guarded at all times.

I also find extraordinary the wisdom of Silvanos. Based on what happened to Lianella and me today, I can only guess that he knew the traditions and ceremonies he and his advisors started so many centuries ago would sometimes contradict one another. We discovered this truth today when we had to weigh the tradition of betrothal and marriage against the ceremonies that have guided the minds, hearts, and spirits of the Silvanesti throughout the ages. I had heard that occasionally the Council of Truth used the Circle of Darkness to discover the gods' wisdom, but I never thought I would take part in such a circumstance.

When Lianella entered that room and we laid the chain out in a circle, her face revealed her nervousness. She didn't want to be exiled from the forest. She kept looking at me beseechingly, as if trying to get me to say something.

Instead, I looked to the council leader and followed his cues. He told her to enter the circle and stand in its center. The minute she did so, she stiffened. Only her eyes moved. Then, instead of declaring her crime, the leader said words that shocked me. "You claim to have used magic to follow the revelations of a god-guided ceremony instead of the traditions of the Silvanesti. We wish to know whether the vision you had of Lysius during your Ceremony of Starlight is true. Lysius, step into the circle with her."

I did so, instantly feeling the magic's constraint. "Lysius, you have gone on record as saying that you saw only your starjewel before your ceremony was interrupted. We wish to give you a chance to see your path, as well."

With that, the council left us. During the first span of time, I watched my image and Lianella's faint outline in the mirror before us. I thought of other elves who had been here before me: Dalamar, the infamous mage who had claimed that his Evil acts were forced upon him; and Porthios, who had stood here for both himself and

his wife Alhana. I had never thought it fair that Alhana had missed this part of the Ceremony. However, according to all reports, the chain had wrapped itself around Porthios.

With that thought, I tried to look at the chain, but couldn't. The room was too dark. Instead, my image in the glass moved, and I suddenly saw myself lying on a sheet under the stars. Above, my octagonal starjewel with its emerald center and small outer rays of diamond shimmered. Then it flashed brightly, and I saw the face of Lianella.

Was this vision contrived? I didn't feel anything for Lianella. Then I saw her next to me, regarding me with a wounded look. In her sorrow and anger, I saw her dash her starjewel to the ground and blast it with a single spell.

Next, I saw her down the street from me, using her magic in an unsuccessful attempt to hold off a creature from my nightmares. With a swing of its claw the wichtlin ripped through her skin, instantly killing her as more creatures closed in. The sight of that death hurt more than I would have thought.

Then I saw myself sitting alone in a dark study in my parents' tower, holding the darkened starjewels of my mother and father in my hands. My own pin rested on the table in front of me. The scene sent a deep ache through me. What would it be like if my future was bound to that of another?

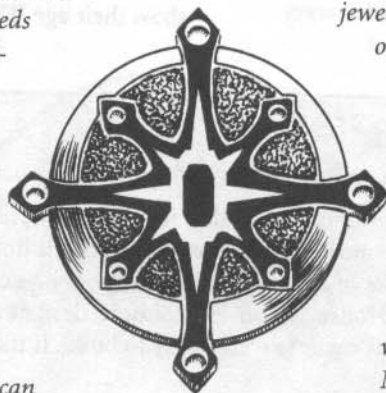
I saw both of us fighting the wichtlin and managing to hold it off long enough for a Windrider and his griffin to come down and destroy it. I saw great dragons wheeling in the sky in the distance, fighting one another, and Lianella pointing at them in fear. I saw her in front of me, sitting at a table and trying to explain something arcane, holding her palm open while a small flame danced on it. She looked so tired at that moment, as if something drained her. Then I saw her standing triumphant, our young son on her hip, as she killed an ogre with her fire magic. She appeared stronger in that vision.

The first visions revealed a life of loneliness and sorrow; the latter, one of companionship—and still some sorrow, I knew. I realized that I did have feelings for her.

When the council opened the door to the chamber, the chain still lay in a circle around us. The leader saw the chain and said to Lianella, "While the truth of your story is evident, you must make peace with your parents. We will straighten out this marriage bonding after that."

Lianella looked at me questioningly. I allowed myself to smile at her for the first time. "We'll talk later," I promised.

Now I must leave to go speak with her.





Mature Adulthood

Upon turning one hundred seventy-five years old, an elf reaches middle age. Only ceremonies or rituals specific to the elf's profession generally occur during these years. By this time, a female has experienced most of her fertile periods and has only one remaining. She and her husband most likely have a child or two growing toward adulthood.

Elves in mature adulthood have the responsibility of guiding their young, helping their parents, and fulfilling their House roles. Occasionally, in response to the needs of the House, they may move into different or higher positions within it.

The Elder Years

Around two hundred and thirty years, elves start to show their age. Their hair doesn't shine as it once did

The Silvanesti Social Order

An essay by Trethan Diemus, written on the first day of his civics instruction

Long ago, when Silvanos gathered the elf clans together into one body, he set into motion traditions the Silvanesti elves still follow today. The most basic of these traditions is how we organize our society. Our Houses form the basic building blocks of our civilization. First of all, each House has a certain set of goals to achieve for the Silvanesti culture. House Mason, for example, designs and builds the structures we live in. This House also obtains the proper materials necessary to build. If this means mining local quarries for a certain type of marble, they do so.

The Houses also define each individual's place within Silvanesti culture. Each House has an internal structure that establishes just where one stands in society. In House Mason, for example, if your job includes designing buildings—a vocation that requires a certain specialized set of skills—you would hold a higher place in the caste system than if you worked in the quarry cutting away marble. Since each House has its specific duties, though, in order to determine relative status between different Houses, one must consider each House separately, then compare its structure to that of the other. If, for example, I wanted to know whether an architect from House Mason or a diplomat from House Advocate should sit closer to the Speaker at a large banquet, I would look first at their respective positions in their Houses. If the architect designs additions to smaller towers in Balinost, and the diplomat travels abroad to arrange treaties with Qualinesti, tradition points to choosing the one whose duties more significantly affect the realm. In this case, the diplomat should sit closer.

Without this system to place individuals within a certain level of society, chaos would ensue. Our House structure relates directly to every other tradition that we have. For example, without strict House organization, who would keep the records of birth and death? How would we know which marriages are allowed and which should be banned? Who would guard our lands? Who would make swords for the soldiers who protect us? Who would grow our food? Worse, if this basic order were disrupted, we would also lose the system that trains the next generation to take over life-sustaining duties.

Without the House system, and all of the other traditions based on it, Silvanesti would no longer be Silvanesti. Instead, we would revert to the former uncontrolled state that Silvanos changed for the betterment of elvenkind. Back in those times, we had no cities. We had no advanced tools. We couldn't defend ourselves from the ravages of dragons and lizard-men armies. Thanks to Silvanos, we became an ordered society able to defend itself and its belief system. We have created many new tools to help us lead easier lives so that we may concentrate on giving our gods their due worship. Without the guidance of Silvanos, we would have fallen before the forces of Takhisis, despite our best efforts to resist.

Although I have heard of instances in which the House structure failed in its goals (such as infighting between some of the temple leaders in Silvanost), I can see no other way to have accomplished what Silvanos did all those years ago. I feel that those who do not support our system should consider standing in the Circle of Darkness to see how their lives could go without it. If they like what they see, then they should continue the Ceremony of Darkness and leave this beautiful forest forever.

For more information about the Silvanesti House system, see the Epilogue.

In fact, the strands often grow brittle or thin. Their eyes, though still brighter than a human's, dull a bit in color. They retain their graceful movements but move more slowly and carefully.

By this time in their lives, Silvanesti elves often have grandchildren. Those of higher caste frequently allow their children to take over some of their duties. Lower-caste elves continue to work until their four hundredth anniversary. After that, their children take them into their households and assume the family duties within the House.

The senior member of each family wears a stole designating his or her position as the eldest. This elf guides decisions that affect the whole extended family.

Death

A Silvanesti elf who lives a healthy, peaceful life can expect to die somewhere between age five hundred fifty and seven hundred (though some elves, Silvanos included, have been known to live well past one thousand years.)

When an elf dies, a priest from his or her chosen temple performs the death rites. If the elf was the oldest member of the family, the stole he or she wore passes to the new elder at this time. Once the death rites are finished and the body taken to its final resting place, the priest ensures that all the appropriate temples are notified of the death so that they can record it.

Although the words vary from temple to temple, all Ceremonies of Passing involve the same actions. First, the priest, clerical attendants (in high-caste ceremonies), and the House elder dress the body in ceremonial burial clothes. These clothes are usually created when the elf first shows signs of aging. If made earlier in life, the clothes tend to deteriorate before the elf dies. Those who die young—from wars, accidents, or unusual sickness—have no garb ready until a few days after the family knows of the death. If necessary, however, a military leader can choose to perform the ceremony in the field instead of returning a body to the family. In these cases, the body remains in full battle regalia.

Once the body is prepared, it is placed within its final receptacle as the presiding priest chants ceremonial words. In the cases of very high-caste elves, the

receptacle is a clear-cut crystal coffin that enables viewers to see the body. (The one exception to this tradition was Speaker Lorac, who wished to be buried in the Silvanesti Forest.) Most other elves are buried in wooden caskets. Usually, the type of wood holds some significance to the family or House. For example, an elf of House Woodshaper has a casket made from the wood of the first tree he or she ever grew, while an elf of House Advocate is usually buried in a finely carved oak casket whose runes state the deeds the deceased performed in life.

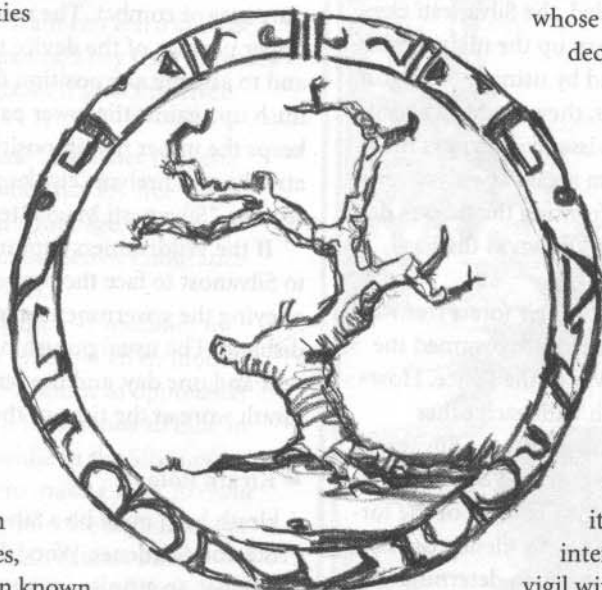
The casket is taken to the family garden, where relatives and close friends view the body. In most cases, the family keeps a candlelight vigil featuring music, dancers, and people sharing memories of the deceased.

A Speaker's body lies in state for one day within the Hall of Balif so that the populace may view it. Otherwise, the body is interred immediately after the vigil within the family or House crypt. In cities or towns other than

Silvanost, the casket is placed within a communal catacomb beneath the largest temple or in a local tomb.

In wartime, if a leader must perform the Ceremony of Passing, he and the deceased's fellows try to find a nearby river or stream. They rest the body upon a hastily created raft and set it afloat. Before it goes, however, they remove the deceased's starjewel and any heirlooms to return to the family. As the body makes its journey along the water, the participants sing a mourning song until the raft passes from sight. If several elves have died at once and must be mourned in this manner, those who remain place all the deceased on rafts, with no more than five per raft. Only when the military leader must retreat quickly or cannot find a body of water nearby are battlefield casualties buried in the ground or a cairn. In such cases, the leader takes the starjewel, heirlooms, and any weapons necessary to help the living carry on.

When a wooden casket or raft is needed, the family requests that House Woodshaper plant two new trees for each fallen one. The saplings are planted in the area from which the trees were taken or, if this is impossible, elsewhere within the Silvanesti Forest.





Silvanesti Roles and Kits

Although elf heroes can choose appropriate roles detailed in supplements such as *Heroes of Steel*, *Heroes of Defiance*, *Heroes of Sorcery*, and *Heroes of Hope*, a few Silvanesti-specific roles (for SAGA players) and kits (for AD&D® players) appear here to help jump-start a campaign taking place in or near the forest.

The Kirath

After the War of the Lance ended, the Silvanesti elves found themselves forced to clean up the nightmarish mess that Speaker Lorac caused by using the Dragon Orb of Istar. To do so, however, they needed a special kind of scout to make reconnaissance journeys into the woods to pinpoint problem areas. The elves who accepted the challenge of confronting the forest's dangers without full back-up were known as the Vanguard of Hope, or *kirath'algos*.

After the Silvanesti reclaimed their forest from Lorac's nightmares, most of the kirath resumed the lives they had led before the War of the Lance. However, several remained in touch with each other despite the strict caste system to which the Silvanesti adhere. Once the sylvan shield rose and evidence mounted that it was draining the life force of the forest and those living in it, these kirath silently ducked into the forest and set up a network to determine how to stop the drain. As time passed, more kirath rejoined the network, bringing new recruits with them.

Roleplaying

Although once the kirath served a reconnaissance role, now their skills are better suited for other duties. Kirath still scout the forest, but for different reasons than in the past. While they must keep an eye on Cyan Bloodbane, their affinity with the forest enables them to find dangerously weak woodland populations and report the problem to a woodshaper. Several kirath then accompany the woodshaper to the area to provide support should an enemy force show up. Finally, the kirath seek a weakness in the shield so they can destroy it.

Although most kirath are solitary sorts who prefer nature to structured elven society, several have joined the anti-shield cause out of a sense of responsibility. All kirath have seen the shield drain their people and the forest of that which the Silvanesti honor and love most: life.

After one quest or level as a kirath, the hero is assumed to have learned the sign language and animal calls (via a device called an "atrakha"; see "Silvanesti Magic Items" later in this Prologue) the kirath use to communicate with each other.

Furthermore, these scouts gain the means to make a soris, firebane cloak, and atrakha when they join the

kirath organization. The soris, an all-purpose weapon and tool, consists of two pieces of wood connected end to end by a cleverly crafted universal joint. A leather wrist thong is affixed 4 feet up the pole. The upper portion of the soris is 18 inches long, tipped with a strong rope loop and four collapsible hooks. The upper section can be either fully deployed, giving the soris an overall length of 6 feet, or folded back against the lower portion of the soris. When in the latter configuration, the soris is treated as a club for the purposes of combat. The metal hinge enables the upper portion of the device to rotate a full 360 degrees and to assume any position from full extension to flush up against the lower part. A small locking tab keeps the upper half in position. (Details about the atrakha and firebane cloak appear in the following section, "Silvanesti Magic Items".)

If the Wildrunners capture a kirath, they take him to Silvanost to face the proper punishment for "disobeying the government" regarding the order to disband. The usual punishment: house arrest for a year and one day, and the removal of all items the kirath wore at the time of the arrest.

✦ Kirath Role

A kirath hero must be a Silvanesti elf from House Protector, Gardener, Woodshaper, or Mystic. Since a kirath has an affinity with nature and the ability to move stealthily for long distances, he must have scores of 7 or higher in Agility, Dexterity, and Endurance (within elf hero guidelines, of course), and a Strength score of 6 or higher. He should also have Perception and Spirit codes of "B" or better. However, kirath cannot have a Presence code higher than "C" since they prefer to work alone or in small groups where cooperative teamwork takes precedence over individual leadership.

Advantages: In addition to elf racial advantages and the special weapons described above, all kirath receive a +2 action bonus to gain or avoid surprise. Any card played while trying to conceal oneself in the Silvanesti Forest is automatically considered trump.

Disadvantages: Although kirath may possess mystical abilities, they can use only the animism sphere. If the kirath can wield sorcery, he may choose from the schools of aeromancy, divination, geomancy, hydro-mancy, pyromancy, and spectramancy only.

Since a kirath hero lacks the disposition to lead others, he suffers a -2 penalty to any Presence actions to take control or lead. Also, kirath heroes suffer the same racial disadvantages as the rest of their elven kin.

As with most Silvanesti roles, a hero must choose this role from the beginning of play if the Silvanesti Shield exists in the Narrator's campaign. Should the shield come down, however, a hero can acquire the kirath role during play.

✦ Kirath Kit

The kirath are a special type of ranger found only among the Silvanesti. They serve as scouts and woodsmen, responsible for helping Silvanesti recover from Lorac's Nightmare and now working against the threat of the shield.

Secondary Skills: Kirath come from four different Silvanesti Houses: Protector, Gardener, Woodshaper, and Mystic. Secondary skills associated with those Houses are appropriate and allowed.

Weapon Proficiencies: Kirath can learn and use any weapons available to rangers. They tend to prefer the longsword and the longbow, traditional elven weapons.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Like other rangers, kirath gain the Tracking proficiency for free.

Required: Animal Calls, Sign Language. **Recommended:** Animal Lore, Direction Sense, Endurance, Herbalism, Hunting, Set Snares.

Special Benefits: Kirath gain a -1 modifier to surprise others (in addition to the -4 elven modifier for surprise), and receive a +2 bonus to opponents' surprise rolls. Kirath gain a +15% bonus to hide in shadows and move silently while in the Silvanesti Forest. They also learn how to make a *soris*, *firebane cloak* and *atrakha* when they join the organization.

Special Hindrances: A kirath cannot have henchmen and halves all Charisma modifiers for the purpose of leading others.

Races: A kirath must be a Silvanesti elf from House Protector, Gardener, Woodshaper, or Mystic. Other races (even other elves) cannot take this kit.

The Windrider

During the Kinslayer War, Kith-Kanan and Speaker Sithas left Sithelbec and Silvanost in search of griffins to aid their war effort. With their triumphant return, Sithas decreed that a special force of griffin riders be formed. This elite unit was dubbed the Windriders and was led by Captain Hallus to the Battle of Sithelbec.

Although griffin riders formed an important part of House Protector forces, they seemed to disappear from view during the War of the Lance. After the reclamation of the Silvanesti Forest from Lorac's Nightmare, the griffins returned with their Windriders. Now the grand tradition of griffin riders has been restored to its former home.

Roleplaying

As a member of an elite troop, a Windrider tends to have a high opinion of herself. This arrogance is offset by a tendency to see the "big picture" regarding a situation, whether it be the layout of the land around her station, knowledge of her unit and her command's



goals, or simply expansive thinking about her reason for living. Windriders love their mounts and hate to be without them. If separated from her mount, a Windrider becomes distracted, wondering whether the mount is receiving adequate care or worrying if she doesn't know where it is.

♣ Windrider Role

Since a Windrider must wield weapons while flying through the air, her Dexterity and Agility scores must be at least 7 each. In addition, because a Windrider must spot details from great heights, her Perception code and score must be at least a "B" and a 7.

Although griffins are strong beasts, no Windrider has a score of more than 7 in Endurance and Strength or a code higher than "B" in Strength. This lack of muscle bulk allows the griffin to fly for a bit longer than it could if the rider were heavier.

Only full-blooded, high-caste Silvanesti elves of House Protector can become Windriders.

Advantages: A Windrider's mount is her greatest advantage. As a result, the Narrator may allow the

hero to start play with a griffin at her side. If not, then when the hero earns Adventurer reputation, she can embark on a quest to "rescue" her former mount or help train an adolescent griffin to become her mount. Because of the complexity of this role, the Narrator and player should mutually determine the hero's back story before play begins.

As the rider of a flying beast, a Windrider gains an automatic trump bonus for any action that involves riding a flying mount.

Disadvantages: Since a Windrider specializes in mounted aerial combat, she fights at a marked disadvantage when not on her steed. As a result, she does not gain trump for any combat actions while on the ground. Also, care and maintenance of a griffin require that the hero spend several hours each day grooming it and supplying food (either via hunting—with or without the mount—or by keeping it in the Windrider stables).

♣ Windrider Kit

Windriders are fighters with specialized training in aerial riding and combat.

Secondary Skills: Windriders come from high-caste Silvanesti, so only secondary skills appropriate to such a noble birth and station are allowed. Windriders may have secondary skills like grooming or navigation from their early training.

Weapon Proficiencies: Windriders have the same range of weapon options as do fighters. They tend to master the longsword and the longbow—traditional elven weapons—and the horseman's lance, which they can use while mounted in aerial combat.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: *Required:* Animal Training (griffin), Riding (airborne). *Recommended:* Heraldry, Hunting, Navigation, Weather Sense.

Special Benefits: A Windrider's most obvious benefit is her griffin mount. If the Dungeon Master prefers, a Windrider may start without a mount and earn one. Windriders also gain a +2 bonus (instead of the standard +1 bonus) on all attack rolls while mounted on their griffins.

Special Hindrances: Windriders suffer a -2 penalty to all attack rolls while on the ground. The Windrider must also spend 1d3 hours each day caring for her mount.

Races: Only full-blooded, high-caste Silvanesti elves of House Protector can become Windriders.



Silvanesti Magic Items

Even under the cloud of the shield, magic is still alive among the elves. The following objects—described here by Jaclyn Cashell of the Tower of High Sorcery in her exhaustive catalogue *Krynn's Items of Magic*—are fairly common among Silvanesti elves and might find their way into the hands of the heroes, either as rewards or as tools to aid their quest in this adventure. For each listing, AD&D rules or an equivalent item from the *Player's Handbook* appears following the SAGA description. Except where noted, non-elf heroes and characters can use these objects.

Atrakha

One of the items that kirath use frequently to communicate with each other is a six-inch collapsible animal whistle called an atrakha. By sliding the tubes, a skilled kirath can emulate the sounds of birds and small rodents. Shrill bird sounds can be heard up to three miles away. Spinning an atrakha over one's head makes a howling call of distress that can be heard up to six miles away.

All told, it takes about a month for a woodshaper, using special wood, to sculpt an atrakha into its basic design and for a kirath to whittle it into its final form.

- ✦ Making an atrakha requires a successful challenging Reason action. Non-kirath cannot use this item.
- ✦ Creating an atrakha demands an Intelligence check at a -2 penalty. Non-kirath cannot use this item. It is worth 200 XP.

Boots of Elvenkind

These soft leather boots allow their wearer to move as silently as a cat through almost any terrain. Using boots of elvenkind, a wearer who makes an effort to move silently can do so in most cases. These boots are made from bugbear hide and can be used by any humanoid of elven stature. They cannot be purchased.

- ✦ A successful average Reason (Perception) action is required only if the wearer attempts to cross an area containing noise-making media (such as scrambling up a scree-ridden slope).
- ✦ Equivalent to boots of elvenkind.

Brooch of Imog

Elven wizards crafted the golden Brooches of Imog. The design features a ring of mistletoe with berries of white gold. The brooches were traditionally presented to wizards who rendered a great service to the elven people.

- ✦ Once per day, a sorcerer wearing one of these brooches can create a shimmering globe that defeats hostile magic directed toward him or her. The brooch's magical field can hold up to five human-sized beings within melee range of the

wearer, and lasts for ten minutes unless the wearer ends it sooner. It blocks all wand effects, plus all spells requiring 15 or fewer spell points to cast. The field does not affect the spells and items of those protected. Sorcerers can use enchantment to bring the field down with a counterspell that costs 11 spell points, plus additional points for range and invocation time. The wearer's Reason score opposes the counterspell. The wearer must have a Reason code of "A" to use a Brooch of Imog.

- ✦ The brooch can create a minor globe of invulnerability once per day for 10 rounds. It functions only for wizards and is worth 1,000 XP.

Cloak of Elvenkind

Made from fine gray leather, soft as cloth, and trimmed with delicate stitching, cloaks of elvenkind are worn by elven woodsmen and enable them to practically vanish into heavy forest foliage. The garments allows the wearer to blend into the woods only when standing still, however. Wearers become visible if they attack.

- ✦ When camouflaged by this treasure, the wearer becomes invisible to creatures at near missile range or farther. If the observer comes into closer range, the wearer must succeed at an average Reason (Perception) action to remain unnoticed. Wearers who move or are in the presence of bright light must attempt the above action when moving into near missile range from far missile range.
- ✦ Equivalent to a cloak of elvenkind.

Firebane Cloak

Firebane cloaks are similar to cloaks of elvenkind treated with the heat-absorbing oils of the elathas plant. They hide one's body heat and protect the wearer from fire and the elements. Typical cloak colors include neutral gray, light tan, dark brown, forest green, and flat black.

Like a cloak of elvenkind, a firebane cloak camouflages the wearer in the forest. It also masks heat emanating from its wearer. Pulling the hood up completely masks him or her from infravision.

Firebane cloaks are waterproof and insulate the wearer more than would a normal cloak of the same cut and thickness. Only elves may acquire these nonmagical cloaks from the Silvanesti.

- ✦ When drawn around the wearer, the cloak adds a +3 action bonus to his or her attempt to resist heat or fire. It also reduces by 5 points any damage suffered from fire.
- ✦ A firebane cloak functions like a cloak of elvenkind. It also provides the wearer with a +2 bonus to all saving throws against fire attacks and reduces the damage of such attacks by 1 point per die. It is worth 1,000 XP.





Flute of Wind Dancing

Enchanted flutes of wind dancing are fashioned from driftwood. Folktales say sirens from the depths of the sea gave them to mariners who found favor with them. In any case, several have made their way to dry land. Skilled musicians can use these instruments to make gentle breezes, create strong winds, and even summon sentient whirlwinds from beyond the circles of the world.

- ✦ By piping the proper tune for at least two minutes, one can generate a normal breeze that blows in whatever direction the player wishes. The breeze disperses nonmagical clouds and halves the duration of magical clouds. Blowing continually over an area the size of a large house, this breeze can put out small flames such as candles or fill a boat's sails.

By playing a livelier tune for at least three minutes, the piper can generate a strong gust of wind that disperses both magical and nonmagical clouds, causes sailing vessels to move at double speed, and sends light items tumbling in the wind.

Playing for ten minutes summons a small air elemental. This tiny whirlwind snuffs out small fires (anything the size of a campfire or smaller) and picks up loose material (such as dust or fresh snow) from the ground to create a blinding cloud large enough to engulf ten humans. Vision within the area is reduced to melee range. This living whirlwind triples sailing speed when it moves favorably to a vessel.

All the flute's effects last only as long as the user plays. The piper can reliably play only one minute for each point of Endurance before resting. Playing longer requires an *average* Endurance action each minute. The user cannot fight, cast spells, use other magic items, or move at more than a slow walk while playing. A player must have a Reason or Perception code of "A."

- ✦ **Air elemental:** *Monster.* Co 9, Ph 12, In 3, Es 8, Dmg +5, Def -4, also dive, aeromancy, immune to air attacks.
- ✦ The flute requires two rounds of playing to summon a *whispering wind* and three to summon a *gust of wind*. A full turn playing the flute creates a *dust devil*. The flute functions for wizards only and is worth 1,000 XP.

Greenmasks

The Silvanesti elves created greenmasks to help kirath scout the nightmare-ridden Silvanesti Forest after the War of the Lance. These nonmagic items are formed from living wood and resemble elven faces. Each greenmask contains small herbal pouches near the nose and mouth that filter the air the wearer breathes. Crystal lenses cover the eye holes. Treated with elathas extract, the mask renders one's whole face invisible to elven night vision.

Generally, Silvanesti elves do not allow other races to use greenmasks. They certainly do not sell them to other elves.

- ✦ Since it covers the full face, ears, and mouth, the mask provides a +4 action bonus to the wearer's attempt to resist poison gas and reduces by 1 point any damage suffered from inhaling noxious fumes. It also muffles the wearer's speech and obscures one's hearing. As a result, any actions involving communication or listening also suffer a -1 action penalty. The mask's crystal lenses impose a -1 action penalty to any Perception actions involving sight (including surprise actions).
- ✦ A greenmask provides a -2 bonus to saving throws vs. poison gas. It also imposes a -1 penalty on surprise rolls and Intelligence checks involving speaking or listening. It is worth 1,200 XP.

Ring of Befriending Animals

A ring of befriending animals can cause small groups of creatures to act docile and friendly towards the wearer. By expending a portion of the ring's power, the user can compel the animals to protect him or his belongings.

- ✦ The wearer of this treasure can attempt to befriend any animals within melee range, provided the total of their Physique scores does not exceed 60. To do so, one attempts an *easy Spirit* (Presence) action. If the attempt fails, the animals flee. A mount or draft animal adds its rider's Presence score to its Essence when resisting the effect. Befriended animals become docile and follow the wearer for up to one hour. At the end of that time, they simply wander away.

By expending a charge from the ring, the wearer can command the animals to guard personal possessions. The animals cannot be ordered to attack one's enemies, but leap to the wearer's defense should that person be attacked (even if the wearer started the fight). One must have a Reason or Spirit code of at least "C" to use this ring.

- ✦ Equivalent to a ring of animal friendship.

Ring of Projection

Rings of projection are typically bronze, set with an emerald and a circle of amber chips. Lifting the stone reveals a tiny secret compartment underneath. Raising the stone while speaking a command word causes an illusory duplicate of the wearer to appear nearby.

Once each hour, one can summon a duplicate image that remains for five minutes or until the wearer dispels or disrupts it by engaging in combat or using other magic. The illusory figure can appear at near missile range or closer. If one does not engage in combat or use a spell or magical item, the image exactly duplicates the wearer's every move. Because the image is purely visual, those at personal or melee range can easily distinguish the projection from the original, but anyone more distant cannot. Users must have a Reason code of at least "B."

The ring can cast a *project image* spell once per hour, lasting up to five rounds. It is worth 1,000 XP.

Webnet

Dimernesti sea wizards spun beautiful hair ornaments called webnets in the years before the Second Cataclysm. The magic that made them proved ineffective after the departure of the gods in the wake of the Chaos War.

Though highly prized as a personal decorative ornament, a webnet's true power manifests with the proper words and gestures. A user can render creatures suscep-

tible to hypnotic suggestion or expand the webnet into a sturdy net large enough to trap five human-sized individuals.

- ✦ This treasure can be used six times per day by anyone with a Reason or Spirit code of at least "C."
- ✦ The webnet is worth 1,500 XP.

Hypnotic Power

The net's hypnotic power engages when the user twirls the net before a creature's eyes and speaks a command word. The user can compel affected subjects to take an action, described briefly—no more than a sentence or two—in a language the subject understands. The action must sound reasonable; one cannot be compelled to fall on one's sword, for instance. The hypnotic effect lasts until the subject has completed the task, but never more than a day. The action need not be immediate; the user might compel the subject to act only in response to some specified condition (within the effect's maximum duration of one day and explained with brief instructions).

- ✦ The subject of hypnosis can be no farther away than near missile range. This power also can be used against groups of creatures, provided that they are all within range, that they can see the webnet, and that the total of their Presence scores does not exceed 60. The user must issue the same command to the entire group.
- ✦ The webnet's hypnotic power affects up to 12 Hit Dice of creatures as a *hypnotism* spell if they fail a saving throw vs. spell.

Net Power

The webnet's second power converts it from a tiny hairnet to a large net almost 10 feet across. One can hurl it at opponents or suspend it overhead to fall and entangle those passing below.

The net can trap up to five human-sized creatures at once. The wielder can return an empty net to normal size with a command (which does not count as a use). The net repairs itself at this time.

- ✦ After activating the net to expand it, one attempts an average *Dexterity* (Agility) action against each targeted individual. Those affected become enmeshed in the net, unable to escape unless the user releases them or they cut their way out. Cutting the net requires a *challenging Strength* (Reason) action, opposed by the user's Reason score. Preventing an attempt to cut the net requires an *easy Reason* (Strength) action from its user. Cutting the net frees those trapped within it.
- ✦ The net power functions like a *net of entrapment*.



introduction



he purity of the elven race was a gift of the gods, with its longevity and its serene majesty. Now that purity was threatened....

—Speaker Sithas reflects on outside influences, The Kinslayer Wars

This section describes the heroes of the scenario that follows and describes how the events of the adventure will most likely unfold. Variations will occur from group to group.

Adventure Summary

The story begins with the heroes encountering elven refugees from Sithelnost, a town in the northwestern region of the Silvanesti Forest. The weakened elves call upon the heroes for help in stopping an unknown power from draining their life forces. En route to Sithelnost, the group falls under attack by a scouting party from Blöde and learns that the ogres plan an invasion of the elven forest. They also hear for the first time of an ancient ogre artifact known as the Heart of the Irda, which the ogres seek to restore lost glory to their race. The long-forgotten resting place of the treasure is rumored to have been recently pinpointed.

The heroes travel to Sithelnost, only to discover that the whole town now lies outside the protection of the Silvanesti Shield, its people weakened and vulnerable from the mysterious life-draining curse. Consulting a high priestess of Astarin, Raenavalona, the party learns that the Silvanesti Shield is responsible for the devastation. Raenavalona, who has heard the rumors about the imminent discovery of the Heart of the Irda, suggests that the heroes may be able to reverse some of the shield's life-draining effects if they can obtain the ancient treasure.

The party sets out to recover the Heart, but discovers that it lies within the protection of the Silvanesti Shield. To retrieve it, they must devise a way to either penetrate the shield or get it to retract. Other obstacles also impede the heroes' path to the tomb in which the treasure lies hidden.

Once they obtain the Heart of the Irda, the heroes head back to Sithelnost. En route, they encounter several natural hazards in the ever-withering wood that challenge their stamina and intelligence.

Arriving back in Sithelnost, the heroes—aided by Raenavalona—prepare to conduct a powerful ritual to restore the elves to full health. Before the ritual can take place, however, tragedy strikes. The ruler of Sithelnost is murdered and the Heart of the Irda stolen. The heroes must recover the relic, knowing that every wasted hour costs more lives.

The heroes locate the stolen treasure, which has fallen into the hands of Vorst, a Sivak minion of the black dragon Onysabet. The ogres also discover that Vorst possesses their treasure. The heroes must deal with both these menaces and emerge from the confusion in possession of the Heart.

On the way back to Sithelnost, the heroes experience one final skirmish with the ogres. Hearing the sound of steel ringing through the dead forest, they encounter Alhana Starbreeze and a company of Silvanesti warriors in pitched battle with another band from Blöde. The heroes join the fight, assuring victory for the elves.

Accompanied by Alhana and her kin, the heroes return to Sithelnost. While the dark elf queen deploys her warriors to protect the town, the heroes join Raenavalona in a ceremony using the Heart to save the Silvanesti.

Heroes Old and New

Players may use either heroes of their own creation or the pregenerated champions presented in the following pages. The text of this adventure assumes that players use the pregenerated heroes. If this is not the case, the differences in racial stock, special abilities, and skills may require the Narrator to make minor changes to some portions of the scenario.

Both AD&D and SAGA statistics appear for each of the pregenerated heroes. Some of them—namely Roselenna and Firemane—were included on character cards in the *DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE®* boxed set. Others, Ladine and Avon, appeared in subsequent adventures, while the final pair, Blackeagle and Klen, are all-new heroes. Those that have appeared before are fully updated within these pages.

A description of Vorst, one of the villains of this adventure, follows that of the heroes. If the pregenerated heroes are not used, at least two of the new heroes should have encountered Vorst previously and be pursuing him.

Other characters who play a key part in the adventure—such as exiled elf queen Alhana Starbreeze and her comrade-in-arms Jahran Kaldeist—are described in the "Important Figures of Silvanesti" section of the Epilogue.

THE STORY ~

* Roselenna

Description	Female Silvanesti elf		
Demeanor	Inquisitive (1☺)		
Nature	Contemplative (4☺)		
Reputation	Champion (Quests 7, Hand 5)		
Social status	Tradesman (Wealth 4)		
Agility	6C	Reason	7A (49)
Dexterity	7A	Perception	7B
Endurance	4C	Spirit	7C
Strength	4B	Presence	8C
Melee weapon	Cutlass (+4)		
Missile weapon	Horse bow of renown (+8)		
Armor	Leather (-2)		
Shield	None		

◆ **Roselenna:** female elf T5/M6; AC 8; MV 12; hp 22; THAC0 18 (*longbow* +2, +2 bonus in swords and bows); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (cutlass), 1d6+2 (*longbow* +2); SA wizard spells (4/2/2); SD infravision 30', +2 bonus to Int checks for perception in forest; SZ M (5' tall); AL CG; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

"Call me Rose—everyone does. Or, at least, they have since I started wearing one in my hair most of the time. Roses are a lot like the real world: They're so pretty and fragrant that you often forget their thorns.

"Some say Krynn was a different place fifty or a hundred years ago. They may be correct, but that's not very important right now. They can live in the past if they like, but not me. Many people I've known consider me foolish and too interested in what lies beyond the horizon. More than one person has suggested I go live among the kender, saying I'm more like those folk than my own. They might be right. I'm proud of my Silvanesti ancestors, sure, but I don't think lordling that over everyone will win me any friends.

"What do I want out of life? I don't know. For the time being, I'm happy to keep traveling and exploring. If I can do some good along the way, so much the better. A lot of people in the world need help, and I can't turn my back on them.

"I may not be grim and serious, but I've found time to learn a few useful skills. My father taught me to use a bow and my mother showed me a few tricks with the blade. Along the way, I've even learned some spells.

"Not too long ago I met Firemane, and we've been traveling together ever since. I can't imagine what my

stuffy kin would say if they knew I was keeping company with a centaur!"

Appearance

Rose wears supple leather that's more like buckskin than traditional armor. She generally throws back her hooded green cloak to reveal her honey tresses. Whenever she can get one, the elf maiden slips a red or gold rose into her hair.

Rose's features are smooth and her complexion both fair and flawless. Her smile is as bright as it is contagious; her hazel eyes shine with curiosity and have stolen more than one young man's heart with their captivating gaze.

Roleplaying

Though Rose has been cut off from most Silvanesti elves since the shield came into being, news of their current plight saddens her acutely. She wants to do what she can to help her people, as she would anyone in need. She has little patience for the Silvanesti caste system, however, and becomes defensive if a friend is slighted.

Game Information

Rose was born in Silvamori in Southern Ergoth. Like all elves, she is a skilled archer and swordswoman, receiving an automatic trump bonus when using bows or blades {or a +2 bonus for those weapons}.

Rose's bow was used by her father in the Chaos War. *Lanthelette* (or "hummingbird") is a weapon of renown {or *longbow* +2} with a +4 bonus to attack actions and damage. Arrows fired from it emit a shrill whistle in flight.

Rose's acute eyesight allows any vision Perception action to be trump. Her elven ancestry makes her so comfortable in the forest that any Perception action made in such places receives the same bonus, even if vision is not involved. {She gains a +2 bonus to Intelligence checks for vision and perception in forests.}

Though Rose is not as haughty as most of her Silvanesti kin, she suffers from their reputations. Thus, no card played for a Presence action involving a non-elf is ever trump {or she loses the benefit of her Charisma adjustments}. This does not apply when Rose attempts to use her Presence to resist mystical spells.



• Firemane

Description	Male centaur		
Demeanor	Egotistical (7👑)		
Nature	Just (1👑)		
Reputation	Champion (Quests 7, Hand 5)		
Social status	Peasant (Wealth 2)		
Agility	8C	Reason	5C
Dexterity	8A	Perception	7A
Endurance	9X	Spirit	8D
Strength	8B	Presence	6A
Melee weapon	Broad axe of renown (+11)		
Missile weapon	Great bow (+8)		
Armor	None		
Shield	None		

➤ **Firemane:** male centaur F7; AC 5; MV 18; hp 56; THAC0 14 (*battle axe* +3, +2 bonus with bows); #AT 3; Dmg 1d8+4 (*Ironflank's Edge*) or 1d6+1 (longbow), 1d6+1/1d6+1 (hooves); SZ L (8' tall); AL N; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12.

"Sure, I'll tell you about myself...but while I'm talking you'll be buying, understand? That's good, because I've about finished off this tankard and the expensive stuff is still in the cellar. So, where shall we start? Do you want to know why the fillies are drawn to me? Or about my skill in battle? There's lots to talk about, so I hope you've got deep pockets.

"See this axe? It was carried into countless battles by Ironflank. I don't suppose you've heard of him, but he's a legend among my people. It's said that this blade has tasted the blood of a thousand enemies. I don't know if that's true or not. It seems a pretty conservative count for a centaur warrior. In any case, I plan on doubling that number before I breathe my last.

"Now, see this bow? I doubt a foal like you could even bend it. But I've put out a man's eye at a hundred yards with it. You show me an elf who can match that shot.

"I can see you aren't believing all I'm saying, yearling. Well...I suppose I don't blame you. I mean, if I met someone who'd done the things I've done, I guess I'd call him a liar—you aren't calling me a liar, are you? I didn't think so.

"The way I figure it, this is a big world with lots to do, lots to see, and lots to explore. Some folk, though, are just as happy grazing their own fields. They have their friends, their filly, and that's good enough. I sup-

pose there's nothing wrong with that, but it just don't work for me. I'd get so bored with a life like that I'd...well, I'm not sure what I'd do. But you get the idea.

"Now, let me tell you a little bit about the fairer sex. You don't look like a few lessons would hurt you none, and I'm about as close to a master of the subject as you're likely to meet."

Appearance

Firemane is a powerfully built centaur whose human and equine halves are both masses of muscle. His dark skin and black eyes give him a deep, brooding countenance. His name comes from his brilliant red hair.

Firemane goes nowhere without the crescent of his bone great bow and a sheaf of eagle-fledged arrows or his silver-bladed broad axe. He wears his studded leather gauntlets more for appearance's sake than any defensive value.

Roleplaying

Firemane was born somewhere in Duntollik, although even he is not exactly sure where or who his father was. The centaur is well traveled and enjoys the opportunity to explore new lands. He has little patience for elven arrogance, but has learned to look past it if doing so brings other rewards. Even Rose gets on his nerves sometimes, but he values her friendship.

Game Information

As a centaur, Firemane has trained with a bow almost from the day he was born. Because of his experience, any card he plays when using a straight bow is automatically trump {or he receives a +2 bonus to his proficiency check}.

This bonus does not apply to crossbows or similar weapons.

Indeed, Firemane has no skill at all (ability code of X) with other missile weapons.

Firemane's natural affinity for equine races is so great that no normal horse, mule, or similar creature will panic while in his presence. This effect does not apply to magically induced fear.

The broad axe Firemane carries is everything he claims it to be. As such, *Ironflank's Edge* is a weapon of renown {or a battle axe +3} and provides a +11 damage rating (+4 bonus to attack actions and damage inflicted). It is said—mostly by Firemane—that only a hero as great as the centaur crusader Ironflank can make effective use of this heavy blade.



* Ladine Dralathalas

Description	Female Silvanesti elf
Role	Displaced noble
Demeanor	Bigoted (7●)
Nature	Reserved (1●)
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 6, Hand 4)
Social status	Commoner (Wealth 3) Aristocracy (Wealth 7)*

Agility	7C	Reason	8B (64)
Dexterity	9A	Perception	7B
Endurance	8C	Spirit	5C
Strength	6B	Presence	7C

Melee weapon	Longsword (+7)
Missile weapon	Arbalest (+9)
Armor	Leather (-2)
Shield	None

* Represents Ladine's standing in Silvanesti.

➤ **Ladine Dralathalas:** female elf F4/W5 (conjurer); AC 8; MV 12; hp 28; THAC0 17 (+2 bonus with swords and bows); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword), 1d4+1 (heavy crossbow); SA wizard spells (5/3/2); SD infravision 30', +2 bonus to Int checks for perception in forest, -2 bonus to saves vs. cold and ice attacks (*ring*); SZ M (5'3" tall); AL NG; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 14.

"I come from the long line of diplomats in House Advocate. Immediately after the War of the Lance I served my queen, Speaker of the Stars Alhana Starbreeze, in negotiations with the Qualinesti and Kagonesti to ensure fair treatment of Silvanesti refugees in Southern Ergoth. Later I worked in vain to clear up the misunderstanding that led to my liege becoming a dark elf.

"Twenty years ago, I discovered I could not return to my beloved Silvanesti. Someone has encased my homeland in a magical barrier that nothing can penetrate. Even my teleportation powers prove useless against the shield. I have tried for years to unlock this mystery. Some of my kin have even sought aid from humans in bringing down the shield, which I refuse to do. My years among humans and the Kagonesti savages have made me appreciate these races, but I refuse to show weakness before them. My isolation from my beloved land is my plight alone."

Appearance

Ladine's pale gray eyes and white, expressionless face accentuate the icy formality of her bearing. She wears her long, silvery tresses in a series of complex braids, a typical fashion among nobles. When not in armor, she

generally wears silver or white clothes. She adores jewelry, though wears only clear stones (such as diamonds).

On her left hand she wears a ring with a snowflake pattern of small diamonds on it. This magical treasure, recovered during a past adventure, grants her a +4 action bonus when resisting attacks involving cold or ice {or a -2 bonus to saving throws vs. cold and ice attacks}.

Roleplaying

Ladine has been involved in Krynn's recent struggles against the Great Dragons. It was during one such quest (detailed in *The Crown and the Serpent* adventure from *Heroes of Hope*) that she met Avon. Though only a half-elf, Avon proved himself a valuable comrade-in-arms and may have saved Ladine's life. She has since come to respect him as much as if he were a full-blooded Silvanesti, an attitude that may surprise some of her kin. Other non-elves, however, must similarly prove themselves on an individual basis before she eases her aloof bearing toward them.

Game Information

Ladine has an elf's skill with a sword, which earns her an automatic trump bonus for attacks with that weapon {or a +2 bonus to attack rolls}. Likewise, her excellent elven perception in the forest gives her a similar bonus to all woodland Perception actions. Her eyesight is especially acute, granting her an automatic trump bonus on Perception actions involving vision. {She receives a +2 bonus to Intelligence checks for vision and perception in forests.}

She remains aloof when dealing with other (lesser) races, whom she regards as savages. So pronounced is this attitude, she never receives a trump bonus in Presence actions involving non-elves (except for cards played to resist magic). {She loses the benefit of her Charisma adjustments.} Ladine is a skilled sorcerer {5th-level conjurer} and can employ spells from the school of summoning.

Her role as a displaced noble (introduced in *Heroes of Defiance*) allows Ladine a trump bonus to imitate her former rank. This comes in very handy when dealing with others of noble birth.

She has contact with various Silvanesti also trapped outside their homeland. From time to time, she can call on them to aid her—though they are as likely to ask for her assistance. Further, many of the exiles know of her loyalty to Alhana Starbreeze and seek her death (once per quest or level).



Avonathalonus

Description	Male Silvanesti half-elf
Demeanor	Sensible (3♥)
Nature	Resolute (2♣)
Reputation	Champion (Quests 10, Hand 5)
Social status	Tradesman (Wealth 4)

Agility	6C	Reason	9A (81)
Dexterity	6C	Perception	7C
Endurance	8C	Spirit	5C
Strength	9A	Presence	6B

Melee weapon Two-handed sword of distinction (+10)

Missile weapon Crossbow (+5)

Armor Chainmail (-3)

Shield None

➤ **Avonathalonus:** male half-elf F7/M8; AC 5; MV 12; hp 45; THAC0 14 (Str +1, +2 bonus with swords and bows); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+2 (two-handed sword), 1d4+2 (crossbow); SA wizard spells (4/3/3/2); SD infravision 30'; SZ M (5'6" tall); AL NG; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

"I last saw Silvanesti, my homeland, just before the shield went up around the forest. I haven't missed it. We 'half-breeds' don't fare well there.

"I fought both with and against the forces of Takhisis during the War of the Lance, starting as part of a mercenary company working for the Blue Dragonarmy. As a Red-Robed Wizard, I provided the only magical fire-power they had. My company stayed with the Blue Army for nearly a year, but when our captain discovered the Blue Highlord was about to betray us, we broke our contract and left the army's service. The army came after us with everything it had. We few who survived kept a low profile afterward, stirring up trouble for the dragonarmies when possible. When our captain died near the war's end in a raid against the Green Dragonarmy, we went our separate ways. I wandered Ansalon, practicing magic and paying for my education with my military skills. I did well until the Chaos War.

"I never realized how much magic meant to me until it was gone. When the gods of magic left, they took a part of me with them. Suddenly, I was just another guy with a sword. Somehow, though, I knew the magic couldn't really be gone. I still sensed its power around me; I just couldn't figure out how to

make it work. So I did the only thing I could: Again, I hired out as a sellsword, using my earnings to study wild magic from the Age of Dreams—the primordial magic that worked without the trappings of High Sorcery. I traveled, too, tracking down rumors of 'new magic' but discovering only hoaxes and charlatans. When I heard about Palin Majere's Academy, I figured I had found one more. Of course, I was wrong, and I'm happy to admit it—as I'm happy once again to be more than just another guy with a sword."

Appearance

At five and a half feet, Avon is tall for a half-elf but small for a mercenary. Still, his powerful, muscular build makes him look somewhat taller.

Despite thinking of himself primarily as a spellcaster, Avon does not dress the part. Indeed, few who meet him see anything but a blond, hazel-eyed mercenary warrior. This misperception happens by design, of course. His ability to unleash spells on unsuspecting foes has won him as many battles as his dancing blade.

Roleplaying

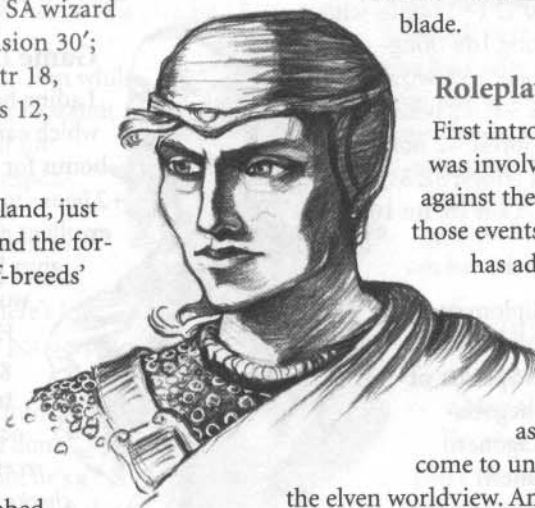
First introduced in *Heroes of Hope*, Avon was involved in a quest to strike a blow against the Great Dragons' rule. During those events he met Ladine, with whom he has adventured ever since.

As a half-elf, Avon was often treated poorly by the full-blooded Silvanesti in his homeland. But through his association with Ladine, he has come to understand—if not appreciate—the elven worldview. And just as he never realized how much magic meant to him until it was gone, the current threat to the Silvanesti may awaken in Avon feelings of loyalty he never knew he had toward a race only half his own.

Game Information

As a half-elf, Avon gains some of the abilities of his Silvanesti forbears. Though trained to use numerous melee weapons, he excels at the sword and gains a trump bonus any time he uses one in combat {or a +2 bonus to sword attack rolls}. Because of his half-elf heritage, however, he never gains a trump bonus during interactions with elves, especially the Silvanesti {or a -2 penalty to Charisma checks in such situations}. Of course, this penalty doesn't apply when attempting to resist the effects of sorcery.

Avon, a talented wielder of magic, has studied at the Academy of Sorcery and acquired expertise in pyromancy, electromancy, and spectramancy.



• Blackeagle

Description	Male human barbarian		
Demeanor	Impulsive (1D)		
Nature	Brave (1D)		
Reputation	Adventurer (Quests 5, Hand 4)		
Social status	Guildsman (Wealth 5)		
Agility	7B	Reason	3D
Dexterity	7C	Perception	3X
Endurance	9B	Spirit	2C
Strength	9A	Presence	5C
Melee weapon	War hammer (+9)		
Missile weapon	Bolas (+2)*		
Armor	Scale armor (−4)		
Shield	None		

*Can be used to entangle a foe with a challenging Dexterity action.

• **Blackeagle:** male human R5; AC 6; MV 12; hp 44; THAC0 16 (Str +1); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+4 (warhammer); SW deaf; SZ M (6'4" tall); AL N; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 6, Cha 10; Reading Lips proficiency (9).

"Many say the gods have frowned on me in this life. I do not agree. Yes, events have not always gone my way, but I am doing well enough.

"I was in my early teens when my parents died. They were heroes who fell saving our chief from an assassin's blade. The villain got away and the chief was wounded. Afterward, I started selling my sword to earn money.

"In time, my reputation as a warrior grew. I became a skilled tracker and bounty hunter. Remaining a mercenary might have been an easier path, but that choice did not feel right. I wanted to make a difference by weeding out people like the one who killed my mother and father.

"Bounty hunting for a living presents its own problems, however. I doubt a thieves' guild exists that wouldn't like to throw me on the rack before tossing my body in a shallow grave. Once, I was nearly caught. I was traveling with a band of adventurers in Iyesta's land in pursuit of Vorst, the assassin who killed my parents. Young, impulsive, and too eager for revenge, we rode into a trap. A huge explosion sounded, followed by the whistle of arrows filling the air.

"I survived; no one else did. It was weeks before I came to my senses. My horse had fled from the attack,

carrying me with it. Somewhere along the way, I'd been found by Klen. She was a ranger of sorts who lived a solitary, nomadic life. If not for her kindness, I'd certainly have died.

"I lost two things in that attack, besides the party I was traveling with. The first was my hearing. Over the next several months, Klen nursed me back to health. She read to me every day, sharing tales of great heroes and teaching me to read lips at the same time. By the time I was well enough to travel, I could follow conversations almost as well as Klen herself.

"The second was a magical shield created by the dwarves of Thoradin. Known as *Hortunung* (snail's shell), it was the pride of my clan. I'd been entrusted with it in memory of my parents' sacrifice. I can't return home until I recover it—but I have no idea who has it now.

"Klen and I married shortly after my recovery was complete. We travel together now, working to bring the criminals of Ansalon to justice. I've come to love the tales and stories my wife tells, even if I can't really hear them. I've even started keeping my own records of our travels."

Appearance

Blackeagle is a tall man with bulging muscles and coal-black hair. His chestnut skin is crisscrossed with white battle scars. He carries himself with confidence and pride. The only ornamentation he wears is a silver wedding band.

Roleplaying

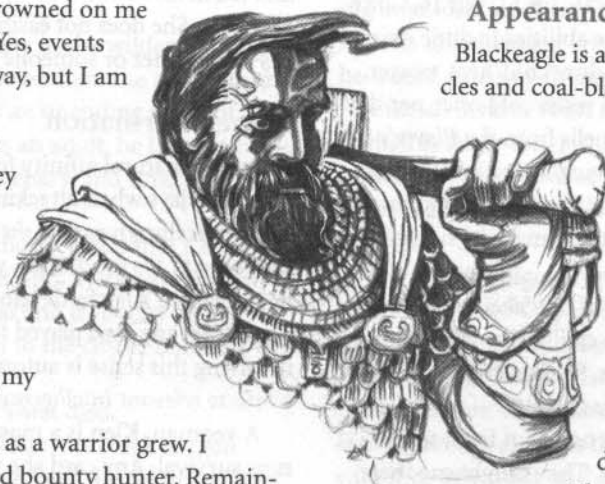
Blackeagle's deafness may prove advantageous in dealing with the infamous Silvanesti arrogance: He is less

likely to take offense if he can't hear an elf's tone of voice. But he reads body language well, and so is not immune to elven haughtiness.


Over the years, Blackeagle's pursuit of Vorst has become increasingly important to him. Each time he loses the assassin's trail, he becomes restless until he finds it once again. Only his love for Klen keeps this revenge from becoming his single-minded pursuit.

Game Information

Because of wounds he suffered during Vorst's ambush, Blackeagle is deaf. He automatically fails any Perception action {or Intelligence check} that depends wholly on hearing. He can read lips very well, however, so this handicap affects his daily routine very little.



Description	Female Silvanesti half-elf		
Role	Yeoman		
Demeanor	Kind (2♥)		
Nature	Insightful (1●)		
Reputation	Champion (Quests 7, Hand 5)		
Social status	Peasant (Wealth 2)		
Agility	8C	Reason	6C
Dexterity	8A	Perception	9B
Endurance	8C	Spirit	7B
Strength	7C	Presence	1D
Melee weapon	Scimitar (+5)		
Missile weapon	Great bow (+8)		
Armor	Chainmail (-3)		
Shield	Target shield (-3)		

 **Klen:** female half-elf R5/C4 (Mishakal); AC 4; MV 12; hp 28; THAC0 16 (+2 bonus with bows); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (scimitar), 1d6 (longbow); SA priest spells, spell-like abilities; SD infravision 30', +2 bonus to Int checks for perception in forest; SW -3 penalty to ability checks outside wilderness; SZ M (5'9" tall); AL CG; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 6. **Special abilities:** Spell-like abilities include animal friendship, bless/curse, endure cold/heat, prayer, remove/bestow curse, and resist cold once per day. **Spells (5/4):** Choose any spells from the *Player's Handbook*, using the following limitations: major access to all, astral, charm, divination, and summoning spheres; minor access to animal and sun spheres.

"I was born on the outskirts of the Silvanesti Forest. My mother had forsaken the civilized world for the tranquillity of the wilderness. She never told me who my father was, just that he was an elf.

"As the years passed, I learned a lot from my mother and her companions. They taught me there was Good in the world, but that the spread of civilization was blotting it out. They told me stories and sang songs of heroes who died long before I was born. I've carried those tales in my heart ever since.

"I learned archery and hunting by watching the Silvanesti. It became something of a game—following them while trying to make sure they didn't notice me.

"Everything changed for me when I met Blackeagle. I was wandering in lands west of the forest and found him on the verge of death. Saving his life took all my skills and several months. Somewhere along the way we fell in love, and as soon as he recovered we married. He's a

driven man, determined to hunt down and destroy the Evil that plagues the world. I guess it was my destiny to meet him, and now we travel together—bringing light to dark places."

Appearance

Klen's voice is deep and her blue eyes keen. She moves with the grace of a deer and has the stamina of grizzly. Her body is tall and muscular, certainly not the willowy frame one associates with the half-elf race. Indeed, were it not for the angular shape of her face and the slight point of her ears, no one would suspect her heritage.

Her warm, understanding eyes reflect a kindness some might think conflicts with her almost feral appearance. She always carries a pouch of medicinal herbs and berries with her.

Roleplaying

Klen can't help but respond to those in need. Unfortunately, sometimes this characteristic puts her in conflict with her husband: In hot pursuit of Vorst, she stops to lend aid to the sick or injured. Though this tendency frustrates Blackeagle, it's also the part of her nature he first fell in love with. Though compassionate, Klen is no pushover. She does not easily forgive an individual who has harmed her or someone she cares about.

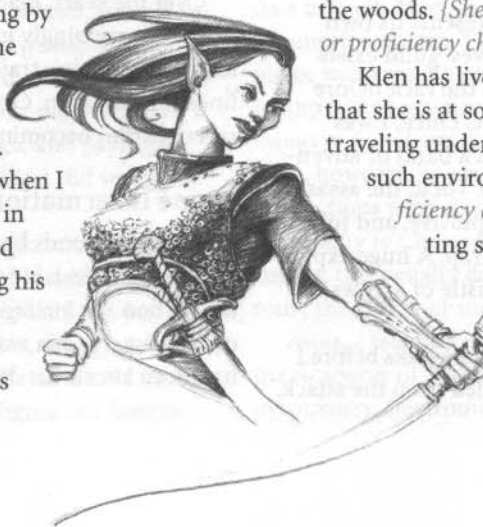
Game Information

Klen has a natural affinity for the straight bow. Any card she plays when attacking with this weapon is automatically trump {or she receives a +2 bonus to attacks with the bow}. Also, years of living in the wild have enabled Klen to develop an acute sense of smell. Therefore, any card played for a Perception action involving this sense is automatically trump {or a +2 bonus to relevant Intelligence checks}.

A yeoman, Klen is a master of tracking and wilderness survival. Any card she plays while attempting to avoid or achieve surprise in a wilderness setting is automatically trump. Further, her skill and knowledge grants her a similar bonus on any Reason or Perception action to follow a trail or track a creature through the woods. {She receives a +2 bonus to Intelligence or proficiency checks for such perception in forests.}

Klen has lived so much of her life in the wild that she is at something of a disadvantage when traveling underground, in a city, or some other such environment. Any action {or ability/proficiency check} Klen attempts in such a setting suffers a -3 penalty.

Klen is a self-taught mystic with the ability to cast spells from the sphere of healing.





Dorst

Vorst was born somewhere in the wilderness to human parents who were both on the run from the law. His early years were an unending chain of grief, misery, and fear. As an adult, he became first a hired thug, then a mercenary, and finally an assassin.

It was for the last of those crimes that Klen and Blackeagle began to hunt him. They have tracked him across the wilderness and from city to city. Finally, his trail led them to the city of Shrentak in the New Swamp.

And it was there that Vorst died.

He fell afoul of Onysablet, the black dragon who rules that dismal land, and she destroyed him in her wicked experiments. In order to make the most of his contacts and sources of information, Onysablet replaced Vorst with a shape-changing creature of her own creation.

It is this thing—which Klen and Blackeagle still believe to be the human Vorst—who appears in this adventure. For ease of reference and play, the name “Vorst” will be used to refer to this creature.

The being who now claims to be Vorst is, in fact, a mutated Sivak draconian. The creature's true form is very much like that of any other Sivak. Hulking and reptilian, he is covered with silver scales which gleam like newly minted coins. His hooked snout is lined with needle-sharp teeth. While most Sivak draconians have great reptilian wings, “Vorst” sports shriveled, useless appendages.

Thanks to Onysablet's skill at life shaping, this reptilian horror is slightly more dangerous than his peers. Like all Sivaks, this creature can assume the shape of the person he has most recently slain (currently the human Vorst). Unlike his kin, however, he can hold this form for as long as he likes. Once he gives it up, either by reverting to his own Sivak form or by assuming the shape of a new victim, he cannot take that shape again.

In his current shape, “Vorst” looks like a dark-haired man of just under 6 feet in height. His muscular frame is bulky, but he moves with the easy grace of an skilled athlete or warrior. At the end of the adventure, he assumes the shape of Flin, the ruler of Sithelnost. At that time, he will forever abandon the ability to assume Vorst's shape.

This Sivak's enhanced shape-changing abilities were not attained without cost, however. Onysablet's terrible magic may have enhanced some aspects of his physiology, but they have caused his wings to shrivel. The withered remains of these leathery members are not even suitable for gliding anymore, let alone flying. Of course, if Vorst were to kill a winged creature and copy its form, he would gain any flying abilities it had.

Like all Sivaks, Vorst will explode into a deadly fireball if slain. When this happens, all characters or heroes in personal or melee range suffer 10 damage points from burns {or 2d4 points of damage}.

Vorst is intelligent but lacks the ambition to do more than serve Onysablet. Thus, he is utterly loyal to her and will take every action to protect her or further her needs. His orders at the start of this adventure are to investigate the Silvanesti Forest and the changes that appear to be occurring there can study and harness its life-shaping abilities.

✦ **Vorst:** Mutated Sivak, shrewd demeanor, Champion. Co 10, Ph 12, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +8 (morningstar) or +7 (heavy crossbow), Def -5 (natural). If slain, Vorst's body explodes into a ball of fire, inflicting 10 damage points on anyone in personal or melee range.

➤ **Vorst:** Mutated sivak, AC 1; MV 9; HD 6; hp 38; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4 (morningstar) or 1d6 (crossbow) or 1d6/1d6/2d6 (claw/claw/bite); SZ M (6'4" tall); ML champion (16); Int high (13); AL NE; XP 975. Vorst's body explodes upon death, inflicting 2d4 points of damage.



ACT ONE



his adventure begins with the six heroes scattered in three groups of two. Dividing the heroes like this requires a bit of extra work on the part of the Narrator, but the storytelling rewards are worth it: Each pair of heroes comes to the adventure with a slightly different goal and viewpoint. Further, each hero has a natural ally in the form of his or her partner. The fact that this

adventure starts with the heroes split up calls for care on the part of the Narrator. After all, if play lingers too long on an event occurring with just two of the heroes, the other players may grow bored.

The best way to keep this from happening is by playing all three events at the same time. The Narrator can devote five minutes or so to the first pair of heroes and then jump to the second one. After five more minutes, the third pair can become the focus of attention. With normal table talk, everyone should remain interested in the adventure even when their characters are “off-stage” for a few minutes.

If the game involves fewer than six heroes, or if the players are using heroes of their own creation from a continuing campaign, the Narrator may choose to play the three events of this scene consecutively instead of concurrently.

Scene One: Meetings in the Woods

A slow pace at the start of this scene should allow the players time to familiarize themselves with their heroes. Each player should receive a photocopy of his or her hero's description (presented in the Introduction).

The Narrator can begin by showing the players the map of Ansalon included in the *DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE* boxed set or *Tales of the Lance*. This adventure begins just inside the Silvanesti border, due west of Sithelnost and south of the Trueheart Mines.

Overview

This scene begins with Roselenna and Firemane traveling through the edges of the Silvanesti Forest. As they travel, the pair discovers a fallen elf—a refugee from Sithelnost.

At the same time, Ladine and Avon discover the campsite of a band of ogres. Only a single humanoid remains, however, as the others have left to raid a

group of elves. They can battle the ogre, learn the plans of the others, and set off to thwart the ambush.

Meanwhile, Blackeagle and Klen track Vorst, one of the assassins who killed Blackeagle's parents. Vorst has set a trap for them. When they pick up his trail anew, it leads them toward the elven refugees.

First Impressions

The adventure opens with Roselenna and Firemane. Read the following text aloud to set the mood.

For several days, you have made your way east toward the Silvanesti Forest, having heard rumors that strange things are happening in those long-isolated regions. Now you have finally completed crossing the land of Iyesta and the Plains of Dust.

With every passing mile, the forest thickens around you. Tall trees rise on all sides, stretching green limbs toward a golden sun. Curling clouds spot the azure sky like white caps on a wind-swept sea. Birds add their songs to the musical voices of the forest. A more perfect day would be hard to imagine.

The Story Begins

Roselenna and Firemane's scenario unfolds in “A Walk in the Woods,” below. The other heroes' events follow in “Defenders of the Green” (Ladine and Avon) and “Manhunters” (Blackeagle and Klen).

A Walk in the Woods

The Narrator should keep in mind the fact that this scene begins on a peaceful note. Soon, however, the heroes come upon large fissure. It lies well-concealed by a tangle of undergrowth, but is clearly of natural origins (that is, no one dug it or attempted to hide it). When the heroes first discover the pit, they must succeed at a *challenging Perception* action {or *saving throw vs. spell*} to avoid stumbling into it.

If no one falls in, the Narrator may read aloud the following narrative to describe the gap to the players:

A jagged gorge cuts into the earth here, as if an angry god had stabbed his giant dagger into the soil and then withdrew it to leave a gaping wound. A tangle of weeds and vines choke the area around the gorge, almost hiding the mouth of the fissure from sight. Something in the air here sends a shiver through your body.

When someone looks into the pit, the following description can be read:

THROUGH THE WOODS ~

Looking beyond the tangle of green and brown, you can discern the shadow-choked bottom of the depression. It appears covered with soft earth and spotted with jagged pieces of stone. Thorny vines dangle down into the pit, swaying like snakes whenever a gust of wind whistles through the area.

If one of the heroes does fall into the pit, he or she can attempt a *challenging* Agility action {or Dexterity check at a -2 penalty} to catch the edge of the rim and avoid falling in. If successful, thorny vines cut into the hero's exposed flesh to cause 3 damage points {or 1d6 points of damage}.

If the hero does fall into the pit, he or she suffers 10 damage points {or 2d10 points of damage}. A successful *challenging* Endurance action reduces the damage to 5 points. {or saving throw vs. petrification for half damage}.

Heroes who fall into the pit, climb down into it, or remain above but succeed at a *challenging* Perception action {or Intelligence check at -2} observe the following scene.

The crumpled body of an elf lies at the bottom of the rift. His flesh looks pale and withered, as if the life energy has been drained away from him by some supernatural force. The fall into the pit has left his legs broken and bent at unnatural angles. He appears to have numerous other injuries—mostly cuts and bruises—although you cannot ascertain their severity.

The elf proves too weak to rasp out much more than his name, Raskar.

✦ *Raskar: Silvanesti adult male, realistic demeanor, Novice.* Co 1, Ph 1, In 6, Es 6, Dmg +5 (scimitar) or +4 (horse bow), Def 0 (no armor).

✦ *Raskar: male elf F2, AC 10; MV 9; hp 1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (scimitar) or 1d6 (longbow); SZ M (5'6" tall); ML unsteady (7); Str 9, Dex 9, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 12; AL NG.*

Once the heroes reach the injured elf, they can administer basic first aid. Doing so requires a *challenging* Reason action {or First Aid proficiency check}. If neglected, the elf dies within minutes.

If treated, Raskar manages to utter a short plea:

"My people...dead...dying...help them... please...save the town...our camp is not far..."

Climbing into or out of the pit is fairly easy for an individual hero, requiring only an *average* Agility or Strength action {or Dexterity or Strength check}. Hoisting the wounded elf out, however, proves harder, requiring a series of *challenging* actions: Designing some manner of harness for the task calls for a Reason action {or Intelligence check at a -2 penalty}. Using this device to lift the elf out without further injuring him requires both a Strength and an Agility action {or Dexterity and Strength checks at a -2 penalty}.

Defenders of the Green

This part of the scene features Ladine and Avonathalonus, who are traveling through the woods in search of an ogre raiding party that has been attacking small bands of Silvanesti trapped outside their homeland. The start of this encounter should feel foreboding and ominous. Ladine and Avon ought to believe that a dozen ogres might spring from the shadows at any moment.

The Silvanesti Forest seems thick and close today. Although the sun is bright overhead, the shadows of the deep wood seem all the deeper because of it. The normal stirring of creatures great and small seems ominously still.


The task at hand is one devoid of cheer or hope. Somewhere in this wilderness is a band of ogres. You have heard rumblings from Blöde of a possible invasion and hope to intercept the ogres' advance scouting party before it gathers much information. It's now been nearly a week since you picked up the trail of these savage raiders. Your instincts tell you they're close—but just how close?

Because the ogres aren't taking any steps to conceal themselves, locating the ogre camp is a fairly simple action. If the heroes make no special efforts to find the ogres, an *average* Perception action will suffice. If they have some clever plan, this might be improved to an *easy* Perception action {or Intelligence check; at a +2 bonus if the players come up with a good plan}.

Ladine and Avon come upon a ring of crude tents gathered around the dancing flames of a cooking fire. The following narrative describes it for the players:

You have reached a small clearing in the dense woods. A dozen crude tents, fashioned from dirty hides and roughly hewn branches, form a jagged circle around a broad fire. The decimated remains of a deer are piled near the primitive spit on which the animal was clearly roasted.





If the heroes are lucky, they'll notice the lumbering shape of Grun, an ogre who's been left behind to guard the camp. If they don't, he'll certainly notice them. In either way, a fight will certainly erupt with the normal sequence of surprise actions at its start.

❖ **Grun:** *Ogre adult male, cruel demeanor, Novice.* Co 5, Ph 13, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +5, Def -3, also thrown weapons.

➤ **Grun:** ogre; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 26; THAC0 17 (+2 with weapon); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 or 1d6+6 (club); SZ L (9'); ML steady (12); Int low (8); AL CE; XP 270.

If the heroes are having an easy time defeating the ogre, the Narrator can introduce another foe; in the midst of battle, Grun's pet worg charges into view and join the attack.

❖ **Worg:** *Dire wolf.* Co 7, Ph 12, In 3, Es 4, Dmg +5, Def -2.

➤ **Worg:** AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ M (6' long); ML steady (11) Int low (5); AL NE; XP 120.

Once the battle concludes, Avon and Ladine can explore the ogre camp. As they poke around, they should be constantly reminded of how offensive the place is. These ogres lack the charm of more civilized creatures and tend to leave rotting piles of filth around everywhere.

When searching each of the tents, the heroes may attempt a *challenging Perception* action {or *Intelligence* check at a -2 penalty}. In most cases, success enables the heroes to find some unusual trinket, such as a pendant carved from a wolf's tooth. These items are of little value but might make interesting conversation pieces.

In the quarters of the ogre leader (the largest and most foul smelling tent), a *challenging Perception* action {or *Intelligence* check at a -2 penalty} enables either hero to find a crude map.

The map is poorly made, but clearly shows that the ogres have been gathering information about north-western Silvanesti. Geographical features have been noted, including some puzzling references to a "gray" section of the forest around Sithelnost. In fact, most of the map seems to focus on Sithelnost and its immediate environs.

Beneath the map lies what appears to be an incomplete missive from the scouting party leader to a commander back in Blöde. Evidently, in addition to its

surveying, the party has been tracking a specific band of elves. It is impossible to tell whether the targeted elves are a military unit, a merchant caravan, or some other force. What is certain, however, is that an attack is about to be launched against them.

The letter breaks off with the words, "We look, no yet find heart."

Manhunters

Klen and Blackeagle are excellent trackers. Their experience, natural talent, and determination more than compensate for Blackeagle's lost hearing. In this particular case, however, they have failed to notice a few subtle signs and are about to walk into a deadly trap.

This scenario should be paced in much the same way as an action/adventure movie like *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. As soon as the heroes spot the trap bait (a bit of colored cloth, described below), an air of tension and suspense becomes the rule. And once the trap springs, events should move very rapidly indeed. As soon as the heroes overcome one hazard, the next should arise.

Depending upon the pace of the adventure and the actions of the heroes, the Narrator might include additional traps, such as dart volleys, snares, or deadfalls hidden in the foliage above the path. None of these traps should be too elaborate, however, as Vorst didn't have all that much time to make them ready.

Your quarry, the traitor Vorst, has taken great steps to cover his trail, but to no avail. You almost had him in Shrentak, the revolting citadel of the black dragon Onysabet. With the aid of local allies, however, he slipped through your fingers and into the mire which surrounds that city.

Although you quickly picked up his trail, overtaking him in the swamps proved impossible. Now, with those fetid expanses behind and the green forests of Silvanesti ahead, your hunt is almost at an end. You will have him—soon!

Vorst's trap is deadly and intricate. The Narrator should have the heroes begin this encounter with an *average Perception* action {or *Intelligence* check} to notice a piece of red cloth. About the size of handkerchief, it looks as if it snagged on a branch. In truth, it's nothing but bait. When the heroes spot it—if they do—it flutters about thirty feet away.

The heroes may suspect a trap and announce that they aren't touching the cloth. In fact, however, the trap lies between the heroes and the piece of fabric.

Vorst has strung a tripwire across the trail, assuming that the heroes will move toward the cloth without checking an area some 25 feet away from it. As the heroes move toward the cloth (or if they

haven't noticed it), they must attempt a *daunting Perception* action {or *Intelligence* check at a -4 penalty}. Failure indicates that one of them has broken the tripwire.

When the trap springs, two bent saplings suddenly snap forward—one ahead of the heroes and one behind it. Both saplings are covered with a bed of spikes that inflicts 8 damage points {or *2d8+2 points of damage*}, double if the above action resulted in a mishap. Both heroes are likely to be injured if they are close together. Avoiding the trap after the tripwire has been sprung proves almost impossible, although the Narrator might allow it with a *desperate Agility* action {or *saving throw vs. spell* at a +4 bonus}.

If the heroes notice the trap, whether they choose to avoid it or disarm it, they're still in for some trouble. Vorst knew the tenacity and skill of his pursuers, so he rigged a second trigger. Like the first, it's a sort of tripwire. This one is hidden beneath the soil and has been laid across a series of sharp edges. As soon as someone steps on it, the line will be severed and the second trap activated.

The second trap will bring a half dozen large rocks swinging pendulumlike at the pair. Dodging these projectiles requires a *daunting Agility* action {or *saving throw vs. paralysis*}. Failing to avoid them will inflict 8 damage points {or *2d8 points of damage*}. This is doubled in the event of a mishap.

The area beyond the second trap is actually an one-inch deep puddle of oily liquid some 10 feet in diameter. This thick fluid has been covered with dry soil and is almost impossible to spot. Again, a *daunting Perception* action {or *Intelligence* check at a -4 penalty} enables the heroes to notice it. If they don't, they splash into it, covering their boots (or hooves) with the sticky stuff. It is quite likely that the heroes will stumble into it while dodging one of the first two traps.

The heroes may assume that this is some sort of contact poison. In truth, however, it's something more insidious. The fluid is a fermented nectar which will draw insects to them at an accelerated rate. Normally, this would be an inconvenience, but nothing more. In this particular area, however, it's a deadly hazard.

While the nectar was hidden by soil, it was effectively odorless. Once exposed to the air, however, its sickly perfume fills the wood. This will summon all manner of creatures in search of a meal. The first to arrive is a trio of giant wasps.

■ **Three giant wasps:** Co 11, Ph 12, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +5, Def -3, also poison.

➤ **Giant wasps (3):** AC 4; MV 6, Fl 21 (B); HD 4; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/1d4 (bite/stinger); SA poison (save vs. poison or suffer 5d6 points of damage and 2d6 hours of paralysis); SZ M (5' long); ML average (9); Int non (0); AL N; XP 420.

After the heroes deal with the wasps, the Narrator may choose to add other encounters.

Only by cleaning off the oily substance can the heroes keep it from drawing attention to them. This task proves difficult, requiring about a gallon of water (more without some kind of soap) and a *challenging Dexterity* action {or *Dexterity* check at a -2 penalty}.

After finally getting to the red cloth, the heroes discover that it has writing on it—a note from Vorst:

I don't know who you are, my shadows, but I'll not be so easily taken. —Vorst

The heroes are again free to continue pursuing the fugitive. This time, one assumes, they will be a little more careful about where they step. They can pick up his trail with a *challenging Perception* action {or *Tracking proficiency* check at a -2 penalty}.

Outcome

Using the information given to them from the fallen elf, Firemane and Rose learn that a band of refugees is located to their east. Assuming they head in that direction, the adventure continues with Act One, Scene Two. If Rose and Firemane do not opt to seek out the elves, the Narrator should arrange for them to become involved in one of the other starting events of this scene.

Ladine and Avon almost certainly will want to seek out the targeted party of elves. If this is the case, the adventure continues with Scene Two: "Refugees". If the heroes opt otherwise, the Narrator should involve them in one of the other starting events of this scene.

If Klen and Blackeagle pick up Vorst's trail and pursue him, they find it leads straight to the elven refugees (and hence Scene Two). Although they may suspect that Vorst hides among them, this isn't the case. He has doubled back along the trail they've left and even now makes his way to Sithelnost. There, later in the adventure, the heroes will encounter him again. If Klen and Blackeagle opt to give up their quest, the Narrator should arrange matters so that they find themselves bumping into the other heroes at the close of their starting scenario.



Scene Two: Refugees

This scene brings together the three pairs of heroes and a band of refugee elves from Sithelnost. Here, the heroes first encounter the wasting sickness. They also have a chance to learn more about the Silvanesti and—if they try to cure the elves—win the approval of the group's leader.

This scene ought to focus on roleplaying. The Narrator should make the interaction with the elves reflect both the aloof nature of the Silvanesti and their desperation.

Each of the hero groups arrives at this scene from a different route, so the Narrator may have to juggle a bit to bring these divergent elements together. The text assumes that the hero pairs are strangers to each other who arrive at the elven camp at about the same time. The Narrator, however, may decide that the heroes have met each other before or arrange an encounter prior to this one where two or all three groups come together before meeting the elves.

If the Narrator wishes to bring the heroes into this scene at staggered intervals, the first to arrive are Ladine and Avon, followed closely by Klen and Black-eagle. Rose and Firemane, assisting the wounded elf, Raskar, arrive last.

First Impressions

A large campsite has been erected in the heart of the forest, so carefully laid out that the wilderness is almost a part of the place. Tents, trees, and shrubs intertwine, one flowing into the next as a trio of neatly built fires fills the forest with the smell of smoke.

The Story Continues

This is a Silvanesti camp. Normally, it would be almost impossible for the heroes to get this close to such a place without being challenged by sentries: The fact that they can indicates the gravity of the elves' condition and may alert the heroes that something is amiss. As soon as the heroes get close enough to see the elves more clearly, the following description can be read aloud:

There is something wrong with these elves. Although the skin of the fair folk normally appears pale, these individuals look ashen gray—almost like the walking dead. Their eyes are sunken, their features drawn, and their movements languorous. Despite the warm day, a shiver passes through your flesh.

About two dozen Silvanesti refugees occupy the camp. All of them, including their leader, Maleesa, have the same characteristics.

♣ **Elven refugees:** *Silvanesti adults, realistic demeanors, Novices.* Co 1, Ph 1, In 6, Es 6, Dmg +5 (scimitar) or +4 (horse bow), Def 0 (no armor).

♣ **Elven refugees (24):** AC 10; MV 9; HD 1; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (scimitar) or 1d6 (longbow); SZ M (5'6" tall); ML average (8–10); Int average (8–10); AL NG.

Making contact with the Silvanesti proves easy: The heroes need only walk into the camp and they will be brought to Maleesa. If they enter too boldly they may trigger conflict, but otherwise the elves are too weak to start much trouble.

With obvious exertion, Maleesa rises from her fire-side seat as the heroes approach. Offering a civil nod to Rose and scarcely glancing at Firemane, she signals two of her people to take over the care of Raskar. She then turns her attention to Ladine.

Maleesa, whose late father served as a guard for members of House Advocate, recognizes Ladine as a former noble. Unless she overhears conversation that reveals otherwise, she assumes the rest of the heroes are Ladine's followers, as they arrived at about the same time. Out of deference to the noble, she tolerates the presence of the non- and half-elves as she addresses Ladine.

I believe I have seen your face before, though many years have passed. Regardless, I can tell by your bearing that you are of noble birth—a leader among our people—and I thank the stars that you have come. As you can see, we lie weakened from an illness that has left you untouched. Pray, tell us how to combat it.

Ladine, of course, should have no idea how to help, as she has never before run across such an ailment. The fact that Maleesa has dropped this problem at her feet and looks to her for leadership in solving it demonstrates the elves' desperation.

Depending on Ladine's response, Maleesa's plea may provide an opportunity for roleplaying among the heroes as they pool their knowledge of possible causes and cures for the illness. Though Maleesa singled out Ladine, the heroes, being *heroes*, likely want to help the weakened elves. Most of them have at least some elven blood in their veins; all have a sense of honor. Rose and Firemane went through the trouble of helping Raskar out of the pit—surely not so he could just die a slower death among his fellows. Avon knows the weakened refugees are sitting ducks for the ogres' planned attack.

Klen and Blackeagle, who begin this scene in hot pursuit of Vorst, may seem reluctant to linger among the elves too long for fear of losing their quarry. But they have lost his trail. A little deduction or a *challenging Reason* action {or *Intelligence check at a -2 penalty*} suggests two possibilities: Either Vorst is hiding in the camp (unlikely, as the mere two dozen elves here would provide little cover) or he has doubled back on the track of the refugees (which is already so confused that it would easily cover his own passage). If Klen and Blackeagle want to leave, the Narrator might suggest that in their current vulnerable state, these elves are in danger of becoming Vorst's next victims.

Should the Narrator wish to draw the heroes into the elves' plight more deeply, one of the full- or half-elfen heroes can spot an old acquaintance among the suffering Silvanesti.

While the refugees will readily accept aid from Ladine, the rest of the heroes first need to win the elves' trust before they let them near. The Silvanesti are a reclusive folk who want nothing to do with the outside world. The fact that some of the heroes are also Silvanesti may help to overcome this prejudice, but class differences will come into play. (For more information about the Silvanesti caste system, see the Epilogue.) Under normal circumstances, the elves would be too proud to accept help from outsiders—but these are dire times.

Convincing the elves to trust the heroes requires each hero except Ladine to succeed at a *challenging Presence (Spirit)* action {or *Charisma check at a -2 penalty*}. At the Narrator's discretion, other factors—such as Silvanesti descent, Rose and Firemane's rescue of Raskar, and the information about ogre movements Avon can offer—might change the difficulty of this action for particular heroes. Also, if the heroes fail on their first attempt, they may try again at an increased level of difficulty.

At the Narrator's discretion, Ladine might meet with resistance from one or two of the refugees because of her association with the exiled dark elf queen Alhana Starbreeze.

Even if they win the trust of the elves, the heroes cannot learn the whole story behind the Silvanesti's predicament because the elves themselves don't know all the details. The following text sums up the information currently available, although the Narrator ought to parcel it out slowly through roleplaying encounters.

We left the town of Sithelnost, where all our folk suffer as we do, several days ago. It was our hope that traveling away from the town would restore our vitality. Obviously, that has not happened. Now, our future seems grim indeed.

Questions from by the heroes may reveal a little more, but not much. Maleesa doesn't feel that it's her place to tell the heroes what's happening in Sithelnost. If asked about the shield, she responds that it appears to have vanished. While this isn't true, it's what Maleesa believes.

Should they want to treat the refugees, the heroes must diagnose the nature of their illness. Doing so requires a *challenging Reason* action {or *First Aid proficiency check at a -2 penalty*} and several hours. Diagnosing the illness will probably take so long that the next scene (Scene Three: "Ogre Attack!") occurs before the heroes learn the following:

The illness that grips the elves is unlike anything you've ever seen before. It doesn't appear to be a natural ailment, for there is no sign of infection, fever, or other consumption. Rather, it looks as if the very energy of life has been drained from the elves. Indeed, some seem to be resisting the grave right now only by sheer effort of will.

Once the diagnosis (such as it is) has been made, the heroes can attempt to treat the elves. Even if they succeed at the *daunting Reason* action {or *First Aid proficiency check at a -4 penalty*} required to create a basic treatment, however, they can't help much. The narrative describes the results of their ministrations:

Your efforts bring a momentary restoration of vitality to the patient, but this quickly passes. Within a few minutes, the poor Silvanesti seems again to hover on the verge of death.

If the heroes are using mystical healing, they find their powers almost useless. Indeed, the narrative above can be rephrased to describe the results of any such spell.

This failure defies explanation unless some manner of magic is used to determine its cause. In the event that a spell is cast which seems suited to the task, the Narrator can read the following text to the heroes:

The elves labor under the burden of a supernatural siphon of some sort. From moment to moment, it drains the very essence of life from them. Nothing about the nature of this magical parasite is apparent.

Outcome

Before the heroes have a chance to complete their interactions with the elves, this scene is interrupted by Scene Three: "Ogre Attack!" After those events, the story returns here. When the heroes conclude their efforts on behalf of the refugees, they continue with Scene Four: "Trail of Tears."



Scene Three: Ogre Attack!

The Narrator should consider the pace of the previous scene (Scene Two: "Refugees") to determine the best time to start this one. As soon as the roleplaying and medical detective work of the last scene begins to wear thin, the ogres strike.

This scene is one of chaos and combat, intended to break up the slower paced action of the previous one. It begins with an attack by the band of ogres stalked by Avon and Ladine, and ends when those beasts are slain or driven off.

If the heroes failed to win the friendship of the elves earlier, their actions here give them another chance to do so. With each ogre that falls, the refugees respect the heroes a little bit more. In the end, they'll accept their help—even if it's reluctantly.

The pacing of this combat scene should be dictated by the actions of the heroes. Like all such encounters, however, it ought to be swift and spotted with more than a little chaos.

The nature of the ogres should be introduced as well. They are fierce creatures who fight more or less by instinct. They will lash out at the nearest foe and take a sadistic glee in smashing just about anything they can.



First Impressions

The sudden roar of a great horn fills the air. It echoes through the forest, causing the branches to tremble and filling the air with panicked birds. Even as the terrible echoes begin to fade, hulking forms burst from the trees.

The smallest of these humanoids is an 8-foot-tall mass of knotted muscles. Their grotesque faces are twisted, their eyes ablaze with bestial rage. Flecks of white spittle drip from jagged yellow teeth as they wave their stone axes menacingly in the air.

The Story Continues

Exactly how many ogres participate in the attack is up to the Narrator. A good minimum, however, is one per hero. If the ogres are being dispatched too easily, the Narrator can toss in a few worgs to make the battle more exciting.

- ❖ **Ogre raiders:** *Ogre adult males, cruel demeanor, Novice.* Co 5, Ph 13, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +5, Def -3, also thrown weapons.
- ❖ **Worgs:** *Dire wolves.* Co 7, Ph 12, In 3, Es 4, Dmg +5, Def -2.
- ❖ **Ogre raiders:** AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 26; THAC0 17 (+2 with weapon); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 or 1d6+6 (club); SZ L (9'); ML steady (12); Int low (8); AL CE; XP 270.
- ❖ **Worgs:** AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ M (6' long); ML steady (11); Int low (5); AL NE; XP 120.

The ogres harbor the mistaken belief that the elven refugees set out from Sithelnost in search of the Heart of the Irda. Creatures of low intelligence, they think that something on their minds must be on the minds of everyone else, too. While the Heart does have lifesaving power (as discussed in Act Two), these elves know nothing about the item.

The ogres fight to the death. Should the heroes take one prisoner and try to question the cap-

tive, they meet with little success. If Avon or Ladine ask about the map or missive they discovered, the ogre responds with either stony silence or profane blustering. Inquiries about the "heart" mentioned in the dispatch elicit no real information, just spat-out statements like, "It's ours!" and "You'll never find it."

The elves, well aware that they can't possibly defend themselves in their weakened state, can be worked into this scene in numerous ways. The heroes might be called upon to save a fallen elf just as an ogre is about to finish her with his axe. One or more elves might attempt to flee the area, forcing the heroes to keep the humanoids away while the fair folk make good their escape.

Outcome

In the wake of the ogre attack, the story returns to previous scene (Scene Two: "Refugees"). As the heroes complete the events described there, they can heal their injuries and rest to recover expended spell points.

Scene Four: Trail of Tears

This scene begins at the conclusion of Scene Two: “Refugees” and assumes that the heroes have managed to win the trust of the Silvanesti refugees. In this scene, the heroes escort the weakened elves back home. The region has been drained of life energy by the Silvanesti Shield and is now a desolate tangle of dead and dying vegetation. Here, the heroes begin to learn something of the shield’s true nature (as described in the Silvanesti Shield sidebar in the Prologue).

This portion of the adventure focuses on the desperate plight of the elves. The Narrator should take pains to present them as sickly creatures who are barely clinging to life. This becomes even more pronounced as they travel toward Sithelnost. The normally agile elves, who can move through the forest with the grace of a deer, will stumble and fall frequently. The pace of travel will be very slow.

The Narrator may wish to reference the map of the region located in the color section of this book. In addition, a familiarity with the history of the Silvanesti elves and their mystical shield will prove very valuable. At the very least, the Narrator should be ready to quickly drop in facts presented in the Prologue and Introduction.

First Impressions

When the Narrator decides that the time has come to prompt the heroes to move on toward Sithelnost, Maleesa makes the following plea.

“Ladine Dralathalas, we owe our lives to you and your companions. Without your bravery, the ogres would easily have overwhelmed us. Your efforts to shed light on the mysteries that plague us are unexpectedly generous. My heart feels hope that it has not known for many months.

“Perhaps I overstep my place, but on behalf of our people, who face the looming void of extinction, I must ask for your help again. Will you and your party accompany us as we return to Sithelnost? We stand a better chance of making it home if we travel under your protection. And, though our efforts to escape the blight have failed, perhaps we can salvage success from this expedition by bringing back those who will find a solution to our troubles.”

The Story Continues

The heroes must decide whether to conduct the elven refugees back to Sithelnost. Their reasons for doing so may range from compassion to curiosity. The refugees will never make it home with ogres lying in wait for

them along the way. And if the condition of this camp is any indication, the whole town of Sithelnost is in need of protection. Even if the heroes can’t end the wasting process, they can defend the town against raiders and predators. If nothing else, Maleesa’s invitation is an opportunity to see parts of Silvanesti long closed to outsiders.

If the heroes don’t think of these facts, the Narrator can have Maleesa point them out.

Breaking Camp

Undertaking the return of the expedition should prove difficult. The heroes have to do most of the heavy work involved in breaking down the elven camp and packing important gear. Though the refugees look to Ladine for leadership, this task may provide an opportunity for one of the other heroes (such as Firemane) to step forward and make a favorable impression by organizing the process.

In the end, much of the gear the elves brought is now beyond their ability to carry. Exactly how long it takes to mobilize the expedition depends upon the heroes. The Narrator should call for a Strength action {or Strength check} on the part of the hero overseeing the physical preparations. The following table indicates the time required to get ready:

Difficulty Attained	Strength Check Difference	Preparation Time
Easy (4)	+2	24 hours
Average (8)	0	18 hours
Challenging (12)	-2	12 hours
Daunting (16)	-4	9 hours
Desperate (20)	-8	6 hours
Impossible (24)	-12	3 hours

Suppose, for example, that the effort is led by Firemane (who has a Strength of 8). He plays a 9 for a total of 17. This is good enough to accomplish a *daunting* action, so it takes nine hours to get the elves ready to travel {or determine how much the PC passed the Strength check by and compare it to the middle column on the above chart to determine the level of success}.

Leaving behind the camp, the expedition heads east. This route brings them to the banks of the Thon-Rishas River. If the Narrator wishes, she or he can toss in a few encounters with wolves or other predators who see the clumsy, obviously weakened elves as easy targets.

❖ **Wolf:** Wild animal. Co 7, Ph 9, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +3, Def -1.

❖ **Wolf:** AC 7; MV 18; HD 3; hp 14; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1; SZ S (3’ long); ML average (10); Int low (5); AL N; XP 120.



Such encounters, however, should not include ogres. Those humanoids show up again at the end of the adventure and ought to be put on the shelf for now.

Crossing the River

At the edge of the river, the heroes find an unexpected obstacle blocking their progress. The bridge that stood here as recently as ten days ago, when the elves crossed over it, has been destroyed. The following narrative describes the scene to the players:

The broad expanse of the Thon-Rishas slices cleanly through the wilderness here. Bright sunlight glistens on its churning surface, making it obvious that the spring thaw has come to the slopes of the Khalkists in the north.

The delicate framework of an elven bridge rests against the shore here. Like a spider's web of wooden beams and stout rope, it stretches toward the far shore. Unfortunately, it doesn't quite make it. The middle third of the bridge is gone, possibly swept away by the racing waters of spring.

Getting past the river can be as easy or as difficult as the Narrator wishes.

It might be possible for the heroes to simply swim across the river, but that's not an option for the elves. They are far too feeble for such exertion. In the event that someone wishes or is forced to try swimming, a *challenging* action is required. This action is based on either the Agility, Strength, or Endurance of the hero, whichever is lowest {or *Swimming proficiency check*}. This action assumes that only a short distance is being crossed. If the hero wishes to swim well out into the water, the difficulty increases to *daunting* {or -2 penalty to *Swimming check*}. Trying to swim across the whole river increases the difficulty to *desperate* {or -4 penalty to *Swimming check*}.

There is plenty of wood around to use to build rafts, especially if the bridge is scavenged. Building a raft requires a few hours of work and an *average Dexterity* action {or *Carpentry proficiency check*}. Failure at this action indicates that the craft will be obviously unsafe before it is placed in the water. A mishap indicates a flaw that becomes apparent only when the craft breaks up halfway to the opposite shore.

Other solutions might present themselves as well, especially if the party tosses around a little magic.

As the party crosses the water, they will discover the reason for the bridge's destruction. Exactly when this encounter occurs is up to the Narrator, but it should (of course) come at a time when the heroes will be hard pressed to overcome it. The following narrative announces the beginning of this encounter:

A flash of darkness falls over your party, as if a cloud were momentarily blocking the sun. Almost as soon as it appears, however, this shadow is gone and a shrill cry fills the air.

High overhead, a sinister shape sweeps downward. Huge leathery wings spread out to brake the creature's lightning descent as glistening talons reach toward you. Serpentine eyes glow with hunger and the anticipation of the kill as a long, scorpionlike tail curves ominously behind the scaled body.

The party has just met a wyvern who has staked out its claim to this part of the forest. If the heroes intend to continue, they must defeat this beast.

☛ **Wyvern:** *Wild creature.* Co 12, Ph 28, In 4, Es 7, Dmg +11, Def -4 , also dive and poison.

☛ **Wyvern:** AC 3; MV 6, Fl 24 (E); HD 7+7; hp 55; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8/1d6 (bite/stinger); SA dive (2d6 points talon damage), poison; SZ G (35' long); ML very steady (14); Int low (5); AL NE; XP 1,400.

The wyvern's dive attack allows it to begin an attack at far missile range, as it has in this case, and swoop instantly to melee range. {*The wyvern attempts to snatch up a hero in its talons, for 1d6 points of damage each, and fly off.*} During its dive, any heroes who are not surprised may make missile or thrown weapon attacks on the beast, although the difficulty of such actions is increased by one degree. After such attacks are resolved, the wyvern can make a melee attack on the target of its choice. That individual may defend him- or herself, but may not make a counterattack. In the wake of the dive, normal melee combat procedures apply.

The poison stinger of the wyvern makes it a truly dangerous enemy. Anyone who suffers damage from its attack must make an *average Endurance (Strength)* action to avoid being poisoned. One minute after being poisoned, the victim must give up one card from his or her hand. This process is repeated after each exchange of blows until the hero runs out of cards and dies or receives some type of antitoxin. {*PCs hit by the wyvern's stinger must succeed at a saving throw vs. poison or die. If successful, the character still suffers 1d6 points of damage.*}

As with the attack by the ogres, the heroes may find their attention divided between fighting their foes and protecting the refugees. This is especially true if the wyvern's attack leads to the overturning or destruction of a raft full of refugees.

If the heroes manage some manner of communication with the wyvern, they may learn something of recent events in the area. Because of this creature's

ferocity, however, it is likely that it will have to be defeated and forced to engage in conversation. In addition, the creature speaks only its own reptilian language, so some efforts may be required to make conversation possible at all.

Assuming that these challenges are overcome, however, the creature can explain the destruction of the bridge. It attacked a man who was crossing it, hoping to snatch a quick bite, but things went wrong. The human dodged at the last second and the wyvern crashed into the bridge. By the time it was able to rip itself free of the rope supports, its prey had escaped. Weakened by the collision, the bridge buckled a few hours later, unable to withstand the rapid currents of spring. The description of this person very closely matches that of Vorst. Whether or not Klen and Blackeagle share that information with the rest of the heroes is, of course, up to them.

After defeating the wyvern, the party is free to continue on.

The Withered Wood

Shortly after the company completes its river crossing, which may require considerable effort, the party enters a region unlike any the heroes have ever seen.

Ever since you crossed the river, you have noticed a disturbing trend. With each mile that you put behind you, the proud trees and lush vegetation of the forest grow less and less healthy. Leaves have slowly turned brown, branches have become gnarled, and blossoms have lost their color.

Even the animals here are affected by this blight. Like the elves in your company, they have grown frail and lethargic. Birds fail to take flight as you approach, and the droning of insects is notably absent.

The elves refer to this place as the “Withered Wood.” Beyond, they assert, waits an even more dreadful place. And beyond that, lies Sithelnost.

Heroes who attempt to discover the nature of the blight here may do so using normal examination or via divination magic. In the former case, a *challenging Reason* action {or *Intelligence check at a -2 penalty*} permits them to learn that the effects on the woods mimic exactly those on the elves. Clearly, whatever is draining the life from them also affects plants and animals.

The use of a magical spell enables the heroes to learn this as well. In addition, however, a properly phrased spell might enable the party to learn a somewhat disturbing fact. Some force is deliberately preventing them from learning the nature of the drain. While the heroes might manage to overcome this supernatural concealment in time, they can only note its existence at present.



As the party moves on, the environment grows worse. Further, the elves become increasingly despondent. When they come within twenty-five miles of Sithelnost, the Narrator should read the following description:


You have reached a band of utter desolation. The trees here are withered as if a dragon's fiery breath had reduced them to standing pillars of gray-white ash. Indeed, the lack of color makes it look almost as if the place had been covered in a blanket of dirty snow or volcanic ash. The lifeless skeletons of chipmunks and other animals lie across soil which covers the forest floor.

This entire region can be summed up in one word: Dead.

This region of ashen forest should be quite disturbing to the party. It does not appear gradually. Rather, they will come upon it suddenly, noticing at once the clear demarcation between it and the rest of the wilderness.

The heroes may be able to learn, either through the use of magic or by careful questioning of the elves, that this band of destruction marks the point where the Silvanesti Shield once stood.

Anyone who touches one of the trees or other plants will find that it crumbles easily into a pile of powdery ash. The same is true of the animal bones and the top several inches of soil. When run between



the fingers, this residue has the consistence of fine flour. Walking through this area will kick up a cloud of dust which seems to hang in the air for an unnaturally long period of time.

Attempts to find signs of life in this area, whether magical or not, will be doomed to failure. All life energy has been drained from this place. The nearby animals seem to sense that this region is unnatural, for they have not returned to it.

This becomes apparent if the party is traveling in the company of animals (hunting dogs, for example, or mounts). These beasts will become skittish as the party nears the area, requiring an *average Presence (Spirit)* action {or *Charisma check*} to keep them under control. Actually convincing them to enter the Ashen Wastes requires a *challenging Presence (Spirit)* action {or *Charisma check at a -2 penalty*}. The nat-

ural ability of centaurs to calm equines may prove very valuable in this place.

Beyond the band of desolation, the heroes find that the forest has returned to its former state. It's not perfectly healthy, however, but similar to the sickly conditions between the river and the region of ash.

Outcome

At the conclusion of this scene, the heroes are assumed to have reached Sithelnost. These events mark the beginning of Act Two: "The Dying Land."

An Interlude describing the town of Sithelnost appears between Act One and Act Two. The Narrator is advised to read through this section before starting the next act, as the town figures prominently in the events of Acts Two and Three.

The Ashen Wastes

The Ashen Wastes mark the point at which the Silvanesti Shield once touched (and penetrated) the surface of Ansalon. For years, that mystical barrier sustained itself by consuming the vital energies of life from those regions. While this had a withering effect on the wilderness near the barrier, it was utterly devastating to the point of contact. Now that the shield has begun to contract, these regions are exposed and the awful truth is clear for all to see.

As described in Aleaha's Journal (see the Prologue), those who enter the Ashen Wastes discover at once that it is not an easy place in which to survive. Every footfall kicks up a cloud of fine, powdery dust. This quickly contaminates unstoppered fluids, cakes around the eyes, and works its way into the nose and throat. In time, it will interfere with all manner of mechanisms, from the sliding sections of a telescope to the joints on a suit of armor.

In addition to these irritating effects, the powdery residue can be potentially dangerous. Even though the dust itself is not flammable, it can trigger a fireball or explosion when suspended in the air. (This is the same condition that causes grain elevator explosions in the real world.) Whenever a large cloud of ash is thrown violently into the air and, at the same time, exposed to an open flame, the Narrator should turn over the top card on the Fate Deck. If the card comes from the Suit of Dragons, an explosion occurs. This blast inflicts 10 damage points to everyone caught in it. The amount of damage drops to 5 points if a hero succeeds at a *challenging Endurance* action. A mishap, however, doubles the damage inflicted. (*When exposed to open flame, the ash causes an explosion that inflicts 3d6 damage points. Characters may attempt a saving throw vs. wands for half damage.*)

The Ashen Wastes also hunger for the life energy which was stolen from it. Because of this, the use of any spell from the sphere of healing can be very dangerous. When such magic is unleashed, it is instantly absorbed by the powdery landscape—apparently having no effect. Roughly a minute later, however, a flowing, amoeba-like mass of powdery residue rises up and attempts to consume the person who cast the spell.

☛ **Ash elemental: Monster.** Co 3, Ph 36, In 4, Es 10, Dmg +16, Def -4, also crush, geomancy.

☛ **Ash elemental:** AC 2, MV 6; HD 12; hp 60; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 4d8; SD +2 weapon or better to hit; SW -2 points per die penalty to damage against air- or waterborne targets; SZ L (12' tall); ML champion (16); Int low (6); AL N; XP 6,000.

This creature menaces the party until it has suffered damage equal to the number of spell points used (unwittingly) in its creation. Once this total is exceeded, the thing collapses under its own weight, creating a cloud which may, of course, be ignited. (*The use of any healing spell automatically fails and causes the formation of an ash-creature, as above. The creature is the equivalent of an earth elemental with Hit Dice equal to the level of the spell cast.*)

Many people believe that the powdery residue of living things found in the Ashen Wastes contains information which can be used to bring down the Silvanesti Shield. Whether this is true remains to be seen.

Interlude: The Town of Sithelnost

The elven town of Sithelnost is located in the northwestern Silvanesti Forest. Fortified by its own barrier hedge of sharp thorns, the town stands near (but not directly on) the banks of the Thon-Thalas River.

Visitors to Sithelnost notice at once that it is a town with a proud heritage. The elves who live here can recite like a litany the roster of heroes who have ridden forth from their town to change the world. The greatest of these are commemorated with the towering marble statues both in the Gallery of Heroes and scattered around the town.

Named for Sithel, son of Silvanos, the town honors this leader who ruled the Silvanesti from 2515–2192PC. Before the Kinslayer War divided the elves, several families in House Gardener were interested in claiming land in the grasslands just outside the forest. Those who decided to head north found themselves in need of occasional supplies from Silvanost and the forest in general. As a result, Sithelnost formed during the reign of Speaker Sithel. Tragically, Sithel died on his way to sign a peace accord at the outset of the Kinslayer War.

During the War of the Lance, Sithelnost was completely evacuated. When the forest was reclaimed, residents discovered that their town had been decimated into rubble and overgrown with a strange vine that sustained itself on animal flesh. Once Porthios's troops destroyed this vine, the former residents entered town and started the long process of rebuilding.

By the time of the Dragon Purge, the town and its nearby barrier hedge was restored to its former glory. However, when the shield rose, Sithelnost lost its ability to trade with local farmers—even by river, which was its major source of revenue. As inhabitants returned to their families and houses in Silvanost, those remaining in Sithelnost started falling to the wasting sickness.

Politics

Until recently, the mystical Silvanesti Shield protected the town from the outside world. As that barrier weakened and contracted, however, the elves of Sithelnost found themselves cut off from their kin. For a race with no love of other people, this turn of fortune leaves them in an uncomfortable position.

The shield and recent events surrounding it have caused a great deal of controversy among the people of the town. Is the Silvanesti Shield a source of salvation or damnation?

Pro-Shield Forces

Roughly a third of Sithelnost's residents are in favor of the shield. Most of the town's government officials, including nearly all of House Protector, consider it necessary to preserve the Silvanesti way of life. This view is also shared by the older, more conservative members of Sithelnost society.

Now that the shield has contracted to exclude Sithelnost, this faction's greatest concern is finding a way to get back within the barrier's protection. Some are trying to figure out how to restore the shield to its former size, while others advocate abandoning their homes and attempting to find a way back inside the barrier as it now stands.

Those in this faction aren't deterred by evidence suggesting the shield may be the cause of the wasting sickness, arguing that other factors may be to blame. Nor are they swayed by the many people who have tried unsuccessfully to pierce the barrier almost from the day it was erected. Returning to the shield's protection, they insist, will not only reunite residents of Sithelnost with their kin, it will once again provide the protection (and isolation) they crave.

Anti-Shield Forces

Others in Sithelnost believe that the town is better served in its current condition. Some, including members of House Cleric, House Advocate, House Mason, and House Woodshaper, assert that the damage done to the living things of the forest is too high a price for the shield's protection. Others, such as House Metalline, have more fiscal motives for their views, believing the shield's protection decreases demand for the weapons they produce by keeping out the foes they would be used against.

Many of those in the anti-shield faction secretly support Alhana Starbreeze. They believe the shield's erection and the subsequent ill effects it has brought upon them never would have happened if the Silvanesti had a Speaker to govern them properly.

Neutral Parties

Not all residents of Sithelnost have taken a firm stance on the shield issue. Those of House Mystic advocate studying the shield to find another energy source for it. House Royal is more preoccupied with establishing who is the rightful Speaker of the Stars than with the shield. And members of House Servitor are too busy getting through their daily lives to form much of an opinion.

Some individuals find the arguments for both sides compelling and sway with the strongest-blowing wind on any given day. In the wake of Alhana's arrival in the town (at the end of this adventure), many of these people breathe a sigh of relief. They look to her for



both guidance and protection, supporting her newly reasserted claim to the throne.

For more information about Silvanesti Houses and political views on the shield, see the Epilogue.

Other Political Concerns

The ogres of Blöde present the greatest military challenge to the elves of Sithelnost. Now that those humanoids have noticed the changes in the shield, raiding parties have begun to probe the elven defenses. It seems certain that a full scale invasion is only a few weeks or months away at best.

In addition, the elves are justifiably concerned about the attentions of Sable to the west and Malys to the east. They are certain that one or both of those great wyrms will soon notice their vulnerability. Almost certainly, the elves of Sithelnost are right.

Places in Sithelnost

While reading this section, refer to the map of Sithelnost in the color section of this book.

Algos Wood and Astarin's Wood

Sithelnost stands in a natural clearing in the northwest corner of the Silvanesti Forest. The elves who live here refer to the areas north of town as Algos Wood and those to the south as Astarin's Wood.

The woods to the north are tended by members of House Woodshaper. The elves of this House maintain and grow the Silvanesti Forest, controlling how much timber is harvested and for what purpose. Their fellow elves generally use the timber to fashion barges or other river craft. Most other wooden structures are fashioned from living trees.

Astarin's Wood also is generally considered to be under the protection of House Woodshaper. Nearly all of the game brought into the town's markets comes from these fertile expanses. Members of House Servitor (under the direction of House Protector) are responsible for hunting and cleaning the catch.

Both the woods, like the rest of the forest the heroes have observed, now lie withered and dying. Timber from Algos Wood crumbles even under the gentle hands of House Woodshaper, and Astarin's Wood cannot support any game worth hunting.

Gallery of Heroes

Some would say that the Gallery of Heroes is the heart of Sithelnost. Here the town's greatest legends, such as Siriath Leafwine (a priest of E'li who undertook a quest on behalf of the Knights of Solamnia and died while helping a group of elves and humans find a lost artifact), are commemorated in gleaming white marble. In order to qualify for a place in the Gallery of Heroes, an individual must have been born in Sithelnost and have undertaken a legendary quest. Statues are created for a hero only after he or she has died.

It is customary for the citizens of Sithelnost to walk this way on the first day of each season, forming a parade known as the Hero's March. Flowers and other offerings are left at the statues.

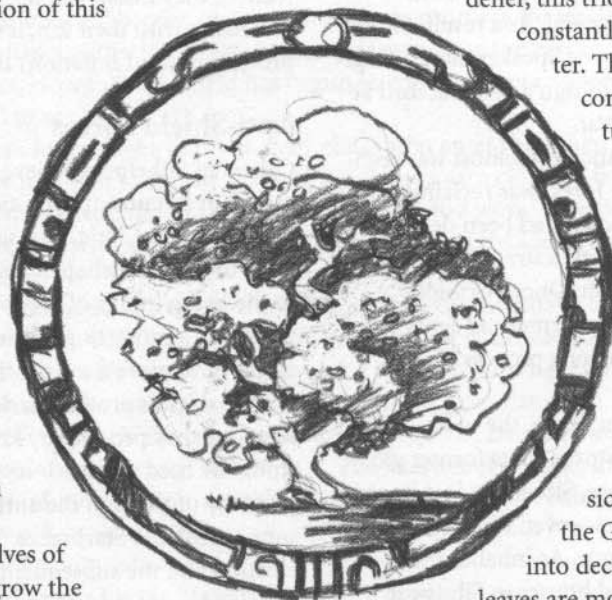
Garden of Dawn

The Garden of Dawn is normally a magnificent sight which any visitor to the town should take time to admire. Tended by the loving hands of House Gardener, this trio of flower beds blooms constantly, even in the dead of winter. The plants that grow here are constantly monitored, nurtured, and guided toward maturity. Many of the plants have medicinal or even magical qualities, but some are simply beautiful to behold. It is said that the head of House Gardener knows secret uses for many of these plants.

Sadly, since the wasting sickness overtook Sithelnost, the Garden of Dawn has fallen into decay. Vines appear twisted, leaves are mottled with gray blight, and most of the plants haven't the strength to produce a single flower. Some fear that the current state of the Garden of Dawn signifies the coming of twilight for the entire Silvanesti race.

Grand Auditorium

Starting in early spring and continuing through late fall, this magnificent outdoor theater normally features a variety of entertaining shows, ranging from musical dramas and operas to poetry readings and dance recitals. The performances are staged by priests of Astarin, god of music and related arts. During the summer, this area often doubles as the pitch upon which a variety of sporting events are played. The most popular of these is soccerlike game called "tri-sphere" played with a trio of balls.



Currently, however, no songs or shouts of competition fill the air of this silent auditorium. The elves haven't the vitality to expend energy on such pursuits.

Library

The library of Sithelnost is a building crowded with books, parchments, scrolls, and the occasional table or chair—a space much at odds with how elves normally order the interior of their buildings. Not only can visitors find tome after tome of elven history, but also scrolls with local decrees upon them, parchment with important messages from Silvanost, and many other interesting items.

One of the history tomes details the exploits of the kirath under the rule of Konnal. If a hero with knowledge of the Silvanesti language reads this book, he or she can attempt a successful *average Perception* action {or *Wisdom check*} to realize that the book makes no mention of Porthios, even though it was he who banded together the forest scouts.

Visitors who look long enough can find treatises on the discovery of High Sorcery, firsthand accounts of the founding of Sithelnost, and books about the Cataclysm and its effects on the area. In all, the holdings appear to be maintained by librarians reluctant to purge any form of the written word.

The Manors

Despite their names, the manors that mark the corners of the Plaza of the Gods are not residences. They are, in fact, clusters of housing—almost like modern apartment buildings. Many have suggested that these would be better known as *quarters*.

The specific names given to them reflect the quality of the accommodations they offer. Thus, the Speaker's Manor, constructed of gleaming crystal, offers the best living in the town. On the other hand, Lord and Ladies Manor—Thalas and Thalah, respectively—and Par patron deities, it is a less festive place. Still, the four statues that stand at the corners of the plaza are among the finest and mther they deal in fruit and produce or swords and daggers, maintain shops in a sprawling section of the town known as the Mercantile. Almost anything of elven manufacture is of excellent quality, although prices are adjusted upward for those few non-elves who do business here.

Usually a bustling center of activity, the Mercantile has grown increasingly quiet since the onset of the wasting sickness. Though some vendors still manage to drag themselves to work each day, the sound of voices bartering and haggling is but an echo of what was heard in former days.

Plaza of the Gods

Prior to the onset of the Second Cataclysm, the Plaza of the Gods was the cultural and spiritual center of the town. Now that the people of Krynn are once again without the favor of theiges Manor are formed from shaped trees and represent more modest residences.

The Mercantile

The majority of Sithelnost's merchant and most honored in the town.

At the center of the town is a towering sculpture of Astarin that rises atop Sithelnost's Grand Cathedral. Those whose faith remains strong despite the withdrawal of the gods often gather here. Formed of wood interwoven with crystal, the cathedral alone appears untouched by the life-draining curse ravaging the rest of the town.

The four towers that stand at the edges of the plaza are devoted to the education of the town's young. The north tower, operated by House Mystic, is a magical academy dedicated to the art of sorcery. The south tower, dedicated to mysticism, and the western tower, which serves the town as a sort of general college, are administered by House Cleric. House Advocate runs the eastern tower, dedicated to commerce and economics.

Thalost Passage and Frenost Way

The town of Sithelnost stands upon a small but important trade route—or at least, it was important before the coming of the Great Dragons. Where the Thalost Passage and Frenost Way used to be major highways, they now serve as grim reminders of better days. The Thalost Passage, which once stretched all the way toward the Bay of Balifor, now ends not far into the tortured lands patrolled by that most terrible of all wyrms, Malystrixx. Though the Frenost Way extends farther (to the west), it is eventually swallowed up by the oozing morass of the New Swamp.

Town Hall

The elves of Sithelnost depend upon Silvanost for most of their legal and law enforcement needs. They do, however, maintain a town hall to handle incidental matters. The head of House Advocate serves as the local judge and also works a circuit for outlying elves. The town hall houses a council chamber and a small holding cell. Sithelnost's court deals with minor infractions; those accused of larger crimes (especially those for which exile may occur) are transported to Silvanost for further investigation, trial, and sentencing.





Wildrunners Courtyard

On the east side of Sithelnost, where the Thalost Passage begins its ill-fated journey, stands a wide grass plaza. It is here, on the Wildrunners Courtyard, that the warriors of House Protector train for battle.

❖ **Wildrunners:** *Silvanesti adults, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Ag 6C, Dx 6A, En 6C, St 6B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 5C, Pr 6B, Dmg +5 (sword), Def -3 (chainmail), also acute sight.

❖ **Wildrunners:** male and female elves R4; AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 17; #AT 1, Dmg 1d8 (sword); SZ M (5'6" tall); ML champion (16); Str 13, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 11, Chr 12; AL NG; XP 120.

Whenever a formal challenge or duel of honor arises, it is traditionally fought on the perfectly manicured grass of the Wildrunners Courtyard. Twice each year, House Protector sponsors an archery tournament open to anyone. Technically, this means that non-elves may participate, although none have ever done so. These matches, accompanied by grand celebrations, mark the spring and autumn equinoxes. Though weakened by the wasting disease, members of House Protector still train in the courtyard. It marks one of the few places in the town that presently approaches its normal level of activity.

Farms

Before the shield went up, the elves of Sithelnost depended on farmers just north of the forest (and some who tilled along the riverbanks) for their grains and other agricultural products. In turn, the farmers used to visit the town to get supplies from Silvanost.

When the shield rose, both sets of elves found themselves cut off from a majority of these bartered and bought goods. Thankfully, the elves who farmed along the riverbank remained inside the shield and thus could provide food for the town's residents. But the new situation hurt Sithelnost's economy, as residents depended on trading grain to Silvanost in exchange for finished goods. (Unbeknownst to Sithelnost's residents, the farmers north of the forest have since had to leave due to hostilities from ogres.)

House Gardener works the riverbank farms, using a three-field system for crops; it also (with the help of House Woodshaper) maintains orchards outside of town. Members of House Gardener have a natural ability to breed hardy crops that resist bugs and other problems much better than the average human crop does, though recent events have affected plant life in the same way they have drained other sources of life energy.

Thon-Thalas River

The elves have constructed a ferry that links the shipyards on the east bank of the Thon-Thalas River with the fisheries on the western shore. Although the Thalost Passage continues onward from here, few people travel that road anymore, as it leads them into the grim lands of the red dragon Malystryx.

The boats manufactured in Sithelnost are magnificent craft that look much like Viking longboats. They are covered from bow to stern with intricate carvings and brightly painted. Although used primarily for travel on inland waterways, they are so well constructed that they also can be rowed into coastal waters. Taking them into the deeper waters of the high seas, however, is asking for disaster.

People of Sithelnost

Like all cities, Sithelnost has its prominent residents. There are numerous elves with influence; the most important ones are detailed below.

Lisindrela

Lisindrela, the daughter of the High Priest of E'li, did not grow up in Sithelnost. Instead, she came here to study under Raenavalona (see description, next page). Now, about a year after arriving in Sithelnost, Lisindrela finds herself suddenly living outside the shield along with the rest of the town. Although she's secretly glad to remain far away from her father's influence, she doesn't really care for Raena's sometimes heavy-handed way of getting her highest acolyte to do what she wishes. Lisindrela has learned much about temple administration from Raena, but she has also learned quite a bit about how *not* to handle interpersonal relations.

Outwardly, Lisindrela maintains a neutral stance about whether the erection of the shield occurred for Good or for Evil. She also doesn't particularly care whether Alhana's son or Kiryn ascends to the throne of Speaker. However, she does care about the well-being of the people around her. Although she won't speak her mind about a subject unless cornered, she does have a strong will that she keeps hidden. She thinks that the shield is a good idea in theory, but that it doesn't actually work in practice. If something like the shield could be manufactured without causing harm to the Silvanesti Forest and its denizens, then she'd be happy to support it.

As for a marriage bond with Silvanoshei, which Raena is trying to effect, Lisindrela wishes to avoid it. However, instead of openly opposing the match, she works against it secretly. In the past, whenever she wished to oppose her father's will, she learned to do so silently and discreetly. These tricks served her well enough to get her to Sithelnost in the first place.

♣ **Lisindrela:** *Silvanesti young adult female, serious demeanor, Novice.* Co 6, Ph 4, In 6, Es 7 (49), Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing), also mysticism (mentalism, sensitivity, spiritualism).

♣ **Lisindrela:** female elf C2; AC 9 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 0; SA priest spells (2); SZ M (5'4"); ML steady (12); Str 7, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 12; AL LG.

Lisindrela is a young elf with long, light blonde hair and startling green eyes. She seems self-effacing and maintains a serious expression at all times. Only occasionally does a hint of her true strength of spirit show itself in her eyes. The heroes are most likely to encounter her in or near the Grand Cathedral. If they do, she will seem shy, meek, and lacking a sense of humor. Many encounters with her should take place before the heroes see her tougher side.

Maravallon

As a member of the kirath now "stuck" in Sithelnost, Maravallon continues to work toward bringing down the shield. Should an opportunity arise, he wishes to speak to Alhana about the current situation inside the barrier. He also hopes to solve the mystery of why the shield moved in the first place. Currently, he contemplates leaving town to find some fellow kirath who were also in the area when the shield moved. They should have joined him by this time, but have not. Maravallon believes ogres might have captured them. Before he can get a party together to search for these lost elves, though, he needs proof of his suspicions.

♣ **Maravallon:** *Silvanesti adult male, sensible demeanor, Adventurer.* Co 6, Ph 7, In 5, Es 6 (36), Dmg +4 (soris), Def -2 (leather), also mysticism (animism).

♣ **Maravallon:** male elf F6; AC 7 (leather, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (soris); SZ M (5'7"); ML champion (15); Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; AL LG.

Maravallon of House Protector has silver-blond hair and pale blue eyes. He keeps his hair cropped short (an atypical practice among the Silvanesti elves) to keep it out of his face—or so he tells those impertinent enough to ask. Actually, a Nightmare creature caused him to hack his hair off to escape. He liked the unusual look, so he kept it.

Originally, he joined the kirath during the cleansing of Lorac's Nightmare. Although he rejoined the Wildrunners upon Porthios's exile, he returned to the kirath when Aleaha started calling back her former

scouts to help protect the forest. Now he owes allegiance only to her. Heroes are likely to encounter him along the outskirts of town or in the Mercantile hoping to pick up rumors.

Nemetranee

Nemetranee of House Mystic is the unproclaimed leader of the sorcerous community in Sithelnost. Although a few others seek to lead the sorcerers of House Mystic, Nemetranee's gentle guidance helps steer the spellcasters down the path that the group as a whole believes would best serve the Silvanesti.

Her divination abilities far surpass those of most other sorcerers, so many of Sithelnost's residents come to her for advice. While at times she has no words of wisdom to give them, she does not fail to offer something to think about that would help them choose their own path. She never crosses the boundary of manipulating behavior, for she intensely dislikes those who use people for their own ends.

♣ **Nemetranee:** *Silvanesti adult female, contemplative demeanor, Champion.* Co 6, Ph 4, In 8 (64), Es 7, Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing), also sorcery (divination, spectramancy, summoning).

♣ **Nemetranee:** female elf M10; AC 10; MV 12; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 0; SA priest spells (4/4/3/2/2); SZ M (5'5"); ML champion (15); Str 8, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 16; AL LG.


Nemetranee has violet eyes and flaxen hair bound up in an elaborate braided hairstyle. She carries herself with unmindful grace and always speaks in soft, melodic tones. Whenever someone approaches her with a question, she pauses a moment to see if an answer immediately suggests itself. If the question is of a serious nature and the inquirer needs the answer via divination, she sets up a meeting in the north tower of the Plaza of the Gods. (This is where the heroes are most likely to encounter her.) Although she cannot find answers to every query, she always tries to devise some form of aid.

Raenavalona

A priestess of Astarin and a prominent member of House Cleric, Raenavalona (Raena) is a woman of vision despite her physical blindness. Many of Sithelnost's more conservative factions look upon her as a dangerous rebel because of her wish to expand Silvanesti contact with the outside world and her suspected loyalty to Alhana Starbreeze.

Though Raena believes in the sanctity of the Ceremony of Darkness, she harbors doubt about whether Alhana was exiled fairly: Since Alhana never endured





the Silvanesti ceremony in person (she was represented by her husband, Porthios), Raena believes the dark elf queen should have an opportunity to face her accusers. Perhaps, in doing so, she may be found innocent and instated as Speaker. Further, Raena suspects that Konnal may have orchestrated events to ensure that Alhana didn't have the chance to go through the ceremony herself.

Raena and her followers believe it is the destiny of Alhana's son, Silvanoshei, to one day reunite all the elves of Ansalon under his banner. She also hopes to arrange a marriage between the crown prince of the elves and one of her acolytes (see the description of Lisindrela, above), having foreseen the union during a divination ritual.

❖ **Raenavalona (Raena):** *Silvanesti adult, compassionate demeanor, Champion.* Co 2 (temporarily reduced to 1), Ph 2 (temporarily reduced to 1), In 9 (81), Es 9 (81), Dmg +5 (scimitar) or +4 (horse bow), Def 0 (no armor), also sorcery (divination), and mysticism (healing). Raena is blind and automatically fails any Perception actions that rely on sight.

➤ **Raenavalona:** female elf P8 (Astarin); AC 10; MV 9; hp 46 (temporarily reduced to 4); THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA spells; SW blind; SZ M (5' tall); ML fanatic (18); Str 7, Dex 9, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 17; AL NG.

Spells (5/5/4/3): Choose any spells from the *Player's Handbook*, using the following limitations: major access to all, creation, healing, plants, sun and weather spheres; minor access to animal and charm spheres. (See spell casting rules on inside cover of this book.)

Raena is a thin old woman with gray, stringy hair and withered features. Though blind, she possesses an uncanny ability to "see" into the hearts of people who enter her presence. The heroes encounter her soon after entering Sithelnost (Act Two, Scene One).

Teveralis

Known as the Herbalist, Teveralis of House Gardener grows herbs for use in food and in healing. Because he was alive during the Time of Darkness when the gods had abandoned Krynn, he grew proficient enough with herbal remedies to treat even the worst-case patients. His instinctive knowledge of plants has allowed him to cultivate stronger varieties of feverfew, firebane, and many other herbs.

Teveralis's fame is such that people in outlying areas once traveled to seek his aid. With the movement of the shield, however, only those outside the barrier can now benefit from his abilities.

Teveralis was once an adventurer, so he knows the ins and outs of the surrounding lands. His broad-minded perspective allows him to treat both elves and humans alike. In addition, he was one of the first elves outside House Cleric to learn of the powers of the heart, having made a trip to the Citadel of Light shortly after its inception. Now he uses mystic healing to augment his herbs.

❖ **Teveralis:** *Silvanesti elder male, open demeanor, Champion.* Co 6, Ph 4, In 7, Es 8 (64), Dmg 0 (unarmed), Def 0 (common clothing), also mysticism (healing, sensitivity, spiritualism).

➤ **Teveralis:** male elf C7; AC 9 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 0; SA priest spells; SZ M (5'6"); ML steady (12); Str 8, Dex 9, Con 9, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 8; AL LG.

Teveralis is an elderly Silvanesti elf about five hundred years in age. He always wears his light-gold hair tied in an intricate braid, and he tends to don robes of royal blue or rich brown. If the heroes visit the western tower of the Plaza of the Gods, they probably will find him outside working with his herbs.

After he exchanges formal greetings, the Herbalist often dispenses with the normal hauteur of the Silvanesti and speaks his mind on any subject the heroes wish to discuss. While this bluntness can be off-putting, Teveralis speaks simple truths. The Herbalist is glad to be outside the harmful shield, and he is not afraid to make his opinions known.

Other Residents

For the Narrator's convenience, game statistics for elf commoners are provided here.

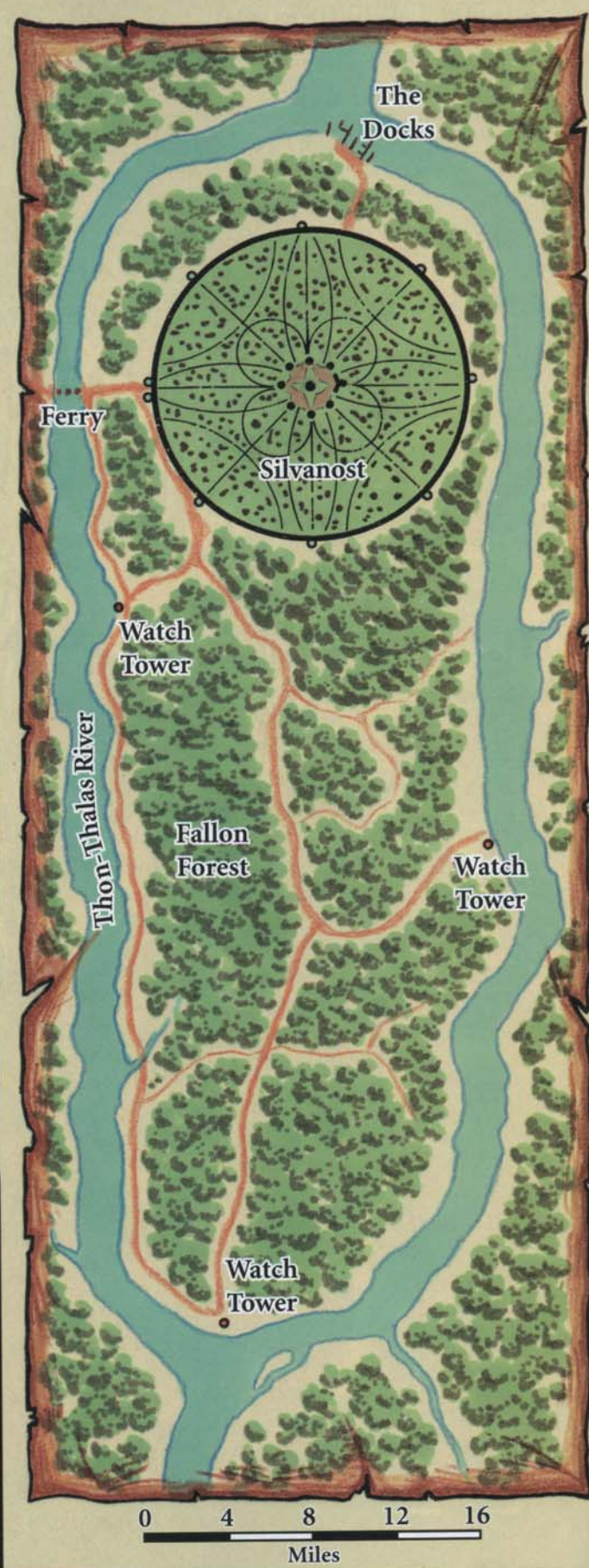
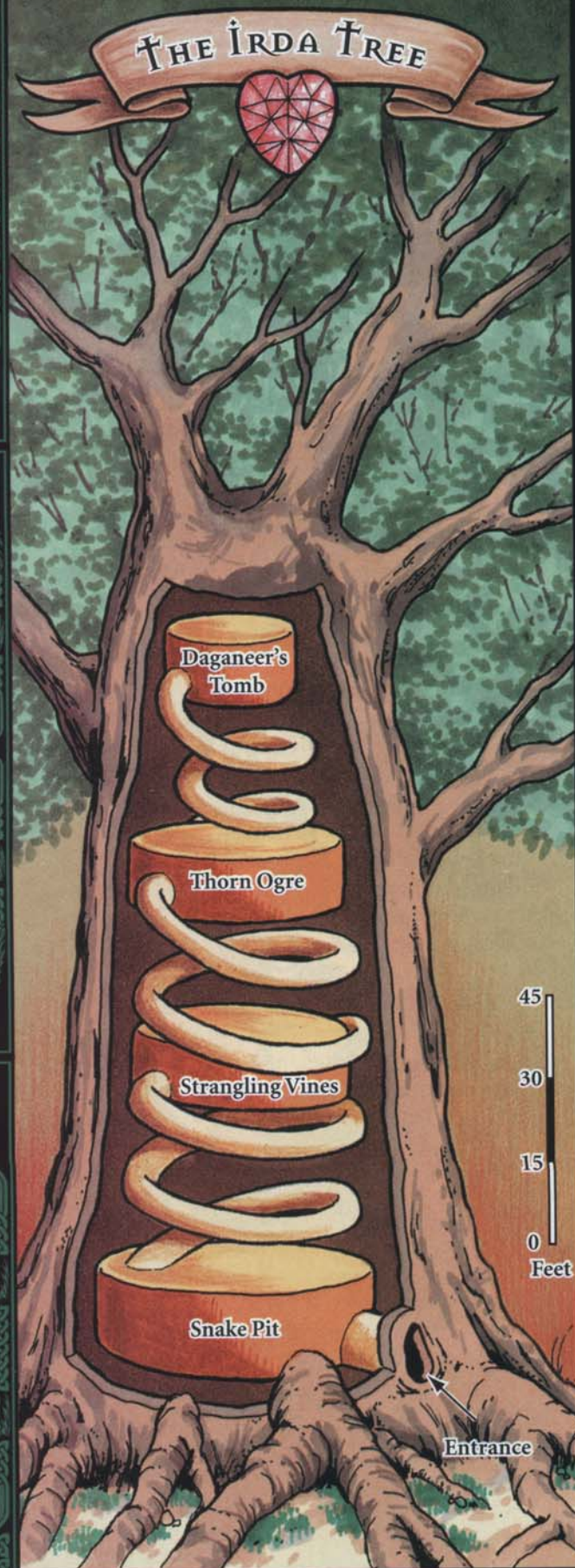
❖ **Sithelnost residents:** *Silvanesti adults, realistic demeanor, Novices.* Co 4 (temporarily reduced to 1), Ph 4 (temporarily reduced to 1), In 6, Es 6, Dmg +3 (short sword) or +2 (self bow), Def 0 (no armor).

➤ **Sithelnost residents:** AC 10; MV 9; HD 1; hp 5 (temporarily reduced to 2); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML steady (11); Str 9, Dex 9, Con 9, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11; AL NG, XP 15.

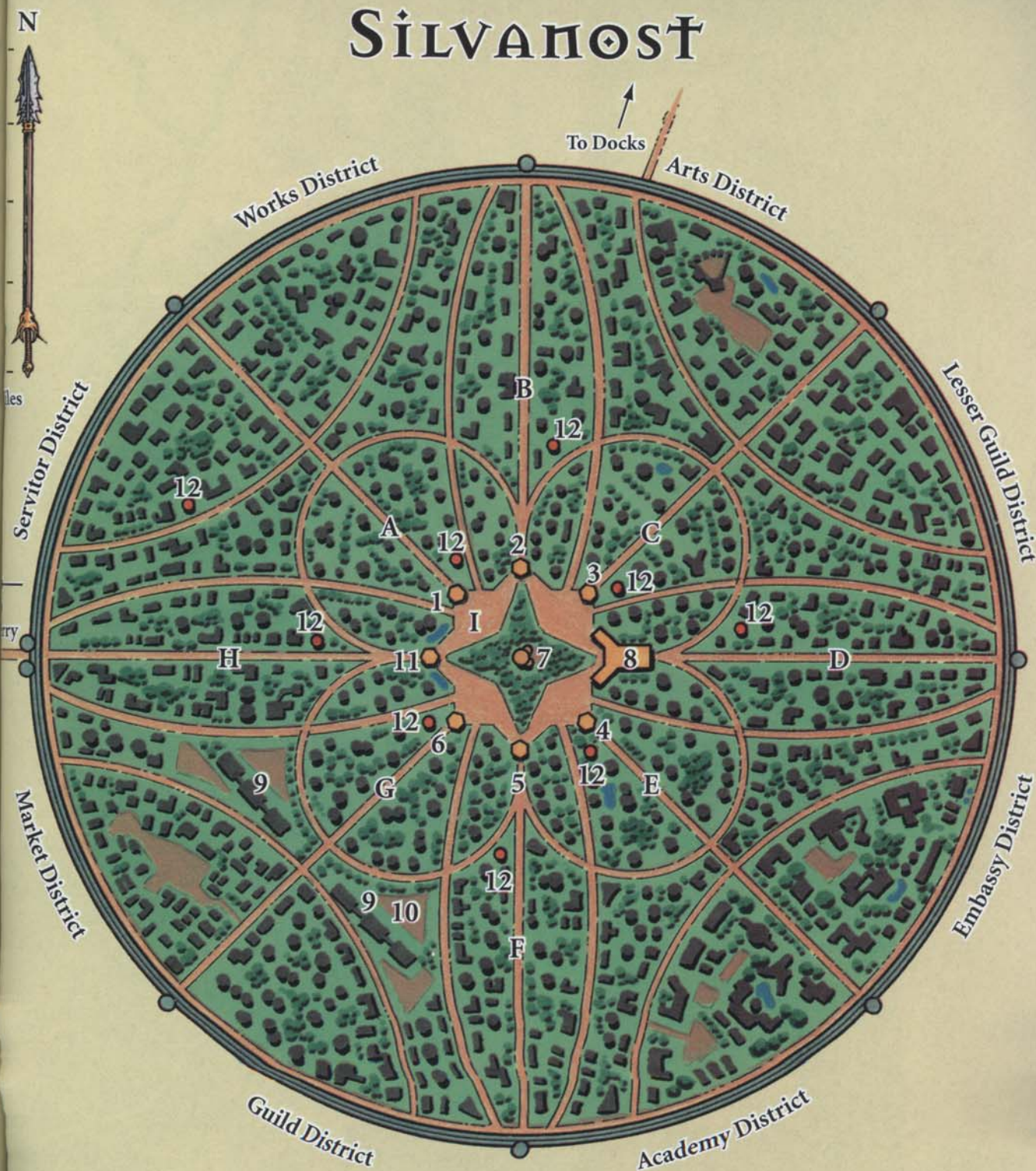
SITHELMOST

1. To the Docks
2. Thalost Passage
3. Wildrunners Courtyard
4. Plaza of the Gods
5. Thalas Manor
6. Thalah Manor
7. Pages Manor
8. Speaker's Manor
9. Grand Cathedral
10. Gallery of Heroes
11. Grand Auditorium
12. Town Hall
13. Library
14. Garden of Dawn
15. The Mercantile
16. Frenost Way
17. Astarin's Wood
18. Algos Wood





SILVANOST



A: House Metalline
B: House Gardener
C: House Cleric
D: House Mason
E: House Mystic
F: House Woodshaper
G: House Protector

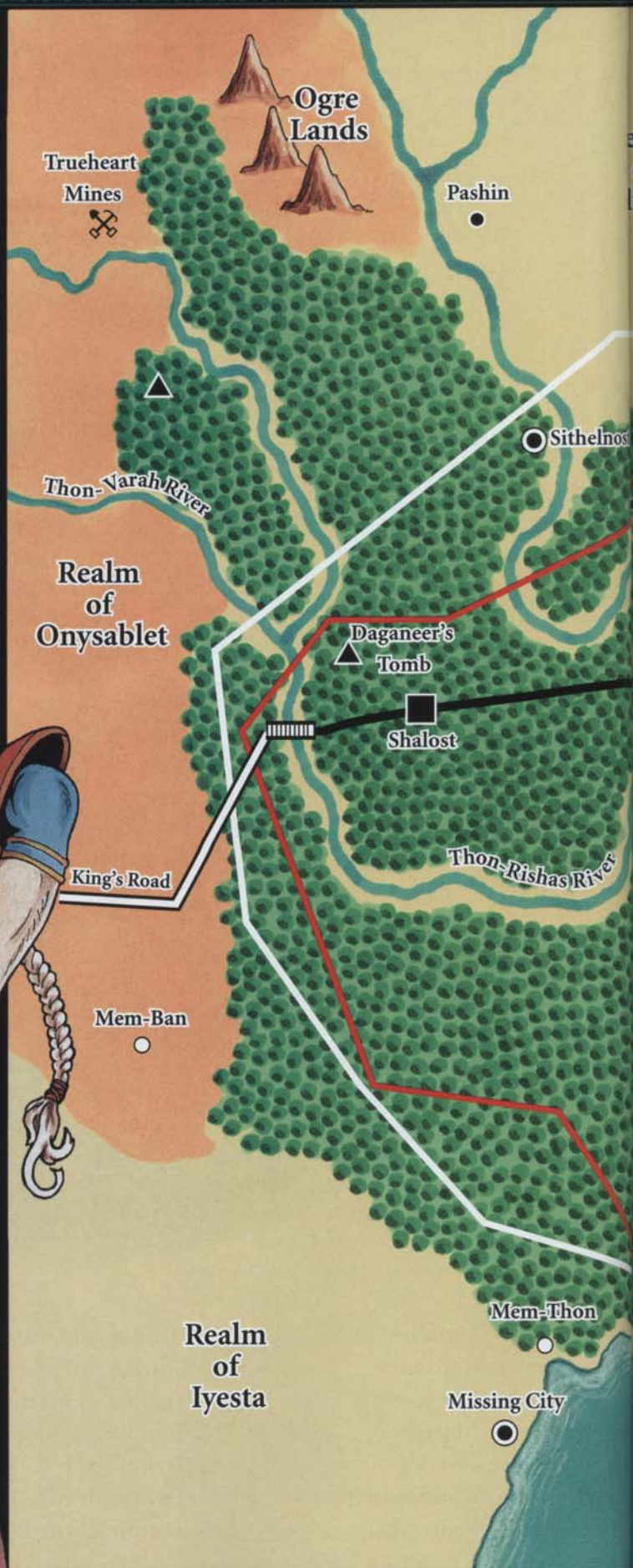
H: House Advocate
I: Garden of Astarin
1. Temple of Matheri
2. Temple of Quenesti Pah
3. Temple of E'li
4. Temple of Kiri-Jolith
5. Temple of the Blue Phoenix

6. Temple of Solinari
7. Temple of Astarin
8. Palace of Quinari
9. Wildrunner Barracks
10. Training Grounds
11. Tower of the Stars
12. House Leader's Tower



Legend

- ★ Capital
- City
- Town
- Village
- Tower
- ▣ Ruin
- ⚓ Ferry
- ⛏ Mine
- ▤ Bridge
- Road
- == High Road
- ▲ Adventure Site
- Shield Location (current)
- Shield Location (original)



THE SILVANESTI FOREST



ACT TWO



arrators are advised to read the Interlude before beginning Act Two, as it details important people and places in this and the following act.

Scene One: Arrival in Sithelnost

This scene covers the events surrounding the heroes' arrival in Sithelnost at the conclusion of Act One. Under normal conditions, the heroes could have traveled the hundred or so miles between the refugee camp and the town in about ten days. With the refugees in tow, however, the Narrator can assume it took them more than twice that time.

While the heroes may have won the trust of the elven refugees, this doesn't mean that the folk of Sithelnost embrace them. As things play out, they meet two important characters. The first of these is Falindrithan (Flin), the commander of the town's military and current ruler of Sithelnost. Nothing the party does will enable them to win his trust. They also have an important encounter with a priestess named Raenavalona (Raena), a talented healer skilled in the arts of divination.

The Narrator should strive to convey the arrogance of the Silvanesti, displayed in full force now that the heroes have entered their "home turf." The elves don't trust outsiders in the least, a fact only magnified by the current situation. Every exchange with Flin should make this obvious. Indeed, even Maleesa, who has good reason to be grateful to the party, has a hard time putting these feelings aside. Only Raena, who foresaw the heroes' arrival through divination, trusts them.

First Impressions

The town of Sithelnost abruptly rises around you. One moment, you are following the trail that has brought you east and the next you are standing at the edge of a magnificent collection of scintillating spires and elegant domes.

Only after you look beyond the grandeur of its structures does the truth about this town strike you. The flowering vines that embrace buildings and lamp posts alike hang withered and pale. The gardens lining

the streets have produced a bountiful harvest of sickly, moldering fruit. Even the great fountain at the center of town fares little better. The spray of water that it sends skyward tumbles back upon blotchy lily pads and putrid lilies.

The Story Continues

As the heroes enter the fringes of the town, shutters are drawn closed and shadowy figures vanish into doorways. After a few minutes, however, a small collection of elven soldiers approaches them.

The leader of these troops is Falindrithan (Flin). Flin has been a powerful member of House Protector for decades and is presently the *de facto* lord of Sithelnost. A major force in the pro-shield faction of Silvanesti politics, Flin is currently working with other members of House Protector to formulate a plan for returning the town to the shield's protection.

Flin commands half his soldiers to take charge of the refugees and the rest to remain with the heroes. As the refugees are led home, Flin orders the heroes to follow him. He leads them to the town hall.

Maleesa, however, remains with them. She knows the kind of person Flin is and suspects the heroes will need an advocate in their dealings with him. For the duration of their stay in Sithelnost, Maleesa will act as a guide, advisor, and companion.

Flin's nature becomes apparent almost at once. During the current state of emergency, he became the acting administrator of the town when the previous lord died of the wasting sickness. Even under the best of circumstances, Flin would be only too happy to toss the heroes into some ancient dungeon and forget about them. Knowing the weakened condition of the elves, he's even more suspicious of outsiders than usual.

❖ **Falindrithan (Flin):** *Silvanesti adult male, brave demeanor, Champion.* Co 7 (temporarily reduced to 1), Ph 7 (temporarily reduced to 1), In 8, Es 8, Dmg +5 (scimitar) or +4 (horse bow), Def 0 (no armor).

❖ **Falindrithan (Flin):** male elf F8; AC 10; MV 9; hp 68 (temporarily reduced to 5); THAC0 13 (+2 bonus with swords or bows); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (scimitar) or 1d6 (bow); SZ M (5'2" tall); ML champion (16); Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15; AL LN.

Flin respects Maleesa enough that she can persuade him to listen to the heroes' theories, discoveries, and other statements, though convincing him to trust the

THE DYING LAND ~

heroes proves impossible. With a successful *desperate Presence (Spirit)* action {or *Charisma* check at a -8 penalty}, however, the heroes can persuade Flin to release them into Maleesa's custody.

Should the heroes fail the above action, Flin orders them locked up while he decides what to do with them. As the guards arrive to lead the prisoners away, Raenavalona steps into the room. Her arrival should be timed to prevent any attempt by the heroes to resist captivity.

If the heroes have convinced Flin not to toss them behind bars, the elven lord instructs Maleesa to arrange quarters for them at Pages Manor (see the Interlude and Sithelnost map). Just as she and the heroes are about to leave, Raena arrives.

Regardless of the circumstances surrounding Raena's arrival, the Narrator can introduce her with the following text:

As if from nowhere, the slender silhouette of a woman appears in the doorway. Flin and Maleesa are unable to conceal surprised gasps. As she steps forward into the light, the darkness flows almost reluctantly away from her features.

Never before have you seen an elf like this one. Her features are shriveled with age and her sightless eyes are covered with a leaden film. Brittle, strawlike hair hangs in dirty tangles almost to her waist.

"I have foreseen the coming of these strangers," she says quietly. Her voice carries with it the parched tones of uncounted years. "My business is with them, Flin, not with you."

In the next few minutes, the heroes learn that Raena is a priestess of Astarin, a healer and a prophet who is both respected and feared by the rest of the community. Raena is described more fully in the Interlude; her statistics also appear here for the Narrator's convenience.

❖ **Raenavalona (Raena):** *Silvanesti adult, compassionate demeanor, Champion.* Co 2 (temporarily reduced to 1), Ph 2 (temporarily reduced to 1), In 9 (81), Es 9 (81), Dmg +5 (scimitar) or +4 (horse bow), Def 0 (no armor), also sorcery (divination), and mysticism (healing). Raena is blind and automatically fails any Perception actions that rely on sight.

❖ **Raenavalona:** female elf P8 (Astarin); AC 10; MV 9; hp 46 (temporarily reduced to 4); THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA spells, spell-like abilities; SW blind; SZ M (5' tall); ML fanatic (18); Str 7, Dex 9, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 17; AL NG.

Special abilities: Spell-like abilities include *create food and water*, *detect snares and pits*, *locate plants*, *neutralize poison*, *quest*, and *slow poison* once per day.

Spells (5/5/4/3): Choose any spells from the *Player's Handbook*, using the following limitations: major access to all, creation, healing, plants, sun and weather spheres; minor access to animal and charm spheres.

For the past three weeks (since the heroes first encountered the refugees), Raena has experienced nightly visions of the party's arrival in Sithelnost, along with the intuitive knowledge that they will somehow play a role in easing her people's suffering. Though she cannot see the heroes, she can tell by their voices and presence that they are the figures from her dreams. Over Flin's objections, Raena tells the heroes what she has learned about the weakness that has overcome her people.

"The wasting came over us quite suddenly and without any warning. When the sun set, the people of Sithelnost were healthy and full of life. When the sun returned to the sky, our spirits had been drained away.





The Heart of the Irda

Physically, the Heart of the Irda is a fist-sized ruby that glows faintly at all times. It was polished smooth, fashioned into a heart, and affixed to a chain of platinum by an Irda wizard named Daganeer. He used its power to help Igraine's folk escape from the other ogres, although he lost his own life in the flight. The Irda paused in their exodus long enough to bury Daganeer's body, although the location of his final resting place (and the Heart itself) remains unknown to this day.

—description from an Irda legend

Most believe the Heart of the Irda, an ancient magical artifact, never existed at all. Mention of it appears in only the most obscure tomes penned by the almost forgotten Irda themselves. In this sidebar are guidelines for using the artifact in both the SAGA and the AD&D rules systems.

✱ SAGA Description

If the owner of the Heart is a skilled mystic, it can be used to cure wounds. In any twenty-four-hour period, a hero with a Spirit code of "B" can use the Heart to restore up to five cards to the hands of injured heroes (25 Endurance points to injured characters). Those with an "A" code can restore up to fifteen cards (75 points). Any number of cards can be restored with each use, but the daily total may not be exceeded.

A skilled sorcerer can use the Heart to animate unliving matter. In game terms, this ability allows those with a Reason code of "B" to summon one elemental per day and those with an "A" code to call forth three such creatures daily. It is important to note that the Heart isn't actually calling forth an elemental. In actuality, it is animating unliving material much as someone creating a golem might. For the purposes of game play, however, the monsters created are treated as elementals. In all cases, the type of elemental is dictated by the surrounding environment. The animating effect lasts for one hour, at the end of which the creature becomes inert again.

If the owner of the Heart is trained in both mysticism and sorcery, he or she can use the relic to reshape living matter and give life to unliving things. This is an example of hybrid magic, which combines the powers of mysticism and sorcery. Those with "A" codes in both Spirit and Reason can use the Heart in this fashion up to three times in any twenty-four-hour period. A person with one "A" code and one "B" code may use this power twice per day, while those with two "B" codes can use it only once per day.

Should the Heart be used to change one living thing into another, certain guidelines apply. For those with Reason and Spirit codes of "B," the total of the new creature's ability scores may be no greater than its totals before the transformation. Thus, an owlbear (31 total points) could be changed into a tiger (30 total points) but not the other way around.

If a hero or other character with eight ability scores is transformed into a creature that normally has only four such ratings, the total points available are halved and all fractions dropped. Thus, Roselenna (49 total points) could be transformed into a monster with up to 24 points. The reverse is also true.

For a hero with one "A" code and one "B" code, the new form can have up to half again its original ability point total. All fractions are dropped in this calculation. Thus, the 31-point owlbear could be changed into any creature with up to 45 total ability score points. suddenly

If the hero has "A" codes in both Reason and Spirit, the newly created creature can have up to twice its original ability score totals. Thus, the 31-point owlbear could find itself suddenly changed into any creature with up to 62 points.

In all of the above instances, the new creature has the same ability codes in its new form that it had in its old one.

If the Heart is used to give life to unliving matter (stone, for example), the total number of ability score points for the resulting creature depends upon the hero employing the Heart. Those with a "B" code in both Reason and Spirit can create something with no more points than they have themselves. If the hero has one "B" code and one "A" code, the new creature can have up to half again as many points as the hero (dropping all fractions). If the hero has two "A" codes, the creation may have up to twice the hero's own total points.

Animated creatures are assumed to have ability codes of "C" across the board.

If the Heart is used to transform living things into inanimate matter, the effects described above are reversed. Thus, someone with two "B" codes could use the Heart to transform to stone a living creature whose ability score points do not exceed his or her own total, while someone with two "A" codes could do

continued on page 61

"This happened at the same time as another disturbing event. At first, it appeared that the shield beneath which we have sheltered for so many years had failed. I have since learned that this is not the case. The shield has not failed. Rather, it has contracted. Where the town of Sithelnost was once protected, it is now exposed. The edge of the shield currently lies some fifty miles to the south—midway between here and the town of Shalost.

"The two events are related, of that I have no doubt."

If the heroes choose to tell of their journey from the west, Raena listens attentively. She then engages the heroes in hypothesizing causes for these recent events. The Narrator should give the heroes an opportunity to figure out for themselves that the shield has been drawing life energy from the world around it. Raena, however, can provide this conclusion if the heroes fail to draw it themselves.

Raena can also tell the heroes that, though the shield must have been draining life from Sithelnost's residents for some time, its effect was slight enough to pass unnoticed by most. The onset of the elves' pronounced weakness marks the time at which the shrinking shield passed over Sithelnost. One would think that the elves should be returning to health now that they live outside the barrier, but they have been unable to bounce back. The drain on their bodies and spirits was too severe—they haven't the energy to recuperate.

Flin is very uneasy throughout this exchange. He's certain that Raena is endangering the Silvanesti by sharing this information with outsiders. Indeed, even Maleesa seems uncomfortable.

Further discussion, possibly including the use of divination spells, enables the heroes and Raena to conclude that some additional force must be employed to restore health to the people of Sithelnost. Raena has gotten wind of rumblings in Blöde over the imminent discovery of a relic known as the Heart of the Irda. According to legend, this magical ruby had the ability to reshape both flesh and spirit. The stone was said to have been laid to rest with the body of an Irda wizard named Daganeer in the closing days of the Ogre Wars (during the Age of Dreams, around 5500PC). The location of that tomb is unknown, but recent reports have narrowed it to a region near the town of Shalost. How accurate these reports are, and whether the tomb lies within or outside the shield, Raena does not know. A successful *challenging Reason* action {or *Intelligence check at a -2 penalty*} on the part of Ladine or Avon enables one of them to make a connection between the Heart of the Irda and the "heart" mentioned in the ogre missive from Act One, Scene One. However, attempts to locate the tomb with divination magic fail. This may cause Raena and the heroes to conclude that the tomb indeed lies within the shield's protection.

Raena has wanted to send an exploratory party in search of the Heart since she first heard of it. But she knows the ogres also seek Daganeer's tomb, and the Silvanesti elves are so weak from the wasting sickness that she believed such an expedition certain suicide. The arrival of six healthy adventurers has given her new hope for the fate of Sithelnost.

Outcome

This scene comes to a close when Raena asks the heroes to recover the Heart of the Irda to save the inhabitants of Sithelnost. Assuming they agree, the heroes likely want to get some sleep before embarking on their quest. Maleesa conducts them to quarters in Pages Manor.

Preparation for the journey south takes place in Scene Two: "Against All Hope."

continued from page 60

the same thing to a creature with up to twice his or her own value.

Controlling the ancient magic of the Heart is not easy, however. While the Irda could wield it very effectively, modern spellcasters must attempt a *challenging Reason* action to use its elemental summoning powers or a *challenging Spirit* action to use its healing powers. In order to use its life-shaping powers, a hero must make a *daunting* action using either Spirit or Reason, whichever score is higher.

➤ AD&D Description

The *Heart of the Irda* is a powerful artifact that may be used only by a priest or wizard. Single-classed characters can use some of its abilities, but a character must be a multi- or dual-classed priest/wizard to take advantage of all the item's powers.

A priest can use the Heart to cast cure serious wounds up to three times per day.

A wizard can use the Heart to cast conjure elemental up to three times per day. This spell does not conjure an actual elemental; it only animates previously inanimate elemental matter.

A character who is both a priest and a wizard may use the Heart to cast polymorph any object once per day, transforming living or unliving matter at will.

Due to the difficulty of calling upon this ancient item, using the Heart's healing power requires a Wisdom check at a -2 penalty. Using the conjure elemental power requires an Intelligence check at a -2 penalty; using the polymorph power requires either an Intelligence or Wisdom check at a -4 penalty.





fountains, and magnificent spires. A cool breeze carries the sweet scent of dew throughout the town as wind chimes sing delicately.

The Story Continues

It is assumed that the heroes will spend a preparatory day or two in Sithelnost before heading south. During this time they are likely resting to recover expended spell points and nursing their wounds. In addition, they probably want to research the Irda, the Heart of the Irda, and the legends relating to the treasure's final resting place.

The heroes, as outsiders, should meet with resistance in gaining access to Sithelnost's library. The Narrator may choose one or more of the following possible encounters, or create others.

- ✦ En route to the library, the party is repeatedly stopped by Wildrunner guards and interrogated about their business. Though the elves are weak, they still take seriously their charge to defend the town from outsiders.
- ✦ Also en route, one of the full- or half-elven heroes is recognized by a former acquaintance. The ailing elf provides a personal tie to the plight faced by all Silvanesti.
- ✦ Once the party reaches the library, the librarian

insists that the heroes prove themselves worthy of the knowledge contained within the library. The heroes must complete a series of challenges, including a physical test of strength and endurance, a mental test of knowledge, and a test of willpower. The challenges are designed to test the heroes' ability to overcome adversity and to prove their worthiness to the library's collection of knowledge.

Once the heroes have completed the challenges, the librarian grants them access to the library. The heroes are then free to search the library's collection of knowledge for information about the Irda and the legends relating to its final resting place.

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Irda Lore

The Irda, or High Ogres, are the beautiful creatures from whom the modern, bestial ogres descended. The Irda stood taller than most humans but were slender, like elves or kender. They had dark skin, with complexions that ranged from midnight blue to sea green. Although their heavy brows might seem to indicate a primitive nature, their silver eyes flashed with keen intelligence. They were regal and statuesque, with an air of greatness and power about them. Most Irda had black hair, but some sported tresses of white or silver. All took great pride in their appearance.

Elven bards say that elves were the first to waken upon Krynn, but the Irda say otherwise. Their history begins with the words "First awoke the ogres: They breathed in the primal dawn, bathing themselves in its virgin light." First to rise from the ground, ogres became the masters of creation. And they were beautiful.

According to their evil natures, ogres established a realm of tyranny. The strict laws of their land enriched and empowered their king and punished disobedience with death. Once the king gained absolute control over his folk, he sought minions elsewhere to dominate. The elves and their goodness proved too repulsive to rule. The animals were too feral and stupid to know they were being ruled. But the humans, short-lived and shallow-brained, could make excellent slaves. Seeing this, the ogres hunted down the barbarian humans, catching them in broad nets. Thus, the humans became slaves in ogre mines.

Squalid and weak though they were, the humans had one great advantage over the ogres: free will. One day, a mine collapsed, killing many slaves and trapping Everlyn, the beautiful daughter of the ogre overlord Igraine. Igraine ordered the slaves out of the caves, anxious not to lose any more of his property.

A slave named Eadamm refused the order, and instead led other slaves to rescue Igraine's daughter. When Eadamm emerged with Everlyn, Igraine knew he must by law kill the slave for his disobedience. But Igraine admired the human's choice, and learned that day of free will.

Instead of sentencing Eadamm to immediate death, Igraine fulfilled the letter of the law by sentencing the human to "death at my whim." Thus, Eadamm could continue to live, for Igraine never developed the whim that would call for the execution to be carried out. Eadamm, grateful for his reprieve, marshaled the slaves to double their output for Igraine.

Igraine soon became richest and most powerful ogre in the region. By allowing his slaves even more freedom, he doubled their output again. But given some freedom, humans always want more. This love of, and demand for, freedom spread through the ranks of human slaves until revolts broke out all across the nation.

Seeing this, the other ogres quickly realized the danger of Igraine's leniency. "Igraine's Heresy" they called it, a weakness that would lead the ogre state into destruction and degeneracy. Igraine pleaded his case before the Irda council, but the rulers labeled him insane. He barely escaped with his life. Before fleeing the city, Igraine struck the chains of all his slaves and pronounced them free. He also encouraged all of his friends and family (who had learned to share his progressive views) to do the same. Eadamm then led a slave revolt that decimated the ogre forces. Thus, the Ogre Wars of the Age of Dreams began.

Eadamm led his folk into the wilderness, where they harried ogre civilization for six years. At last, the ogres captured the rebel. They hamstrung him and paraded him about for six days, one day for each of the years he evaded their forces. Then, before a packed coliseum, the ogres drew and quartered him. The crowd consisted almost entirely of slaves, who were brought to witness Eadamm's death as a warning against further rebellions. The slaves did not take the message to heart. They revolted, massacring every last ogre in the coliseum.

Meanwhile, Igraine and his followers fled to safety, scattering throughout Ansalon. In time, the evil ogres who were left behind grew misshapen and horrible, their appearance matching the corruption in their hearts. Their intellects and charms vanished also. They became stupid brutes, with only their vestigial cunning to testify to their former power.

Meanwhile, the Irda (as Igraine's folk called themselves) remained hidden away from the world. The evil ogres never ceased to look for their traitorous brothers. Takhisis herself hunted them in rage for betraying her worship. Even the men who had been freed by Igraine forgot his role in their liberation. The humans cast themselves as the sole leaders of the rebellion, and included the Irda with the rest of the ogre oppressors. Friendless and hopeless in the world, the Irda resigned themselves to their inevitable deaths.

Mishakal saw the plight of the Irda folk. As they slept one night, her healing hand passed through them,

continued on page 65



bar in this scene. Information on the Heart of the Irda is almost nonexistent, however. Only a *daunting Reason* action {or *Intelligence check at a -4 penalty*} or a well thought-out divination spell enables the heroes to uncover anything at all. Their findings are limited to the italicized entry in the previous scene at the start of the sidebar describing the Heart. Only the Narrator has access to information about the powers available to someone who holds the ruby.

As for the location of the tomb, the heroes find only the following verse from an almost-forgotten poem titled "Igraine's Journey."

Despite the need for frantic pace
A tear shone on brave Igraine's face.
His heart commanded a moment's pause
To recognize valor and the hero's cause
To rescue the body of a soul now lost
Who'd won them freedom despite its cost.
Within the heart of a noble tree
They placed the hero peacefully
Beneath a crown, emerald bright
Shrouded in the green twilight
Around his neck the glowing stone
Whose power was his and his alone
Was left in darkness to ever burn
In hopes its master might return.



At some point before the party leaves (likely after the heroes finish their research, but earlier if Blackeagle and Klen grow restless about their pursuit of Vorst), Raena appears with a grave look on her face. She addresses the heroes:

Last night, I saw the Heart once more in a vision. It was carried by a man—at least, I think it was a man, though I sensed something strange about him. He was a tall, muscular being, with dark hair. Evil glinted in his eyes as he beheld the Heart and clenched his profane fingers around it.

I fear that even now, this man searches for the Heart of the Irda. But I also sense that among you are some who know who this man is and how to stop him. I pray to Astarin to speed you on your journey.

The "man" in Raena's vision is Vorst. Though the Sivak has not yet received orders from Sable to retrieve the artifact, Raena's premonition has foretold the future.

This revelation should increase the heroes' sense of urgency. Also, if Klen and Blackeagle were considering leaving the party to resume their manhunt, this development should unite them in purpose with the other heroes. Aiding the elves and defeating Vorst are now one and the same quest.

Depending on the condition in which the heroes arrived in Sithelnost, Raena expects they may need to spend one more day recovering or concluding their research. But if the party tarries beyond that, Raena grows increasingly frantic about the expedition.

Maleesa shares Raena's impatience over any delay. The ogres have a head start in searching for Daga-neer's tomb and could discover it before the heroes do. Plus, each day of postponement is another day the weakened residents of Sithelnost lie vulnerable to attack by ogres and other marauders.

Maleesa will travel with the heroes if they like, although in her current state of health she won't prove much help in a physical confrontation. Still, her value as an advocate during encounters with other Silvanesti might be more than enough to outweigh her relative helplessness. The decision as to whether Maleesa joins them rests wholly in the hands of the players.

Outcome

Because the information Raena has heard about the ogres' search places the tomb more or less due south from Sithelnost, the heroes may travel either by river or overland. In the former case, the adventure continues with Scene Three: "Swift Water." If by land, then the events of Scene Four: "Into the Fire" unfold.

continued from page 63

granting their bodies the power to change. She blessed the Irda with the ability to take the form of any humanoid creature of Krynn, becoming one with their enemies. This talent saved the Irda time and again as they hid from the hostile world.

However, Irda isolation did come to an end: Sadly, the High Ogres caused their own destruction. The Irda in their homeland upon a forgotten isle north of Ansalon, broke open a potent item known as the Graygem to harness its power against the Dark Knights—inadvertently releasing Chaos and bringing about the Second Cataclysm. Chaos called down fire upon their remote islet, destroying it and all the Irda living there.

In the wake of the Second Cataclysm, what few Irda may survive have withdrawn from the world. Indeed, most of Krynn's folk believe them extinct.

Although Irda harbored no animosity toward Krynn's other races, the feeling is not reciprocated. Humans still tell tales of the wicked and oppressive ogres who once enslaved them. They describe beasts who surpass even modern ogres in evil and depravity. Nonhumans hated Irda because they share ogre blood. Other ogres hated Irda because they betrayed their evil natures. And every race distrusted Irda because of their shape changing ability. Legends abound of Irda "child stealers," who assume the shape of a child's parent only to swallow him whole.

The Irda were completely undeserving of their reputation. Unlike their evil ogre kin, Irda chose the path of good. Because the gods of Evil sponsored them in creation, however, the Irda struggled with the vestiges of evil within them. Non-Irda often interpreted this inner struggle as arrogance or antagonism. In fact, the Irda were peace-loving and gentle folk who retreated from combat and avoided offending others.

Irda dwellings were simple and elegant. They often lived in smooth, dry caves during inclement seasons and warm, lush valleys in the summer. They decorated their dwelling places with dried flowers and stalks and carefully avoided fouling their environments. Irda sought to live in harmony with nature, refusing to wear or eat any products derived from animals, whether or not removing the product caused pain.

Until the Summer of Chaos, the ruling line of the Irda stretched back unbroken to the Age of Dreams and Igraine himself. Irda prided themselves on their heritage and treated each other with respect and honor. A "Decider" ruled them, and the court of nobility extended to even the most common of the Irda. This arrangement made for happy citizens and stable politics.



Scene Three: Swift Water

This scene details events that may befall the heroes if they travel southward from Sithelnost on the Thon-Thalas River. The heroes travel via an elven longboat, meeting various potential hazards along the way. Narrators may wish to review the rules for nautical movement in Chapter Three of the *Book of the Fifth Age* {or Chapter Fourteen of the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide*} beforehand.

The voyage begins uneventfully as the heroes travel the Thon-Thalas. A selection of encounters appears here for Narrators to use along the journey as desired. Eventually, the heroes come ashore approximately twenty-five miles from the town of Shalost. Somewhere in the wilderness between their current position and that town lies the mysterious shield.

Before starting this scene, Narrators should offer the heroes a chance to select any special supplies they'd like to bring along. Wealth actions {or the price lists in Chapter Six of the *Player's Handbook*} aren't required, as Flin can supply them with just about anything they need (within reason). If they ask for something that might seem threatening to the elven ruler, however, persuading Flin to supply it might require a *daunting Presence (Spirit)* action {or *Charisma* check at a -4 penalty}.

First Impressions

Once the heroes are ready to depart, Flin leads them to the waterfront where an elven longboat awaits them. Intricate carvings cover the craft from stem to stern, but it is quite sturdy, despite its delicate appearance. The Narrator may read the following aloud to the players:

The sun plays softly across the swift waters of the Thon-Thalas, sparkling brightly atop the crests and forming bows of brilliant color in the morning mists. Against this radiant display, the withered, brown foliage along the riverbanks seems quite out of place.

As the shimmering spires of Sithelnost fall away, the voice of Raena crackles through the air. It seems impossible that you could hear her words at this distance, yet they ring clearly in your ears.

"Travel swiftly and safely, young heroes, for the fate of our town, our nation, and perhaps even our race lies in your hands."

The Story Continues

The boat takes about forty-eight hours to reach the river's closest approach to Shalost. This time frame doesn't include rest stops or such, only actual travel time on the water. If, for example, the party camps for eight hours, the duration of their voyage should be extended accordingly.

Once the heroes set out, Narrators may use any or all of the following encounters to liven up the journey. Multiple encounters should occur in the order given here. During and between these encounters, Narrators should encourage the players to role-play conversation and their heroes' reactions to the devastation of the beautiful Silvanesti Forest.



Dryads

As the heroes journey along the river, they encounter a small group of dryads. The sylvan creatures are terribly frightened by the damage the shield has done to the forest, particularly to their tree-homes. They aren't sure who's at fault, but consider the heroes likely candidates when they see them fearlessly moving through the forest—in full health.

One of the dryads calls to the heroes from the riverbank, pretending to be an elf woman in distress. When the heroes investigate, two others spring from hiding and the three of them attempt to charm the heroes, requiring an *average Spirit (Presence)* action to resist {or *saving throw* vs. *spell*}.

☛ **Three dryads:** *Woodland creatures*. Co 8, Ph 6, In 6, Es 8, Dmg +1, Def -2, also charm.

☛ **Dryads (3):** AC 9; MV 12; HD 2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1, Dmg 1d4 (knife); SA *charm*; MR 50%; SZ M (5' tall); ML steady (12); Int high (14); AL N; XP 975.

If they manage to charm all of the heroes, the dryads question their captives to learn who they are and why they are in the forest. The players should roleplay the charmed heroes, but must answer the dryads truthfully. Once the dryads learn that the

heroes seek a means of reversing the shield's effects, they release them and send them on their way.

Should the heroes defeat the dryads' charm attempt, the forest women remain angry and distrustful unless the heroes explain their quest and succeed at an *average Presence (Spirit)* action {or *Charisma check*} to convince the dryads of their sincerity.

If the heroes manage to win the trust of the dryads and inquire about the location of Daga-neer's tomb, the creatures can provide some assistance. They know of a great tree northwest of Shalost called the "Irda Tree" by some of the older dryads. Further, they have heard that this tree and its immediate environs have survived unscathed the slow death plaguing the rest of the forest. Once they've shared what they know, the dryads send the heroes on their way with wishes for success.

Signs and Portents

Along their journey, the heroes may experience events and circumstances related to the growing nearness of the Silvanesti Shield and their quest to locate Daga-neer's tomb. Although the shield does not normally affect people as distant from it as the heroes are, their movement toward it and their focus on their goal has drawn some of the shield's growing awareness (see the Silvanesti Shield sidebar in the Prologue). The heroes may experience a powerful feeling of being watched or hear a faint, whispering sound they cannot recognize. They may even catch glimpses of something in the water or in the dark depths of the forest, a strange shimmering shape.

Narrators should use these omens to heighten the players' sense of tension as the heroes draw closer to their goal, and to make the Silvanesti Forest seem a strange and foreboding place.

Ghosts

This encounter is best suited for a night when the heroes have stopped to rest or camp along the riverbank, although it can also take place while they are on the river after dark. Narrators should try to make the players a bit nervous before the ghosts spring out and attack. The heroes spot some faintly glowing lights and may even hear some mournful noises just before the ghosts attack—things that can be dismissed as tricks of the light or the sound of the wind.

From the shore, the heroes suddenly notice that their boat is adrift, heading downriver without them. A ghost has severed the boat's moorings. The heroes must catch the boat before it drifts too far away, requiring a *challenging Strength* action {or *Strength check at a -2 penalty*} to swim out and pull the boat back to shore. Ignore this part of the encounter if the heroes are still on board their boat when they meet the ghosts.


A group of ghosts—restless spirits of elf warriors who died of the wasting sickness—attacks the heroes. The ghosts look like spectral elves clad in elaborate armor and wielding swords. They attempt to use their *Spirit drain* {or *aging*} power on the heroes, howling and shrieking mournfully as they attack.

- **Five ghosts:** *Undead creatures*. Co 5, Ph 6, In 7, Es 8, Dmg N/A, Def N/A, also fear aura, Spirit drain.
- **Ghosts (3):** AC 0; MV 9; HD 10; hp 54; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg age 1d4×10 years; SA fear (save vs. spell or age 10 years and flee for 2d6 turns); SD struck only by silver (half damage) or magical (full damage) weapons, immune to nonethereal spells; SW turn, holy water; SZ M (5' tall); Int high (14); AL LE; XP 7,000. The ghosts do not attempt to use their *magic jar* power; they simply materialize and attack.

Outcome

If the heroes lose their ship, they must continue on foot. These events are detailed in Scene Four: "Into the Fire." Assuming that the party manages to negotiate the encounters in this scene successfully and reach their destination, they can now search for the tomb. In this case, the adventure continues with Scene Five: "The Silvanesti Shield."





Scene Four: Into the Fire

This scene details the events of an overland journey south from Sithelnost. The party encounters a raging forest fire set by a dying, fear-maddened chimera before reaching the new limits of the Silvanesti Shield and the start of the next scene.

If the heroes wish, they can begin this scene with mounts provided by Flin. Whether the party travels by foot or on horseback, however, Narrators may wish to review the rules for movement in Chapter Three of the *Book of the Fifth Age* {or Chapter Fourteen of the DUNGEON MASTER® Guide}.

Before starting this scene, Narrators should give the heroes a chance to select any special supplies they'd like to bring along. Wealth actions {or the price lists in Chapter Six of the Player's Handbook} aren't needed, as Flin can supply them with just about anything within reason. If the heroes ask for something that might seem threatening to the elven ruler, however, persuading Flin to supply it requires a successful *daunting Presence (Spirit)* action {or *Charisma* check at a -4 penalty}.

First Impressions

The crisp morning air offers little hint of the much warmer temperatures certain to manifest themselves as the spring day wears on. With the bright sun shining down and the misty fleece of morning fog spreading tenaciously ahead, your expedition south begins.

As the shimmering spires of Sithelnost fade from view, the voice of Raena crackles through the air. It seems impossible that you should be able to hear her words at this distance, yet they ring clearly in your ears.

"Travel swiftly and safely, young heroes, for the fate of our town, our nation, and perhaps even our race lies in your hands."

The Story Continues

The heroes have about fifty miles to cover, which represents between two and three days of travel by foot. If they're on horseback, the trip takes about half as long. In either case, the party is slowed somewhat if Maleesa accompanies them.

After the heroes have traveled for a day or so, they notice a faint haze in the air. Before long, it becomes obvious that a large fire rages ahead of them.

The smell of burning timber hangs heavy in the air, carried on a brisk wind. Before long, smoke stings your eyes and every so often a smoldering cinder drifts past you.

Suddenly, a herd of long-horned deer burst from the undergrowth and thunder past. Their eyes wide and fear-maddened, they seem to pay no heed to you, rushing past as though the Dark Queen herself nipped at their heels.

An orange glow radiates from the forest ahead of the group. Dancing fingers of red caress coils of dark smoke. The heroes can easily interpret the signs of a forest fire before them. It appears frightfully close—and large.

But the fire is more than just an obstacle spreading before the group. The dead and dying trees all around are dry as tinder despite the spring rains that have fallen in other parts of Silvanesti. Spread by a brisk wind, the fire stretches around the heroes in the shape of a horseshoe. Their travels have carried them unknowingly into the maw of an inferno that even now closes behind them.

Suddenly, a terrible cry shrieks over the crackling flames. A massive form crashes through the trees, scattering burning timber and cinders everywhere. It turns toward you with terrible rage and madness in its six eyes before all three of its heads—goat, lion and dragon—trumpet a roar of challenge.

The fire was caused by a chimera that until recently was trapped within the confines of the shield. The monster, suffering from the shield's life-draining effects, has gone mad and attacks any creature that approaches its nearby lair. The unnaturally dry wood, ignited by the chimera's fiery breath, has fueled an inferno, and the monster is too stupid and maddened to do anything except attack creatures who tread nearby. The heroes must overcome the chimera swiftly to secure any hope of escaping the fire.

Fortunately, the heroes have a couple factors in their favor. First, the chimera is already injured from its mad dash through the burning woods. Second, the creature is maddened by pain and rage, so heroes might be able to trick it in some way: luring it into charging into the burning woods, getting one of its heads to bite at the others, and so forth. Narrators should apply an appropriate difficulty level—at least *challenging*—to any such action {or DMs should assess a penalty of at least -2 against appropriate die rolls}.

As the heroes deal with the chimera, the Narrator should emphasize how the smoke stings their eyes, how contact with embers and flames raises painful burns on their exposed flesh, and how the hot, tainted air sears their lungs. Make the conflict an urgent one.

☛ **Chimera: Monster.** Co 5, Ph 27 (presently 18), In 2, Es 7, Dmg +17, Def -3, also pyromancy.



➤ **Chimera:** AC 2/5/6 (flank/front/rear); MV 9, Fl 18 (E); HD 10; hp 48 (currently 35); THAC0 11; #AT 6, Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d4/1d4/2d4/3d4 (claw/claw/horn/horn/bite/bite); SA fire breath (3d8 points of damage or save vs. breath weapon for half); SZ L (5' tall); ML elite (13); Int semi (2); AL CE; XP 5,000.

Once the party deals with the chimera, each hero must succeed at a *challenging Endurance* action {or *Constitution check at a -2 penalty*} to negotiate a safe route out of the fire. Failure inflicts 5 damage points from the heat and smoke {or *2d4+1 points of damage*}. A mishap inflicts 10 damage points and also indicates that smoke has overcome the hero, who collapses into unconsciousness. Without help, the hero suffers 10 damage points {or *2d10 points of damage*} per minute until dead.

Keeping mounts and other animals under control while escaping the fire requires a successful *challenging Presence (Spirit)* action {or *Charisma check at a -2 penalty*}. Frightened animals suffer damage as described above.

Narrators may introduce other hazards as they see fit. For example, a burning tree might crash down, pinning a hero beneath its searing mass or killing a

mount. Any flammable liquids carried by the heroes might explode under the assault of the great heat, severely wounding the person carrying them.

Extinguishing the whole fire proves extremely difficult and requires invention and resourcefulness on the part of the heroes. Magic probably comes into play, although the Narrator should reward other creative solutions as well. If the heroes do not attempt to put out the fire, or fail to do so, the fire burns out naturally when it reaches the damper sections of forest not so severely drained by the shield.

At their discretion, Narrators may introduce additional encounters (see "Signs and Portents" in Scene Three) before the heroes reach the Silvanesti Shield in Scene Five.

Outcome

Once the heroes make it through the fire, they can continue on their journey toward Daganee's tomb. After a while, they come to the new perimeter of the shield. The action then moves to Scene Five: "The Silvanesti Shield."

Scene Five: The Silvanesti Shield

This scene primarily concerns the discovery of the Silvanesti Shield's new boundary and the efforts of the heroes to get through it. At the start of this scene, the heroes are searching the woods north of Shalost for signs of Daganeer's tomb. Before reaching the tomb, however, they run into an ashen barrier similar to the one they crossed en route to Sithelnost (Act One, Scene Four). When this happens, the Narrator needs to be familiar with the description of the Silvanesti Shield presented in the Prologue.

First Impressions

The following text should be read aloud to the heroes when they encounter the shield.

An ominously familiar sight appears before you in the wood. A terrible white scar runs through the verdant green of the forest. Once-proud trees now look as if they had been carved from old snow, and formerly rich soil exhibits the color and consistency of volcanic ash. A shimmer ripples in the distance, wavering before you like heat off a target shield left lying in the sun.



The Story Continues

The Narrator should convey the awesome nature of the shield to the heroes as they attempt to find a way through the barrier. A sense of lethargy and aversion hangs over them. The closer they move toward this tortured region, the greater the effect becomes. The heroes have found the current boundary of the Silvanesti Shield. Its strength is actually a psychological effect more than a physical one. If anything, this makes the barrier even more pronounced than it might otherwise be. After all, something a person believes to be dangerous is often more frightening than something which truly is dangerous.

Daganeer's tomb lies on the other side of the Silvanesti Shield. To reach it, the heroes must somehow penetrate the barrier. This is not an easy thing to do: The Legion of Steel and many others have tried almost from the day the shield was created.

The obvious ideas have been attempted by others—and failed. Thus, the heroes cannot use summoning to teleport through the shield or blow a hole through the barrier with even the most powerful electromancy attack. (See the Silvanesti Shield sidebar in the Prologue for the results of such attempts.) They must stretch their ingenuity further.

In fact, the heroes must communicate with the shield and convince it to let them pass. Attempting to do so is such a novel concept that the heroes should first attempt a *challenging Perception* action {or *Wisdom* check at a -2 penalty}, which alerts them to the fact that the party is in the presence of a sentient being. (Refer to "Signs and Portents" in Scene Three: "Swift Water.") Failing that, the Narrator can use Maleesa—if she is with them—to offer suggestions if things aren't going well. Similarly, a mystical message from Raena might turn around a party pursuing the wrong path of inquiry. Whatever happens, however, the players should feel that *they* were the ones who solved the puzzle.

Interaction with the shield proves very strange, as the shield cannot comprehend language or even rational thought. Communication, therefore, must take place on a more primitive level.

Because the shield has only recently gained sentience, its consciousness has not yet mastered higher-order operations. Language, at its foundation, is an arbitrary construct: For example, nothing about the word "tree"—the shape of its letters, the sounds made while pronouncing it—has any relation to an actual tree; as English-speakers, we have simply agreed that the letters t-r-e-e strung together in that order refer to a woody perennial plant with branches. That's why it takes children years to build a vocabulary.

The shield, then, is at an infantile stage of its cognitive development. Saying the word “tree,” or even drawing a picture of one, would be akin to holding up flash cards for a newborn. Like a newborn, the shield is conscious and can feel basic emotions and drives, but cannot communicate much beyond that. If the heroes hope to communicate with the shield, they must do so through empathy.

First, one of the heroes can establish contact through mentalism. If no hero has mentalism powers, the one with the highest Spirit score can make contact through a *challenging Spirit* action. {Contact can be made using ESP or a similar spell, or a successful Wisdom check at a -4 penalty by the hero with the highest Wisdom score.} Once contact is made, the hero may instinctively sense some fundamental elements at the core of the shield’s being—that it is determined to protect the Silvanesti; that it will not allow anyone to pass into the region it shelters; that it also will not allow anyone to exit, and in so doing, face the hazards of the outside world. At the same time, however, the shield feels itself losing strength and shrinking.

To respond to the shield, the hero needs to communicate in the same fashion—through empathy, rather than logical thought. The hero must think of images, not words; feelings, not ideas. For example, to convey the question, “Does Daganeer’s tomb lie within your protection?” the hero might imagine the tomb and its occupant (based on what the party knows of them). The shield, recognizing the site as indeed lying within its borders, responds with a more specific image of the tomb’s location.

Communication will likely prove slow, strange, and fraught with false starts. But once the heroes get the hang of it, they can attempt to convince the shield to let them pass.

The best way to do so is to play upon its sympathies. If the situation in Sithelnost can be presented to the shield, it will feel that it has failed. After all, it was created to protect the Silvanesti. While it feels no guilt over the fact that it has begun to shrink, it still has a strong desire to do what it can for those who were once within it. If the heroes can convince the shield that they are working to help the elves of Sithelnost, it will allow them to pass through.

For example, to make known the concept “We need to get through you to save the elves of Sithelnost,” a hero might first imagine what it feels like to be one of the weakened elves, to experience the pain they suffer. Next, the hero might imagine the party on the other side of the shield, holding the Heart of the Irda. The hero then may imagine the pain once more, but this time easing until gone. Finally, the hero might imply that once Sithelnost is saved, the shield can have it back.

Other arguments might work as well, but the heroes will never convince the shield to collapse or expose those within it to any danger. Although the success of these efforts should be based upon role-playing and problem solving on the part of the players, Narrators who would like to include an action may do so. Getting a simple concept across to the shield (“We mean no harm”) might require a *challenging Spirit* action. This becomes a *daunting Spirit* action if the concept is more difficult (“We are searching for a magical treasure”). In addition the Narrator should ask how the hero attempts to convey the message. If the concept being presented is at all untruthful, the difficulty increases by one degree as the shield has an inherent ability to sense such deceptions.

{Simple concepts require a Wisdom check at a -2 penalty. Complex concepts assess a -4 penalty and direct lies impose a -8 penalty.}

Depending upon how the heroes’ communication efforts with the shield unfold (and on the Narrator’s discretion), the party’s attempts at persuasion may yield one or more results:

- ❧ The shield allows the party to pass through it. The heroes may or may not think to secure permission ahead of time to pass back out again.
- ❧ The shield does not allow passage, but contracts enough to expose Daganeer’s tomb.

The party is already racing against Vorst, but if the Narrator wishes to crank up the tension, the shield imposes a time limit (conveying, for example, an image of the sunset) after which it will not allow the heroes back through, or will expand once more to envelop the tomb.

Should the heroes attempt to inquire whether Vorst has already passed this way, the shield does not understand their query. (Vorst, in fact, has not tried to penetrate the barrier, so the shield does not recognize his image.)

The shield may, in response to careful queries, reveal other information about its origin or source of fuel (life energy). It will not, however, reveal any vulnerabilities.

Outcome

Once the heroes have negotiated their way through the shield, they are free to head south and continue their search for the Irda Tree. The adventure continues with Scene Six: “Daganeer’s Tomb.”



Scene Six: Daganeer's Tomb

Once the heroes have found a way through the shield, they can complete their search for Daganeer's tomb and the Heart of the Irda.

This scene covers the time between the crossing of the shield and the discovery of Daganeer's tomb in the Irda Tree, the great oak in which the hero was laid to rest. The Narrator may need to reference the "Irda Lore" sidebar or the poem from Scene Two: "Against All Hope."

As the heroes near the tree, the Narrator should convey the beauty and splendor of the Silvanesti Forest immediately surrounding it—an important contrast to the rest of the forest that was once just as lovely. The tragedy associated with the shield should be impressed upon the players as well as the heroes.

First Impressions

The wilderness immediately within the Silvanesti Shield appears as withered and brown as that without. Farther away from the barrier, however, the forest has grown more lush until all traces of the life-draining shield are lost. At long last, you have entered an area that truly looks like an elven forest.

The foliage here shines as bright as any emerald, with flowers so vibrant that they look like the remnants of a shattered rainbow. Birds, dragonflies, and countless little animals scatter as you move through the area. You seem to have come across a haven from the blight.

The Story Continues

The party is nearing the Irda Tree, which has withstood the shield's ravages. If the heroes did some research in Sithelnost (or successfully negotiated with the dryads in Scene Three), they may know they seek a tree as the tomb's location. For ease of reference, the following bit of verse from Sithelnost's library is reprinted here:

Within the heart of a noble tree
They placed the hero peacefully
Beneath a crown, emerald bright
Shrouded in the green twilight

The Irda Tree is a massive oak 80 feet high with a trunk some 20 feet in diameter at its base. Its natural splendor cannot be understated. Narrators should try to make it seem as real and majestic as possible. The Irda used the power of the Heart to increase the tree's size and imbue it with a guardian. A hollowed-out space within the tree serves as the final resting place of

Daganeer and the Heart of the Irda; the tree's spirit guards the Irda hero and his treasure for all time.

☛ **Irda Tree:** *Intelligent tree.* Co 0, Ph 32, In 6, Es 12, Dmg 0, Def -8, also mysticism (animism, healing, mentalism).

☛ **Irda Tree:** AC 3; MV 0; HD 15; hp 112; SA spells; SZ G (50' tall); ML fearless (20); Int high (14); AL N.

Through its guardian spirit, the Irda Tree is empathic and aware of everything that goes on in the forest around it. Its perceptions are blocked by the Silvanesti Shield, however: It cannot sense anything beyond the bounds of the shield.

Once the heroes penetrate the shield in Scene Five, the Irda Tree becomes aware of their presence, sensing that they seek Daganeer's tomb and the Heart. To determine the heroes' worthiness of taking the Heart, the intelligent tree decides to test them using its magical powers. Only if the heroes prove themselves will the Irda Tree allow them to approach Daganeer's resting place.

The Irda Tree uses its spell-like powers to place illusions in the minds of the heroes, confronting them with challenges that appear to keep them from the tomb. The challenges are designed to test not only the heroes' resolution, but also their compassion, courage and willingness to sacrifice themselves for the good of others. Some possible challenges are provided here in the order in which they should be encountered, but the Narrator may feel free to create different or additional challenges suited to the individual heroes in the party.

☛ **Four illusory elves** attack the heroes from the forest, shouting at the heroes to leave. The elves appear crazed by something (possibly the effects of the shield). Their attacks seem to inflict damage, but any hero "killed" is merely rendered unconscious. The heroes can fight the elves or they can try to talk with them. Narrators should adjudicate any fight against the elves normally. Convincing the elves of their noble intentions requires the heroes to succeed at a *challenging Presence* action {or *Charisma* check at a -2 penalty}. If the elves are convinced, they slip into the forest and disappear. The party should show some compassion for the elves; after all, the heroes are the ones invading the shield and the elves are clearly not in their right minds.

☛ **Four elves:** *Illusory creatures.* Co 6, Ph 7, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +6 (longbow or sword), Def -2 (leather armor).

♣ **Illusory elves (4):** AC 8 (leather); MV 9; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (longbow) or 1d8 (longsword); SZ M (5'5" tall); ML champion (16); Int non (0); AL N; XP 120.

♣ The heroes are traveling through the forest when an illusion of Vorst (pulled from their minds) ambushes them. The illusion fights briefly, exchanging attacks and insults with the heroes and taunting them before running off into the woods toward the shield. Again, "Vorst's" attacks, although painful, are merely illusions and cause no real harm. The Irda Tree wants to see if the heroes' thirst for vengeance is greater than their quest. Blackeagle and Klen should find themselves particularly torn between dealing with Vorst and continuing the search for the Heart. If any heroes pursue the illusory Vorst, he leads them on a wild goose chase through the forest for a few hours before vanishing entirely. The illusory version of Vorst acts exactly as the heroes would expect the real Vorst to act and is *not* a Sivak, since the heroes are not yet aware of his true nature.

♣ **Vorst: Illusory creature.** Co 10, Ph 12, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +8 (morningstar) or +7 (heavy crossbow), Def -5 (natural).

♣ **Illusory Vorst:** Mutated Sivak; AC 1; MV 9; HD 6; hp 38; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (morningstar) or 1d6 (crossbow); SZ M (6' tall); ML average (10); Int high (13); AL NE; XP 650.

♣ The heroes hear a cry for help coming from the heavy foliage a short distance away. If they go toward the sound, they see an illusion of a young elf woman menaced by a wyvern. She lies wounded on the ground as the creature rears up to deliver a killing blow.

♣ **Wyvern: Illusory creature.** Co 6, Ph 7, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +6 (longbow or sword), Def -2 (leather armor).

♣ **Illusory wyvern:** AC 8; MV 9; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8/1d6 (bite/stinger); SZ G (35' long); ML average (9); Int non (0); AL N; XP 65.

If the heroes manage to seriously injure the wyvern—reducing it to half its Physique score {or hit points}—the creature flies away, leaving the heroes in the company of the young woman. She introduces herself as Embla and says that she comes from a village about a mile away toward the south. She has been stung by the wyvern; its poison courses through her body. She asks the heroes to help her, then passes out.

♣ **Embla: Illusory creature.** Co 6, Ph 7, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +6 (long bow or sword), Def -2 (leather armor).

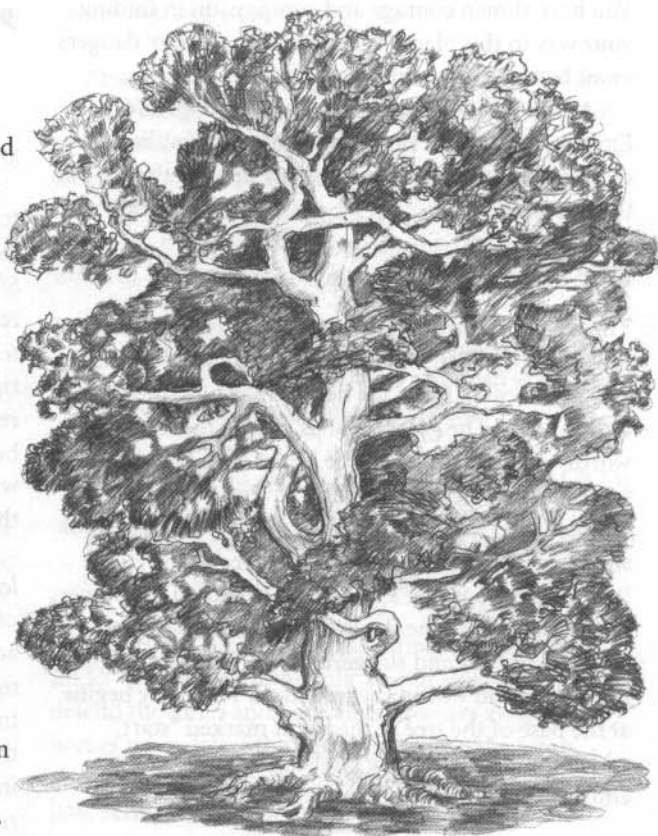
♣ **Illusory Embla:** AC 8; MV 9; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M (5' tall); ML average (10); Int non (0); AL N; XP 65.

The heroes can use whatever healing magic or other remedies they possess to try treating Embla's wounds, but nothing they do seems to cure the poison. They have a choice: postpone their quest to seek help from Embla's village, or leave her to die. As they debate, the Narrator may wish to remind the heroes that many elves in Sithelnost may die if they delay too long in finding the Heart of the Irda. The Irda Tree judges the heroes on their decision.

If the heroes carry Embla's limp body and follow her directions toward her village, they come to the clearing where the Irda Tree grows. There, the final test begins. (If the Narrator did not use the Embla test, one of the Irda Tree's other illusions or a helpful forest creature—perhaps a stag or fox—can lead the heroes to the clearing.)

Outcome

Once the heroes have overcome the first challenges offered by the Irda Tree, the adventure proceeds with Scene Seven: "Final Resting Place."



Scene Seven: Final Resting Place

This scene details the living tree where Daganeer and the Heart of the Irda lie and the challenges the heroes must overcome there. Once they find the body, they can claim the Heart of the Irda for themselves. If they do so too hastily, however, the spirit of Daganeer appears to defend his treasure.

The start of the scene assumes that the heroes were involved in the Irda Tree's last test in Scene Six, involving the illusory girl Embla.

First Impressions

The emerald twilight of the Silvanesti Forest gives way to a beautiful clearing. The soft ground is covered with dark green moss and creeping vines dotted with colorful, fragrant flowers. A massive, majestic tree towers overhead. Its gnarled trunk is as thick as a small house and its many branches extend over the entire clearing. Sunlight filters through the thick canopy of leaves, dappling the clearing in green and gold. A gentle breeze rustles through the leaves, making an almost musical sound. A sense of tremendous peace and tranquillity permeates this place.

As the breeze stirs her hair, Embla's eyes flutter open. She seems completely cured of any injury—in fact, so are you all. You find your health fully restored.

"Welcome, to the Forest's Heart," she says, smiling. "And to the final resting place of the treasure you seek. You have shown courage and compassion in finding your way to this place. But I warn you—more dangers await between you and your prize."

Another gentle breeze rustles the foliage and Embla vanishes like smoke on the wind. You hear a creaking sound, and see a doorway open at the base of the giant tree.

The Story Continues

The Irda Tree, through its own magic, removes any illusory wounds the heroes suffered in Scene Six and also heals real damage the heroes may have incurred to this point. The great tree has judged the heroes worthy of trying to reach the Heart of the Irda, but what happens next is up to the adventurers.

The Irda Tree map in the color section of this book shows the interior structure of the tree in which the Irda placed Daganeer's body. The Irda used the power of the Heart to shape the living wood of the tree to create chambers and staggered spiral ramps of highly polished wood within the tree itself. The party begins at the base of the tree at the point marked "start," which is described in the First Impressions section above. The following encounters are keyed to that

map. As the heroes move into the tree, the Narrator can pick up the adventure with the description presented for the first chamber (below).

Snake Pit

Beyond the narrow doorway lies a space like a dark cave shaped out of the living wood of the giant tree. The pitch black floor glistens with moisture; the smell of freshly turned earth and a dry, musty sort of smell cling to the dark interior walls and ceiling. At the far side of the chamber, a barely perceptible ramp curves along the wall, winding upward into the trunk of the tree through an opening in the ceiling.

Suddenly, a low hissing sounds from all around you. The floor of the room appears to move in ripples. Dozens of tiny, dark eyes stare up at you.

The cool, damp chamber at the bottom of the Irda Tree houses a large colony of black snakes, altered by the power of the Heart of the Irda to make them deadly poisonous and bind them to the Irda Tree. The snakes normally live off of the plentiful rodents and other small animals in the forest, entering and leaving the tree through small spaces in and around the roots. They do not attack the heroes immediately, but remain clustered on the floor. However, they attack anyone who enters the chamber.

❖ **Snakes: Animals.** Co 8, Ph 2, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +1, Def -2, also poison.

❖ **Snakes:** AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; hp 11; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1 (bite); SA poison (save vs. poison or 3d4 points damage); SZ S (4' long); ML average (8); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 175.

The heroes must find some means past the snakes to reach the ramp on the far side of the chamber so they can begin their ascent into the Irda Tree itself. Simply leaping across the chamber over the snakes requires a successful *daunting Agility* action {or *Dexterity check at a -4 penalty*}. Failure lands the hero right in the middle of the angry snakes; a mishap results in the hero automatically getting bitten. The heroes might also try to clear the snakes out in some way (such as using lit torches to make a path through them) or use magic to get past them.

Any hero bitten by a snake must attempt a *challenging Endurance* action against the poison. If successful, the hero suffers 4 damage points. If the action fails, the hero suffers that damage (8 points for a mishap) and becomes paralyzed. The hero dies in five minutes unless magical aid is applied to cure the poison. Consider this a 4-point effect for a healing spell for a character. {Bitten characters must succeed at a saving throw vs. poison or die in five rounds.

If the saving throw succeeds, the character suffers 2d4 damage points.}

Strangling Vines

You enter a cool, moist chamber. It is roughly circular, its walls and floor covered with heavy, leafy vines. Near the center of the chamber lies a pair of skeletons, the vines growing over, around and through their bones. One was clearly human or half-elven, while the other appears to have been a kender. Rusted equipment, armor, and weapons lie beside the white bones. On the far side of the chamber is another ramp, going upward farther into the tree.

An examination of the skeletons fails to reveal any clear cause of death. Some of the bones are broken, but one cannot tell whether the damage occurred before or after death. (Actually, the human died of snake poison but managed to drag himself into this chamber before expiring; the kender was killed by the danger the heroes are about to discover.)

The vines in the room were created by the Heart of the Irda, altered from normal forest creepers to grow like symbionts inside the Irda Tree. They are animated and attempt to entangle and crush anyone who passes through the chamber. Evading the vines' first attack requires a successful *challenging Perception* action {or roll normal surprise for the PCs}. Any heroes entangled by the vines must succeed at a *challenging Strength* action or inflict at least 8 damage points on the vines to break free {or succeed at a bend bars roll or inflict 15 points of damage on the vines}.

A careful search of the area and a successful *average Perception* action {or *Intelligence check*} reveals a small silver ring on the finger of the human skeleton. The ring is magical, as the heroes might discover using a divination or enchantment spell. If placed upon someone's finger, the ring seems to tingle. Sadly, this item is cursed. No card played by the wearer for any reason is ever trump. {The ring burdens the wearer with a -2 penalty on all attack rolls and saving throws.} Removing the ring requires an appropriately worded spell (probably an enchantment) with 4-point effect. {Removing the ring requires a remove curse spell.}

Thorn Ogre

Six-inch thorns of heavy wood, sharp as daggers, grow out of the walls and ceiling of this chamber. The floor, in contrast, is so smooth it almost appears polished. A ramp on the opposite side of the room leads still upward.

Suddenly, the wall of the chamber near the ramp bulges outward, the wood creaking and groaning. The bulge takes on a humanoid shape and splits off from the trunk of the tree, becoming a hulking figure made entirely of living wood, covered in sharp



thorns and wielding a club formed from the substance of its own body. It moves toward you with surprising swiftness.

Aware that others might find the tomb and overcome the Tree, the Irda took steps to protect the body of their fallen hero. As soon as one of the heroes enters this area, the movement triggers a spell that calls forth the tomb's guardian, a kind of wood elemental in the shape of an ogre formed from the living wood of the tree and covered in sharp thorns.

☛ **Thorn Ogre:** *Guardian monster.* Co 5, Ph 18, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +3 (thorns), Def -3 (wooden skin). Suffers double damage from fire attacks.

☛ **Thorn Ogre:** AC 1; MV 9; HD 8; hp 55; THAC0 13; #AT 1, Dmg 2d6 (thorns); SW suffers double damage from fire attacks; SZ L (9' tall); ML fearless (20); Int low (5); AL N; XP 650.

The Thorn Ogre is virtually mindless and is not under the control of the Irda Tree. It exists solely to defend the tomb and keep all trespassers away. The heroes must defeat the ogre to pass into the tomb chamber itself. If the heroes defeat the guardian and later return to this room, it does not reappear.

Daganeer's Tomb

The final chamber, near the crown of the giant tree, is almost perfectly circular and about 15 feet in diameter. The walls have the look and warm glow of finely polished wood, richly carved with swirling designs of intertwined leaves and branches. In the very center of the room, a low bier of wood rises up from the smooth floor. A skeleton clad in faded and tattered cloth lies atop the bier. Twining branches covered with tiny leaves grow in a complex mesh over the body, as if the tree itself clasps the body of Daganeer to its bosom. Against the skeleton's rib cage rests a fist-sized ruby that gleams with a fiery inner light: the legendary Heart of the Irda.

The net of branches covering the body is actually much tougher than it seems. Moving and untangling enough branches to reach the Heart of the Irda without damaging the branches or the skeleton requires about an hour of work. Of course, the heroes can also simply break the branches with a successful *average Strength* action {or *Strength check*} and take the Heart. Doing so, however, shows disrespect for both the Irda Tree and Daganeer; such action angers the Irda hero's spirit, causing it to appear.

✦ **Daganeer's ghost:** *Undead creature*. Co 5, Ph 6, In 7, Es 8, Dmg 0, Def 0, also fear aura, Spirit drain.

✦ **Daganeer's ghost:** AC 0; MV 9; HD 10; hp 54; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg age 1d4×10 years; SA fear, drain; SD struck only by silver (half damage) or magical (full damage) weapons, immune to nonethereal spells; SW turn, holy water; SZ M (7' tall); Int high (14); AL LE; XP 7,000.

If the heroes offer an explanation of their haste, the ghost does not menace them. They may use spiritual-

ism or other types of magic to get this message across, but they can also simply speak to the ghost normally.

Should the party take no action to explain its need or fail to thank the Irda hero for his help, the ghost of Daganeer attacks. Each hero must succeed at an *average Presence (Spirit)* action {or *saving throw vs. spell*} or flee from the chamber and cower for an hour. Daganeer can also drain the spirits of those who intrude upon him. Resisting this drain requires a successful *average Spirit (Spirit)* action {or *saving throw vs. spell*}. Failure permanently reduces the hero's Spirit score by 1 point. If the hero's Spirit score drops to 0, he or she is slain. {*Failure means the ghost's touch causes the victim to age 1d4×10 years and flee in panic for 2d6 turns.*}

Battling the ghost proves difficult, as only powerful magical weapons can harm him. Normal items, as well as items of distinction {or *+1 weapons*}, cannot wound the spectral creature, although an enchantment spell might enable the items to do so.

The heroes can soothe the angered spirit once combat erupts if they offer an explanation.

After the battle (if there is one) concludes, the heroes may continue to uncover the body to reach the Heart of the Irda. They can then claim it and exit the tree. None of the guardians menace them while they have the Heart: Vines and snakes part to allow passage.

Outcome

Once the heroes obtain the Heart of the Irda and make their way out of the Irda Tree, they can begin their journey north. These events, which include exiting the region protected by the shield, are detailed in Scene Eight: "Returning North."





Scene Eight: Returning North

This scene wraps up the quest to recover the Heart of the Irda. The heroes obtained the Heart in Scene Seven and are about to begin the return half of their journey. While they may have to pierce the shield again, doing so should present less difficulty than previously, as they've already learned the secret.

The Narrator may make this journey as easy or as difficult as seems appropriate. The shield may have imposed a time limit in Scene Five, encouraging haste on the part of the heroes. If the heroes are throwing caution to the wind, they'll obviously be at greater risk for a dangerous encounter.

First Impressions

A cool breeze sweeps across the emerald green Silvanesti Forest. Heavy gray clouds appear on the horizon, promising rain in the not-too-distant future. Will this be a simple spring shower or a violent tempest?

The Story Continues

Once the heroes emerge from the Irda Tree, they need to retrace their steps northward. Somewhere along the way, the Narrator should mention that it has begun to rain. In short order, a veritable downpour develops. A few

hours after the start of the storm, the heroes are greeted with the unwelcome onset of a flash flood. At this point, the Narrator should read the following text aloud.

For some time, the rain has pelted down in what feels like a solid sheet. As you make your way along a slender gorge and begin to cross a swollen, swift-running stream, the true scope of the storm becomes apparent.

The water here is so filled with mud that it's as brown as the soil itself. Large pieces of wood and other debris, including the occasional body of a small woodland creature, swept up by the raging torrent, dance in the racing water.

As you take in this display of nature's fury, the sound of distant thunder rolls above the hammering rain. It seems to reverberate through the forest endlessly, growing steadily louder.

But as a wall of thick, brown water appears upstream, it becomes suddenly obvious that you did not hear the sound of thunder. Rather, it was the challenging roar of a flash flood.

When the flash flood hits, the Narrator should make the players act quickly. No time should be allowed for group discussions, long range plans, or other time consuming activities.

Each of the heroes must attempt a *challenging Agility* action to escape the torrent of water. {*Saving throw vs. paralysis to avoid the rushing water.*} Success indicates that the hero gets out of the gorge safely. Failure or a mishap leaves the hero in the water's path. Any hero who fails to get clear is hit by the wall of water, suffering 4 damage points (8 for a mishap). {*Those who fail are hit by the water for 2d4 points of damage.*}

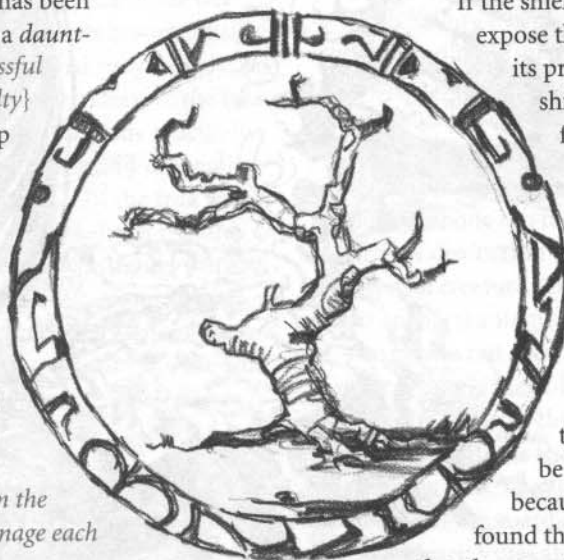
Those caught in the water are carried downstream at a rapid pace. A hero who has been swept away must succeed at a *daunting Agility* action {or a *successful Dexterity* check at a -4 penalty} to reach safety. With the help of someone not caught in the flood, the difficulty of this action drops to *challenging* {or to a -2 penalty}. A hero who cannot get free suffers another 4 damage points (8 in the event of a mishap) each minute until he or she succeeds at an action and reaches safety. {*Characters in the flood suffer 2d4 points of damage each round.*}

After dealing with the hazard of the flash flood, the heroes can complete their journey. The Narrator should keep in mind the fact that it will be raining the whole way, making the trek uncomfortable at the very least.

The Narrator may, at his or her discretion, add additional obstacles to the journey. Some possibilities include:

- An encounter with a scouting party of elves from Shalost, or even Silvanost. These elves are still in relatively good health compared with their kin in Sithelnost; use the statistics for Sithelnost residents (detailed in the Interlude) without the temporary reductions. The Silvanesti ask the heroes to state their business and explain how they came to be within the shield (or inquire whether the heroes might know how the scouting party came to be outside it, if the shield retracted instead of letting the heroes through). Depending on the heroes' response, the elves' demeanor for the rest of the encounter may range from tolerant to hostile. News of the advanced state of the wasting disease concerns them: They may have already noticed weakening among residents of the forest's other cities. If the heroes are on a time limit imposed by the shield, the elves detain them long enough to make them sweat about getting back to the shield before their deadline passes.

- A general feeling of lethargy and "not quite feeling oneself" arises among the heroes, if they are within the shield's protection. This is the start of the wasting disease. Now that the heroes are inside the barrier, it has begun draining their life forces right along with those of the forest's permanent residents. (The shield doesn't choose to do so—it can't help itself.)



If the shield retracted in Scene Five to expose the Irda Tree, the heroes reach its previous boundary just as the shield's edge moves back into its former place. What little life remains in this part of the forest seems to fade before the heroes' eyes at the shimmering barrier's return.

If the shield did not retract, the heroes arrive at the shield's edge and must penetrate it once more. Getting through it this time should be easier than it was previously, because the heroes have already found the technique. This doesn't mean that the operation will go off flawlessly, however. If the heroes used any manner of deception to get through the barrier, they now need to make amends. In the time since their last encounter with the barrier, the Silvanesti Shield has learned that it was tricked. If the heroes are going to get through the barrier again, they're going to have to try a little fast talking.

Again, these conversations will be difficult, as the shield speaks only in impressions, emotions, and sensations. Most of this encounter will demand careful thought and roleplaying. The Narrator may require a *successful challenging Presence* action {or *Charisma* check at a -2 penalty}. This will certainly be more difficult if the heroes have taken an action that offends the shield.

Once the heroes have passed the shield's boundary, the party can continue toward the dying town of Sithelnost.

Outcome

At the close of this scene, the heroes have one leg of their journey remaining: getting from the shield's edge back to Sithelnost. If they came by water (Scene Three), something has happened to their boat in their absence, requiring them to return overland (Scene Four). If they arrived on foot, the Narrator should incorporate one or both of the encounters from Scene Three on the return trip. Once the heroes reach Sithelnost, the adventure continues Scene Nine: "Back in Sithelnost."

Scene Nine: Back in Sithelnost

The heroes return to Sithelnost with the Heart of the Irda. At the start of this scene, Narrators should give the impression that the heroes have reached the end of the adventure and need only help Raena cast her spell. Shortly, however, the heroes discover that Raena has been assaulted, Flin murdered, and the Heart of the Irda stolen. The sudden discovery of Flin's body should be sprung on the party without warning. Investigation of this crime points toward Vorst, the fiend hunted by Klen and Blackeagle.

By the scene's end, the heroes should feel a sense of urgency even greater than before. Not only has the Heart gotten away from them, it is now en route to Onysablet, one of Ansalon's most sadistic dragons.

First Impressions

The forest parts as you move forward, revealing the town of Sithelnost. Even as your eyes catch sight of its spires and domes, a brilliant flash of lightning splashes blue-white light over the town. The elven town exhibits no sign of life or movement. Have you returned too late to save it from extinction?

The Story Continues

The heroes find Sithelnost much as they left it, though every hour has increased the death toll. Flin and his soldiers meet the heroes shortly after they enter town. These warriors lead the party to Raena, to whom they can turn over the Heart of the Irda. The following narrative describes her reaction:

Raena shows a weary smile as her gnarled fingers close around the Heart of the Irda. For a fraction of a second, the veil of age seems to fall away from her. Then, the centuries return and she heads slowly toward the exit.

"I go now. In the morning, when the first rays of sun fall upon the town, meet me back here. I shall spend the night meditating and readying the Heart of the Irda. I ask that you, too, prepare yourselves for the trial ahead. Though the ceremony is simple, it is also taxing, and I shall need your help to complete it. Only by combining our powers with those of the Heart can we save the people of Sithelnost. Rest well, for the greatest test of all lies ahead."

After Raena departs, the heroes may return to their former quarters at Pages Manor. There, they might heal wounds, rest to recover spell points {or spells}, or otherwise prepare themselves for the rite.

At some point during the night, the heroes make a most disturbing discovery: the body of Flin. Exactly how or where they stumble upon it is up to the Narrator. Ideally, they find the corpse in their own rooms, perhaps stuffed in a trunk or hidden in a closet. The following text describes the scene.

Flin's lifeless body is cold and chalky. A deep gash across his throat suggests that he was taken unawares by a skilled assailant. A dagger buried in Flin's heart pins a yellow sheet of parchment to his chest.

Examination of the body, either through the use of spells or via an *average Perception* action {or *Intelligence check*}, reveals that Flin has been dead for at least two days. Clearly, the person the heroes spoke with earlier this evening was not Flin, but an impostor—almost certainly the assassin. The yellow parchment is a note from the killer. It reads:

By now you have delivered into my hands a most valuable treasure. My dark mistress will be pleased with your efforts on her behalf. Perhaps she will have a chance to thank you herself one of these days.

Either Klen or Blackeagle can attempt a *challenging Perception* action {or *Intelligence check at a -2 penalty*} to note that this handwriting matches Vorst's (as they saw it in the forest at the very start of this adventure). If they still possess that note, the task becomes *average* {no penalty}.

Presumably, the heroes seek out Raena to check on her welfare—and find her unconscious but still alive. Someone struck her hard, opening a bloody wound in the back of her skull and leaving her for dead. There is no sign of the Heart of the Irda. Raena can tell the heroes only that her attacker sounded and smelled just like Flin, though she sensed nevertheless that he wasn't the elven lord.

A successful *daunting Reason* action {or *Intelligence check at a -4 penalty*} enables the heroes to deduce the identity of Vorst's master. If they fail, Raena can use divination. One way or another, the heroes should end this scene with the knowledge that Vorst is working for Onysablet.

The heroes, of course, need to hurry after him if they are to recover the Heart of the Irda.

Outcome

The adventure proceeds with Act Three: "Dragon's Pawn."



ACT THREE



his act follows close upon the previous one. As a driving rain continues to pour down upon the Silvanesti Forest, the heroes set off in hot pursuit of the creature that now wears Flin's form (still called "Vorst" for ease of reference).

Scene One: Murder and Mayhem

If all goes well, the heroes overtake Vorst on the banks of the Thon-Rishas River. Here, the mutated Sivak attempts to strike a deal with them before revealing his true identity. This most likely scenario concludes with the heroes engaging in battle with Sable's minion.

Should the heroes prove less swift in their pursuit, they come upon Vorst just as a band of ogres do. This scenario proves the most chaotic, as the heroes must wade through the battling humanoids to recover the Heart of the Irda before it falls into the ogres' clutches.

If the heroes are delayed in their pursuit of Vorst, either because of their own dawdling or because Fate is against them, they arrive on the scene too late to recover the Heart of the Irda. If this is the case, Vorst has already been attacked by a band of ogres and is mortally wounded. The creature still has enough fight left in him to trouble the adventurers. However, Vorst is not so foolish as to directly challenge them. He fights them if forced, but more likely attempts to trick them into recovering the Heart of the Irda for him. Of course, as soon as the treasure is once again in their hands, Vorst will turn on the heroes.

Whether or not the heroes strike up an alliance with Vorst, they must pick up the trail of the ogres, who have reclaimed the Irda artifact. In the hands of the ogres of Blöde, the Heart of the Irda will prove no less dangerous than in Onysablet's own horde.

The rapid pace of pursuit should be the most dominant factor in this scene. The Narrator ought to promote this feeling of urgency by giving players little time to consider their heroes' options or discuss crucial matters before announcing their chosen course of action.

First Impressions

A more dismal beginning to this trek would be difficult to imagine. The wilderness trails are slick with mud, and bone-chilling rain hammers constantly upon you. Although the downpour is no longer accompanied by lightning, thunder rumbles ominously in the churning gray sky.

The Story Continues

Whether or not Maleesa accompanied the heroes in their journey to Daganer's tomb, she is now too weak to continue and must remain in Sithelnost.

If the Narrator needs to put pressure on the heroes, Maleesa might come to be in peril. The elves of Sithelnost are not convinced that the party is blameless in Flin's killing. If the heroes fail to complete their mission, Maleesa may pay the price for bringing them into the elves' midst.

The Killer's Trail

When the heroes set out from Sithelnost, they first must pick up Vorst's trail. He isn't retracing the route that brought him (and the heroes) into Sithelnost. Instead, he's moving through the woods. This makes his trail easier to pick up, but slows those who would overtake him. Traveling alone, of course, Vorst can make fairly good time (compared to the party, at any rate). Picking up his new trail requires a *challenging Perception* action {or *Tracking proficiency check at a -2 penalty or Intelligence check at a -4 penalty*}.

Following the trail proves easy once it is discovered. Additional *challenging Perception* actions {or *Tracking or Intelligence checks*} might be required every day or so to avoid losing the trail, but a party with access to magic and the keen senses of elves should have little trouble. Because of the rain, however, the Narrator should make the heroes work to keep on the trail of their enemy.

In Hot Pursuit

Of course, following Vorst's trail is of prime importance. The cause to which the heroes have dedicated themselves is lost if they do not overtake their prey.

Making up ground through the heavy forest and steady rain does not prove easy. The pursuit should be resolved via an *average Agility (Agility)* action from the hero with the lowest Agility score {or a *Dexterity check by the PC with the lowest Dexterity*. A roll of 20 is considered a mishap}. The outcome of this action determines the course of the encounter with Sable's pawn.

If the heroes **succeed** at this action, they overtake Vorst exactly as they plan. As the party will almost certainly be quick to employ trump cards, magic spells, and so on in this chase, success is the most likely result. The scene continues with "A Cornered Beast," below.

If the attempt to overtake the villain fails, the heroes still come upon Vorst, but the shape changer is in the middle of a skirmish with a band of ogres. The scene proceeds as described in "Bad Blood," below.

In the unlikely event of a **mishap**, the heroes encounter Vorst after he has met the ogres. Their prey has been badly beaten but is still a dangerous creature. In this case, the encounter with Vorst is resolved as described in "Devil's Bargain" on page 83.

A Cornered Beast

If the heroes have managed to overtake Vorst, they catch him with the Heart of the Irda in his possession.

A shadowy figure kneels beside the gurgling expanse of a silver stream. As he dips his hands into the water, something in the wind seems to tell him that he is being watched. He rises slowly and sniffs at the air in an almost predatory fashion.

You recognize the narrow countenance of the elven leader Flin. Vorst's disguise is excellent—he looks so much like the genuine article that you would never suspect the substitution.

At this point, the party cannot tell that Vorst is a mutated Sivak. Indeed, the heroes likely assume that the creature before them is simply very well disguised. Only a careful examination (possibly involving magic) reveals Vorst's disguise as too good to be simple make-up.

Recognizing that he is outnumbered and almost certainly overpowered in this encounter, Vorst begins to negotiate. (If he thinks that he's got the drop on the party, however, he might take a chance.) He claims that he doesn't want to give back the Heart, of course, but he's not willing to die fighting for it.

Any deal Vorst strikes with the party is a sham. He has one goal and one goal only: the safe delivery of the Heart of the Irda to his mistress in the New Swamp. To accomplish this feat, he'll murder (as he has already proven), lie, strike bargains with obvious ene-

mies, and so on. A good Narrator will make the most of this when roleplaying the encounter with Vorst.

If talks with Vorst seem to be going nowhere, the Narrator can launch the ogre attack (described in the following section) upon the party. Obviously, it won't happen exactly as described there, as the attacking humanoids will assume that Vorst and the heroes are all part of one large adventuring party.

Bad Blood

This encounter takes place if the heroes fail in their pursuit action, but do not suffer a mishap. It assumes that the party comes upon Vorst engaged in a battle with the ogre raiders.



The thick woods open up before you to form a wide clearing. A cold wind blows the cascade into a stinging shower that threatens to raise welts on your exposed flesh. Against the ever changing pattern of dark rain over black shadows, you see an unusual sight.

A half-dozen large, brutish-looking humanoids have formed a circle around a single, frantic figure. As these ogres taunt and jeer at their victim, you recognize the narrow countenance of the elven leader Flin.

Vorst's disguise is excellent—he looks so much like the genuine article that you would never suspect the substitution.

Despite pleas for mercy, it is clear that the ogres have only one fate in mind for their opponent. With hissing snarls, they advance menacingly and raise deadly clubs high in the air. Their mocking laughter booms like thunder through the brooding shadow.

The heroes have three options here:

Sitting out the Skirmish

If they are disposed to help neither side in this conflict, the heroes are perfectly free to sit back and watch the ogres beat Vorst into submission. This won't take long, as the Sivak agent is greatly overmatched.

In the wake of the beating, the ogres search the body, stripping it of all valuables (including the Heart of the Irda), and then head on their way. They leave Vorst for dead, even though his murderous heart yet beats in his chest.

The heroes may approach Vorst after the battle, either to offer medical help or ensure that he has paid





the price for his crimes. If they do, they discover that Vorst is still alive. At this point, the adventure continues as described under “Devil’s Bargain.”

Coming to Vorst’s Aid

The party may choose to rush to Vorst’s aid. After all, the ogres may not leave him alive, and the heroes almost certainly have questions they want answered. Of course, they might also come to Vorst’s aid so that no one will cheat them out of the chance to drag him back to Sithelnost to answer for his crimes there.

Because the ogres have all their attention focused on Vorst, the heroes gain the element of surprise. Their first attacks, therefore, should have a significant effect. The ogres may even turn and flee after the initial volley of attacks rather than take the time to assess the nature and number of their new opponents.

❖ **Twelve ogre raiders:** *Ogre adult males, cruel demeanors, Novices.* Co 5, Ph 13, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +5, Def -3, also thrown weapons.

➤ **Ogre raiders (12):** AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 26; THAC0 17 (+2 with weapon); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 or 1d6+6 (club); SZ L (9’); ML steady (12); Int low (8); AL CE; XP 270.

Vorst recognizes the heroes, having seen them in Sithelnost. He won’t trust them, but welcomes their aid against the ogres. In the chaos of battle, Vorst does everything in his power to slip away and vanish into the woods.

At the Narrator’s discretion, this scenario can play out as a straightforward battle or develop in one of two optional directions:

❖ If Vorst gets the chance, he assumes the shape of an ogre (assuming that he is able to kill one, of course) and then leads the humanoids against his would-be rescuers. This quickly formulated plan provides him a means of escaping not only alive, but under the protection of the ogres. Should Vorst manage to pull off this transformation, at least one of the heroes should see him change shape. This observation alerts the group to his nature (or, at least, demonstrates that he is not what he appears to be) and identifies his means of escape. How the heroes respond to this information is, of course, up to them. At this point, the Narrator is advised is to continue the adventure with Scene Two: “Brute Force.” The encounter described there will require some minimal modifications to accommodate this turn of events.

Alternatively, if one of the heroes suffers a fatal injury at Vorst's hands, the Narrator could opt to have the mutated Sivak assume the hero's form and replace him or her in the adventuring party. This is an extremely challenging situation to sustain and should be attempted only by experienced Narrators. If the player whose hero has been duplicated is a seasoned roleplaying veteran, he or she might even be allowed to continue on—apparently in his or her original role. Only when Vorst sees his chance and turns on the party does the Narrator need to step in and begin to dictate the changeling's actions.

Should the heroes complete the battle without losing their prey, Vorst feigns tremendous gratitude. He tries to negotiate with them, hoping to obtain his freedom in exchange for the Heart of the Irda. Of course, he has no intention of actually turning the artifact over to them.

Joining the Ogres

The heroes may choose to join the ogres in attacking Vorst. Unlike Vorst, however, the ogres won't welcome intruders. If the heroes opt for this strategy, a great skirmish erupts in which none of the three sides works together.

Should the party choose this route, the Narrator should take care to oppose them with only enough ogres to challenge the heroes, not kill them. The ogres have split their forces and thus do not attack in their full number, as the heroes will learn in Scene Two.

As described in "Coming to Vorst's Aid," however, Vorst attempts to slip away during the battle if given a chance. Narrators should aim to maximize the Sivak's potential for deceit and treachery in this encounter.

Devil's Bargain

If the heroes suffered a mishap in their pursuit, they come upon a muddy stretch dotted with Vorst's footprints. The prints lead through an expanse of shrubs and into a broad clearing that shows unmistakable signs of a skirmish. Here lies the battered body of Vorst in the wake of his encounter with the ogres. Though beaten and wounded, the creature is so fierce that there's still a good fight left in him. The following narrative introduces this turn of events:

A body dressed in torn rags lies on the tortured earth. Blood runs from lacerations on this man's face. With a groan of pain and slow, labored movements, he begins to rise. You recognize the narrow countenance of the elven leader Flin. Vorst's disguise is excellent—he looks so much like the genuine article that you would never suspect the substitution.

He throws back his head and releases a cry of pain. As his voice fills the air, a transformation comes over him. His features flow and change; in only a few seconds, the elf is gone. In his place stands not the body of the assassin Vorst, but the hulking form of a silver-scaled reptile. Thick with muscles and wearing a mantle of evil, the creature turns slowly around—fixing his beady, black eyes on you.

At this point, Vorst rushes toward the heroes and attacks. He has no desire to negotiate with them, but might be persuaded to talk if overpowered. Should the heroes interrogate him, they may learn the truth about the death of the real (human) Vorst in Shrentak. The assassin Blackeagle and Klen have pursued with such zeal is long dead.

✦ **Half-dead Vorst:** *Mutated Sivak, shrewd demeanor, Champion.* Co 3, Ph 8, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +8 (morn-ingstar) or +7 (heavy crossbow), Def -5 (natural). If slain, Vorst's body explodes into a ball of fire, inflicting 10 damage points on anyone in personal or melee range.

✦ **Half-dead Vorst:** Mutated Sivak; AC 1; MV 6; HD 3; hp 12; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (morn-ingstar) or 1d6 (crossbow) or 1d6/1d6/2d6 (claw/claw/bite); SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int high (13); AL NE; XP 975. Vorst's body explodes upon death, inflicting 2d4 points of damage.

One way or another, the heroes learn that the mutated Sivak was attacked by ogres. If they don't hear it from his own scaly lips, the surrounding area reveals this fact. Large ogre footprints cover the ground. Broken branches and torn-up shrubs indicate that a violent struggle has taken place here. If the Narrator wishes, a successful *average Perception* action {or *Intelligence check*} can determine these facts.

Another truth also becomes clear, either from Vorst himself or through an examination of the scene: The Heart of the Irda is not here. The ogres have taken it.

If the heroes are to recover their treasure, they must turn north toward Blöde. The ogre's path is not difficult to follow, but the encounter at its end is certain to be a perilous one indeed.

Outcome

Should the heroes end this scene with the Heart of the Irda in their hands, they can return to Sithelnost. If they haven't recovered the treasure, they must pursue the ogres to reclaim it. Either way, en route they encounter Alhana Starbreeze and her followers in Scene Two: "Brute Force."



Scene Two: Brute Force

After the encounter with Vorst, the heroes continue pursuing the Heart of the Irda by turning north toward the ogre nation of Blöde. (If the heroes ended the previous scene in possession of the Heart, the events detailed here require only minor adjustments.) This begins with the heroes stalking the ogres who attacked and killed Vorst. A battle erupts when they overtake their prey. By the time the conflict finally ends, the heroes (if all goes well) recover the Heart of the Irda and gain valuable allies: Alhana Starbreeze and her followers.

First Impressions

The ogres have headed north, leaving a path of trampled shrubs, broken branches, and general destruction that even the most inept city dweller could follow. As the rain at last begins to slacken, brief glimpses of blue appear through the gray morass overhead.

The Story Continues

The ogres make no effort to cover their tracks, confident that nothing in the withered forest poses any threat to them. Because of this carelessness, the heroes should have little problem following their trail, though the Narrator can require an *average Perception* action {or *Tracking* or *Intelligence* check} if he or she wishes.

Overtaking the ogres, however, is another matter. These powerful creatures move swiftly and indefatigably when they wish to do so. Catching up with the raiders requires a *challenging Agility* action, made by the hero with the lowest Agility score {or *Dexterity* check at a -2 penalty by the PC with the lowest *Dexterity* score}. If successful, the heroes begin their encounter with the ogres on more or less even footing. In this case, the following narrative can be read to the players when they reach the ogres:

A pack of hulking humanoids gathers around the body of an elk. One after another, they tear into the flesh of the animal, ripping off bloody strips that they promptly devour.

Not far away, a second animal lies in a crimson pool. A pack of oversized wolves snarl and snap at each other as their yellow fangs rend the creature apart.

At this point, the heroes are free to attack the ogres and worgs using normal combat rules (including those for surprise and encounter range).

Should the pursuit action fail, the ogres noticed the approaching heroes and have set up an ambush. The following narrative describes the start of the ogre attack:

As you move through an area of dense undergrowth, you catch the scent of rotting meat and corruption in the air. In the same second, the forest around you erupts in chaos. From every direction come shouts of wild fury, the hulking shapes of powerful humanoids, and a pack of giant wolves.

Ambushed heroes have no chance of surprising the ogres and worgs, and must make a *challenging Perception (Agility)* action to avoid surprise themselves. {Roll for surprise normally, but the ogres cannot be surprised.}

No matter who gains surprise, a fierce and frantic battle follows. The Narrator should determine the exact number of enemies opposing the heroes—perhaps a two-to-one ratio: enough to challenge but not defeat the heroes. The ogres have split their forces; this group is in fact a reconnaissance party returning from a brief mission. Their fellows are not far away, however, as the heroes soon learn.

❖ **Ogre raiders:** *Ogre adult males, cruel demeanors, Novices.* Co 5, Ph 13, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +5, Def -3, also thrown weapons.

❖ **Worgs:** *Dire wolves.* Co 7, Ph 12, In 3, Es 4, Dmg +5, Def -2.

❖ **Ogre raiders:** AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 26; THAC0 17 (+2 with weapon); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 or 1d6+6 (club); SZ L (9'); ML steady (12); Int low (8); AL CE; XP 270.

❖ **Worgs:** AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SZ M (6' long); ML steady (11); Int low (5); AL NE; XP 120.

When the heroes are close to securing victory, they hear a blare of horns signaling the arrival of ogre reinforcements. The reinforcements never come into view, however. Instead, sounds of pitched combat erupt a few hundred yards away. And mixed in with the guttural sounds of ogre war calls are battle cries in distinctly elven voices.

The Elven Queen

Assuming the heroes investigate, they come upon Alhana Starbreeze, Jahran, and their Silvanesti followers fighting for their lives against an overwhelming number of ogres and worgs—the main ogre force. In fact, so great are the odds against Alhana's party, that only with the heroes' help can the elves triumph.

About forty ogres battle Alhana's party (though the Narrator can reduce this number if the heroes have suffered serious wounds already.)

• **Twelve Silvanesti warriors:** *Silvanesti adults, various demeanors, Novices.* Co 8, Ph 6, In 7, Es 8, Dmg +5 (scimitar), Def -2 (leather), also missile weapons.

• **Silvanesti warriors (12):** male and female elves F2; AC 8; MV 9; hp 10; THAC0 19 (+2 bonus with swords and bows); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (sword); SZ M (5'6" tall); ML champion (16); Int very (12); AL NG.

Descriptions and game information for Alhana and Jahran appear in the "Important Figures of Silvanesti" section of the Epilogue.

In the wake of the battle, a successful *challenging Perception* action {or *Intelligence check at a -2 penalty*} enables the heroes to find the Heart of the Irda on one of the slain ogres if they did not recover it in the previous scene. Some of the heroes might search for the artifact while the others speak with Alhana and her party.

As this roleplaying encounter unfolds, the Narrator should keep in mind the rigid caste system in which Alhana grew up. Though she treats all the heroes with respect—her worldliness has made her more tolerant than most Silvanesti, and the heroes did just save her, after all—old habits die hard. In speaking with the party, she primarily addresses Ladine (whom she knows as a supporter and former noble). Rose, the group's other full-blooded Silvanesti, also receives more personal attention. The rest Alhana encompasses with her gaze while talking with her kinswomen. Should one of the other four address her directly, she responds in a polite but reserved manner.

Jahran generally speaks only to Ladine and Rose. Fortunately, Alhana does most of the talking for the elves. Jahran stays close to her, however, ready to protect the noble in the event of trouble.

The exiled queen thanks the heroes for their aid. She states that she and her followers heard sounds of the heroes' battle and intended to investigate when the second group of ogres ambushed them. Alhana then inquires about the party's activities in the Silvanesti Forest.

Though the heroes may hesitate to simply blurt out their business, they stand to benefit most from telling the truth. These renegades have long suspected that the Silvanesti Shield posed unknown hazards. This is an opportunity for the heroes to gain powerful allies in the struggle to save the residents of Sithelnost. Beyond the obvious threat of the wasting disease, the elves of Sithelnost face other dangers from which the



heroes alone cannot protect them. The ogres of Blöde are clearly aware that the shield has started to fold back. Their recent incursions into the Silvanesti Forest are sure to prove only the first of many—each more brutal than the last.

Ideally, as a result of discussions with the heroes, Alhana and her party agree to travel with them to Sithelnost and help protect the town. Convincing the elves to do this requires a successful *challenging Presence (Spirit)* action opposed by Alhana {or *Charisma check at a -2 penalty*}. A similar action is again required once the group arrives in Sithelnost. If all goes well, Sithelnost may even become the seat of Alhana's power in the coming years.

Outcome

Once the heroes have defeated the ogres and had a chance to converse with Alhana and her party, they can return to Sithelnost. These events, which wrap up the adventure, are presented in the next (and final) scene.

Scene Three: Lifesaving Rite

This scene brings the heroes' quest to an close. After recovering the Heart of the Irda, the heroes return to Sithelnost with Alhana Starbreeze and her party for a lifesaving ceremony.

At the start of this scene, the Narrator should emphasize the gloom and despair that fill the streets of Sithelnost, perhaps describing the elves as "cadaverous," "withered," or "desiccated." These and other touches can give the scene a macabre, sepulchral mood. When the time comes for Raena and the heroes to conduct the healing ritual, a feeling of renewed hope should enter the game.

First Impressions

The people of Sithelnost are nowhere to be seen as you move into the town. The spires seem to have lost their natural radiance and an air of death hangs heavily over the place. Perhaps you have returned too late....

The Story Concludes

Though Sithelnost appears a ghost town, the surviving elves are simply too weak to get up and confront the new arrivals. Indeed, much of the town's population has died: Nearly fifty percent have been claimed by the life draining effects of the shield. Shocked by the condition of her people, Alhana and her followers separate from the heroes to assess the devastation and secure the town's borders from intruders. In its current state, Sithelnost lies all too vulnerable to attack by ogres, Onysablet's minions, or other hostile forces.

Presumably, the heroes seek out Raena upon their arrival. They soon discover, however, that the priestess now lies in a coma as a result of the wasting disease and her head injuries from Vorst. The heroes must find a way to revive her before they can continue. A *daunting Reason* action {or *First Aid* proficiency check at a -2 penalty} or healing spell should suffice. If the heroes cannot bring Raena back to consciousness on their own, Jahran can aid them.



Raena awakens still weak but eager to conduct the ritual. She explains that through divination, meditation, and further research, she has learned how to channel the Heart's power to restore life to Sithelnost's people and environs. To do so, she needs the help of all the heroes.

At the Narrator's discretion, Alhana and her companions can participate in the ceremony if the heroes invite her to do so. However, to keep the focus of this scene on the heroes, the exiled queen is perhaps best left to protect the town from invasion while the ceremony takes place. Raena may explain that Alhana's dark elf status could taint the proceedings.

Holding the Heart, Raena gathers the heroes into a circle and directs them in weaving an ancient spell. If desired, the Narrator may use the rules for combined spellcasting presented in *Heroes of Hope* and *Heroes of Sorcery*. The following passage describes the start of the healing ritual:

Raena stands in the center of the circle, head thrown back and arms extended to raise the Heart toward the sky. The ancient gem glows and pulsates with power. Her frail form shakes as she pronounces the ancient words of healing that will save Sithelnost.

Suddenly, she wheezes and reaches for her own heart. "The spell demands too much of me," she gasps. "I am too weak...you must continue..."

In the next moment, her lifeless form drops to the floor, the Heart of the Irda falling from her hands.

Raena's weakened body could not sustain the spell she set in motion, but the heroes can complete it if they act quickly. The hero with the highest Spirit code (probably Klen) should pick up the Heart and attempt a *desperate Spirit* action {or *Wisdom check at a -8 penalty*}. If successful, she manages to bring the spell to an end safely.

If her action fails, however, each of the participants (including Klen) must attempt a *daunting Endurance* or *Presence* action (whichever code is higher for each hero) to avoid being drained by the spell as Raena was. Success at this action indicates that the character remains conscious and suffers no ill effects. Failure means the hero lapses into unconsciousness and is drained of any mysticism points he or she possessed; if the hero had no such points, he or she suffers 10 damage points. {*PCs must succeed at a saving throw vs. death magic or lose consciousness and suffer 2d6 points of damage.*}

Once the ritual is over, the hero can be restored to consciousness through a healing spell. Due to the drain of this powerful artifact, lost spell points are

regained slowly: The hero recovers a number of points equal to his or her Spirit score per day. Thus, it takes a number of days equal to the hero's Spirit score for one to recover one's full spell points. {*The PC loses all memorized spells and may not rememorize them until the next day.*}

If the participant's attempt results in a mishap, he or she loses consciousness and either 10 damage points or all spell points as described above. At the same time, however, the hero also loses all but his or her lowest card. Lost spell points return at the slower pace described above, but only after the hero has regained all the cards lost to the ritual's effect.

Assuming the spell ended successfully, red light radiates from the Heart, encompassing all of Sithelnost in its glow. Once the ceremony concludes, the elves are immediately restored to full health and life returns to normal in Sithelnost. Raena either died in the process of casting the spell or is revived along with the elves she was trying to save (Narrator's choice.) The heroes, having at long last convinced the populace that they are truly friends, find themselves accepted by the elves.

The following text describes the closing scene.

As life returns to the town of Sithelnost, the plants and trees awaken before your eyes. Verdant new leaves burst forth, closely followed by vibrant flowers and fruit blossoms. A warm breeze gently blows, carrying away the scent of death and decay that clung to this town for too long.

In the streets, residents emerge from their dwellings, blinking at the transformation and flexing their limbs in wonder at their renewed strength. Children's laughter once again fills the air. At last, spring has come to Sithelnost.

Outcome

This scene concludes the adventure. The heroes have saved the people of Sithelnost from death and won the favor of the elves. They might even have earned the respect of Alhana Starbreeze, an advantage that could prove valuable in the years to come.

A more complete description of the events that follow this adventure, along with ideas and source material for continuing play, can be found in the Epilogue.





he beautiful trees of Silvanesti. Trees fashioned and coaxed through centuries into groves of wonder and enchantment. All around Tanis were the trees. But these trees now turned upon their masters, becoming living groves of horror. A noxious green light filtered through the shivering leaves.

—*Tanis stands within Lorac's Nightmare, Dragons of Winter Night*

The story of *The Sylvan Veil* is but a harbinger of events to come. The Silvanesti Forest holds endless potential for additional quests. Now that the heroes have established a reputation among the elves (and with the shield itself), they may find themselves involved—intentionally or not—in Silvanesti affairs. This section, recommended for Narrators only, details persons, places, and things that can serve as catalysts for further adventures.

Current Conditions

In early 34sc, the Silvanesti Forest stands in sad shape. The trees are not as healthy as they should be; the forest wildlife is dying as well. The elves of Silvanost are few and growing fewer each day. Elves living in the forest aren't in a much better situation.

Even under these precarious circumstances, however, the Silvanesti suffer from civil strife. Those forces directly under Military Governor Konnal's command still remain loyal to him. However, several groups stationed in the forest have started to work against Konnal. Fortunately for the Silvanesti, everyone is too weak to support a sustained civil war.

Important Figures of Silvanesti

Closed off from the rest of the world for two decades, the Silvanesti have maintained social order through their leaders. Some leaders have held power for centuries, while others have newly emerged.

Governmental Figures

Although the structure of the government has changed from the times before the War of the Lance, its basic organization is still there—as are the issues left unresolved with the death of Speaker Lorac.

Political Climate

Before winter settled in, several high-placed members within each of the Houses approached Military Governor Konnal about dispersing the shield that was suspected of draining life from all Silvanesti. They met with Konnal's implacable stare and a negative answer. Later that week several members of this group died of the wasting sickness.

Fear and anger brought together those left in the group, which now called itself *Hythel-Shelain*, or shield-haters. The *Hythel-Shelain* decided to approach Kiryn, whom they felt was old enough to become Speaker of the Stars, and offer him the position if he would agree to disperse the shield. Since they knew that he strolled the Garden of Astarin at about the same time each day, they sent two representatives to talk to him.

Although Kiryn seemed to dislike the shield as much as they did, he declined the position. Before he could explain why, several of Konnal's personal guard stepped forward and sent the two representatives away.

By this time, tempers were high and fights broke out within Houses and families over whether to continue to support Konnal or instead raise Kiryn to the position of Speaker of the Stars. Some in House Royal held secret meetings to discuss the possibility of Alhana or Porthios returning to assume command. Konnal had to settle several of these disputes by force. In the meantime, several more members of the *Hythel-Shelain* wasted away into death.

Military Governor Konnal

Currently, Military Governor Konnal retains command of the government of Silvanesti. His charisma, force of will, and practical manner engender loyalty in those below him in rank or station. He has stated that he would step down once the new candidate for the Speaker of the Stars was experienced and old enough to take the position.

Although Kiryn, Konnal's chosen candidate, has now reached adulthood, Konnal has refused to let him become Speaker because of all the problems that confront Silvanesti. Of course, he has other motives for refusing to step down as well. First of all, Kiryn dislikes the fact that the shield is killing his people. Konnal has tried to explain that the shield keeps out the dangers of the outside world and that everyone should be willing to give up a part of himself or herself to maintain this protection, but Kiryn does not hold this viewpoint.

A NEW CHAPTER ~

Secondly, a mysterious advisor named Rillion Dawnbringer gained the upper hand on Konnal two decades ago when he brought several members of House Woodshaper to him with an idea for how to protect the Silvanesti from outside conflict. Dawnbringer finds Konnal a convenient puppet and prefers to keep him in power rather than take a chance on Kiryn's compliance. As a result, Konnal has had to bow to his wishes on more than one occasion. Although Konnal believes that Silvanesti should be separated from the outside world, he does not like some of the effects of the shield.

♣ **Military Governor Konnal:** *Silvanesti adult male, vigilant demeanor, Master.* Ag 8C, Dx 7A, En 7C, St 6B, Re 6C, Pe 8A, Sp 5D, Pr 9A, Dmg +9 (Shadekiller, longsword of distinction), Def -6 (chainmail, target shield).

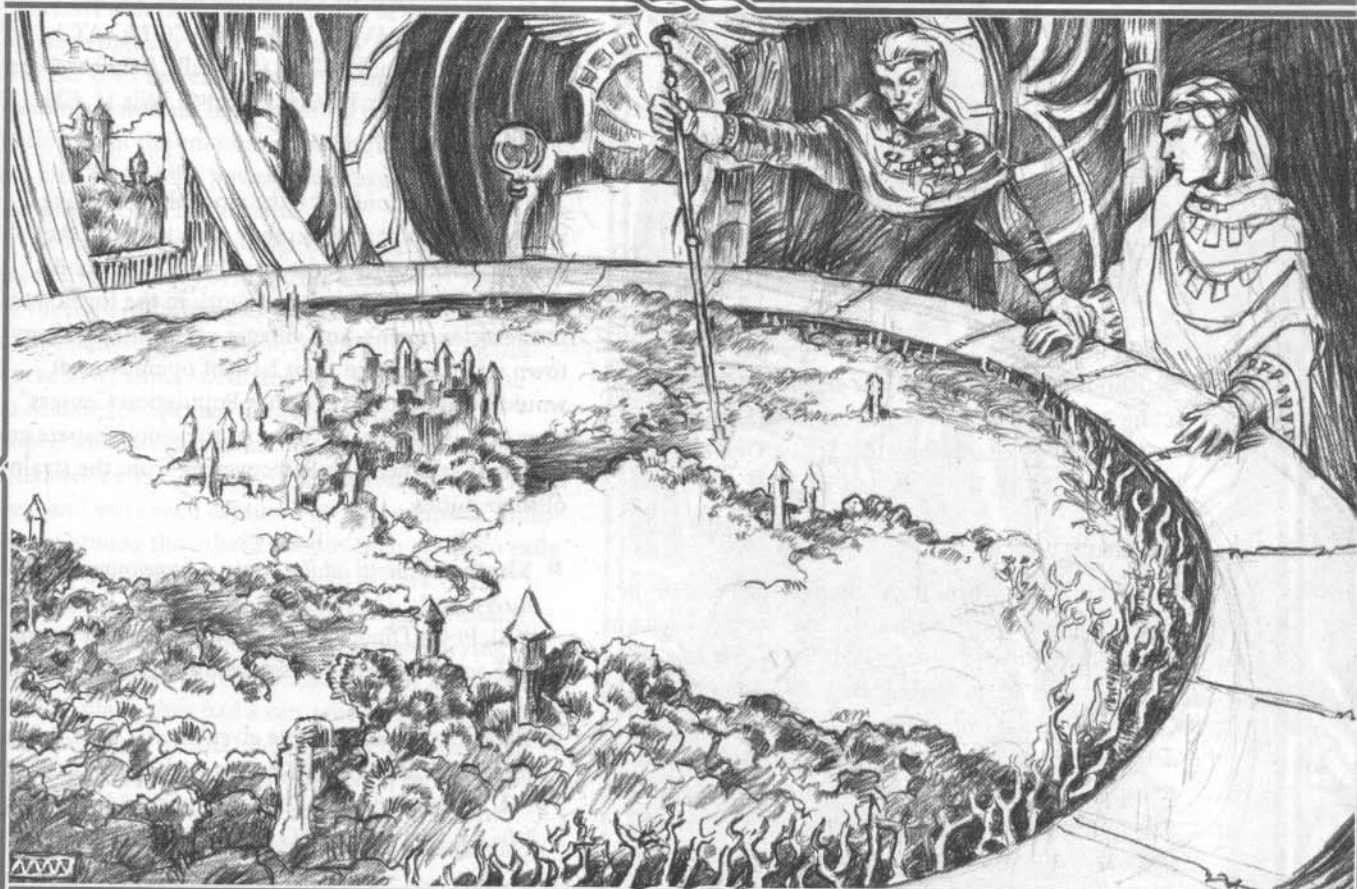
♣ **Military Governor Konnal:** male elf F10; AC 4; MV 9; hp 72; THAC0 11 (+2 bonus with swords or bows); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (*longsword* +1); SZ M (5'8"); ML elite (14); Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 18; AL LN; XP 1,400.

Kiryn Starbreeze

Kiryn himself does not wish to become the Speaker of the Stars. He remembers Alhana and Porthios fondly and does not believe it his right to step into the position of Speaker. On the other hand, Alhana and Porthios aren't around to save the Silvanesti from the life-draining forces of the shield. As a result, Kiryn is willing to become Speaker to disperse the shield, then step down to allow Porthios or Alhana to take his place. Unfortunately, an obstacle in the form of Konnal and his mysterious advisor rests in his path.

♣ **Kiryn Starbreeze:** *Silvanesti adult male, sensible demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 7C, Dx 6B, En 5C, St 5B, Re 6C, Pe 6C, Sp 5C, Pr 6B, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def -3 (chainmail).

♣ **Kiryn Starbreeze:** male elf F6; AC 5; MV 12; hp 43; THAC0 15; #AT 1, Dmg 1d6 (sword); SZ M (5'10" tall); ML elite (13); Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13; AL LG.



Rillion Dawnbringer

Nobody knows much of Rillion's recent past, except that he was lost in the forest during the time of Lorac's Nightmare. He came back to take up his post in House Woodshaper shortly after the Summer of Chaos, and he refuses to tell anyone what happened to him out in the twisted forest. Those who knew him before the War of the Lance tell tales of how reclusive he seemed then; now his actions are strange in that he has taken a liking to Silvanesti politics. (See "Cyan Bloodbane" for more information.)

When he saw the unusual tree in the Garden of Astarin, Rillion made his first moves in the political arena. He figured out that the tree's shield properties could be expanded outward. He talked to others within his House and persuaded them of the Good that a shield like the one around the tree could do for Silvanesti. Once he explained the possibilities to Konnal (along with his price), Rillion gained a hold on the Silvanesti government.

✦ **Rillion Dawnbringer:** *Silvanesti male adult, deceitful demeanor, Champion.* Ag 5C, Dx 6C, En 5D, St 5C, Re 8A, Pe 7B, Sp 6B, Pr 8B, Dmg +2 (dagger), Def -2 (leather armor), also acute eyesight, sorcery (divination, enchantment, geomancy), mysticism (animism).

✦ **Rillion Dawnbringer:** male elf M10; AC 8; MV 12; hp 36; THAC0 17; #AT 1, Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M (5' tall); ML champion (15); Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 15; AL NE, XP 3,000.

Military Forces

The Wildrunners form the main fighting force of the Silvanesti. Military Governor Konnal oversees them as commander-in-chief, but day-to-day operations and field missions are supervised by Wildrunner General Cadimus Tederai (*Silvanesti adult male, aggressive demeanor, Master; or 14th-level fighter*) and a network of captains, lieutenants, and section leaders. Although still a strong force, the Wildrunners were more substantial in number before the harsh winter of 33 to 34sc killed so many of them.

Most of the troops stationed in Silvanost still remain faithful to Military Governor Konnal. The troops stationed in the forest, however, have gradually suffered from attrition. Not only have they heard news of wasting sickness deaths from Silvanost and some of the smaller villages in the Silvanesti Forest, but they also have seen the forest and its wildlife change and die around them. Since Konnal cannot rally them personally by constant visits to the barracks as he does with his Silvanost-based troops, only the most loyal (and blind) of soldiers remain in his service. The rest melted into the woods to join the kirath as foot troops.

Wildrunners:

Silvanesti adults, various demeanors, Adventurers.

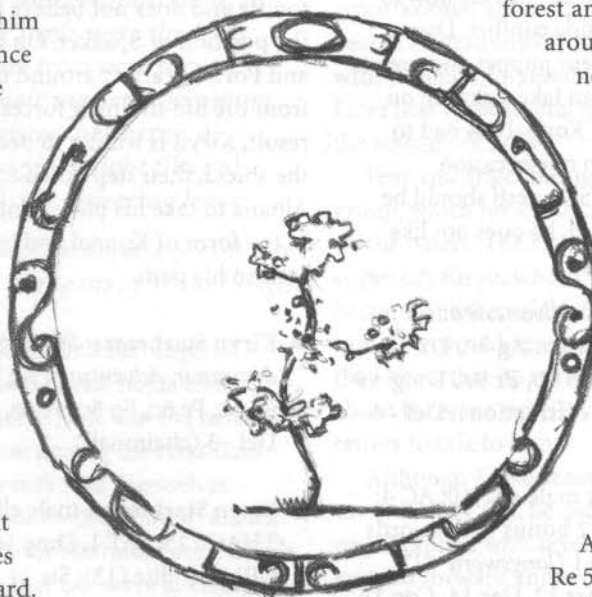
Ag 6C, Dx 6A, En 6C, St 6B, Re 5C, Pe 6B, Sp 5C, Pr 6B, Dmg +5 (sword), Def -3 (chainmail), also acute sight.

✦ **Wildrunners:** male and female elves R4; AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 17; #AT 1, Dmg 1d8 (sword); SZ M (5'6" tall); ML champion (16); Str 13, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 12; AL NG; XP 120.

The kirath, along with the woodshapers, have several goals. Not only do they wish to bring the shield down, but they also monitor Cyan Bloodbane's activities. Their forces work in the forest and in the cities, towns, and villages of Silvanesti. If any town could be called their base of operations, it would be Solune. (See "Other Population Centers" later in this Epilogue.) Some of the woodshapers and healers dwell there while recovering from the strain of their duties.

✦ **Kirath:** *Silvanesti adults, various demeanors, Adventurers.* Ag 7C, Dx 7B, En 7C, St 6B, Re 6C, Pe 6B, Sp 5B (25), Pr 5C, Dmg +4 (soris), Def -2 (leather armor), also acute sight, mysticism (animism).

✦ **Kirath:** male and female elves R4; AC 8; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 17; #AT 1, Dmg 1d6 (soris); SZ M; ML fanatic (18); Str 13, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; AL NG.



Other Silvanesti Groups

Besides the entire town of Sithelnost, other Silvanesti elves dwell outside the shield in 34sc. Many of them linger near it, attempting to discover a way back into their home forest. Others have built new lives elsewhere. The one thing most of them have in common is that they anxiously await news of the shield's removal and renewed contact with their relatives living within it. Those who recently found themselves outside the shield when it retracted now work with others to achieve these same goals.

Several different organizations have been attempting to bypass the shield. Among them are Alhana Starbreeze and her supporters, and the Legion of Steel.

Alhana Starbreeze

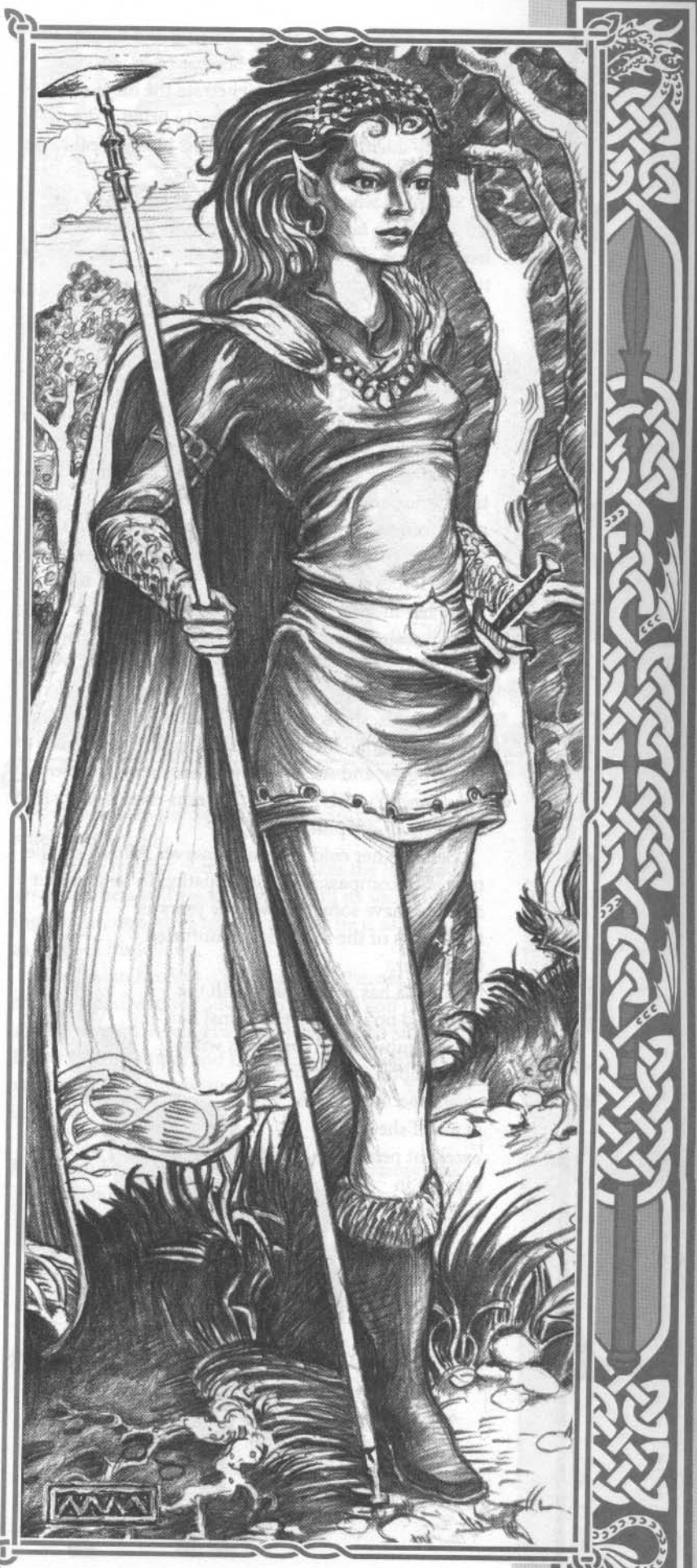
Alhana Starbreeze is a slight elven woman with long, flowing black hair. She generally wears some manner of golden torc or tiara to keep her locks out of her face. Although still beautiful, years of hardship have begun to take their toll on her. This is especially apparent in her violet eyes, which look tired and sad.

Alhana is the daughter of Lorac Caladon, the last Speaker of the Stars in Silvanesti. She was in Sancrist when she received news that her homeland had fallen to the dragonarmies during the War of the Lance. At that time, she was quick to blame the allies of her people for this defeat. Only later did she learn that her own father had been the instrument of Silvanesti's downfall. In attempting to protect his nation from the enemies surrounding it, the desperate king loosed the power of a dragon orb. This was the onset of the Nightmare.

After Lorac's death, Alhana entered into a political marriage with Porthios, the Qualinesti Speaker of the Sun. Although her husband took on the title of Speaker of the Stars and Sun while rooting out Lorac's Nightmares, Alhana was actually the true candidate for Speaker of the Stars. Both royals hoped their alliance would unify the Silvanesti and Qualinesti elves. They were wrong. Alhana and her husband were each captured by opponents of unification among the other's people, then cast into exile by their own. Now they both live as dark elves.

After being exiled from her native land, Alhana and her husband immediately set to work trying to restore their plan of reunification. While in the midst of these plans, they had a son, whom they named Silvanoshei. Both Alhana and Porthios hope to bring about reunification through their son, though Silvanoshei's whereabouts are currently unknown.

While the Silvanesti government considers her an enemy of the state, some of her people see Alhana as a chance at salvation. Alhana believes that the Silvanesti



Shield is more a curse than a blessing and realizes the danger it holds for the elves. She has been working with the Legion of Steel to penetrate the barrier and grows more determined every day to bring it down. The anti-shield faction in Sithelnost places great hope in their exiled queen.

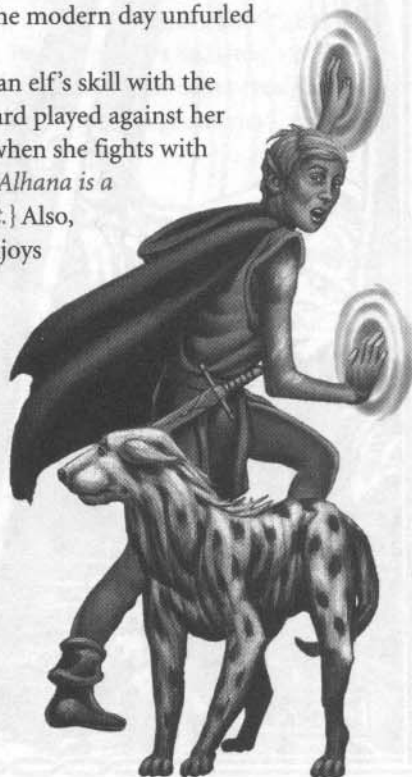
Silvanesti who have been trapped outside of the shield tend to fall into two groups. Most still despise her as a dark elf. Many, however, see Alhana as the key to elven unification and would willingly lay down their lives for her.

Alhana's efforts to bring down the shield have brought her into contact with a number of other Silvanesti exiles and outcasts. The most important of these is Jahran Kaldeist, who leads a renegade military force equally determined to destroy the shield.

During her exile, Alhana has spent a great deal of time in the company of kender, dwarves, and other non-elven races. She also once loved the human Sturm Brightblade and enjoyed the friendship of other Heroes of the Lance. These experiences have made her more receptive to other races than are most elves, but she nonetheless still retains some of the elven aloofness bred into her for so many years. When dealing with other races, especially humans, kender, and dwarves, she is polite, but distant. When dealing with less human races—including minotaurs, draco-nians, ogres, and such—she is openly resentful. So pronounced is this attitude that non-elves usually find her manner off-putting.

Beneath her cold exterior, however, Alhana can be moved to compassion and sympathy. To be sure, her attitudes have softened over the years as the terrors of the modern day unfurled before her.

Alhana has an elf's skill with the sword, so no card played against her is ever trump when she fights with that weapon. {Alhana is a sword specialist.} Also, as an elf she enjoys excellent perception in the forest.



As a dark elf, Alhana is an outcast at the start of this adventure. At its conclusion, however, the people of Sithelnost have begun to accept her again. They have not set aside all their doubts and concerns, but the stories she can tell about the ravages of the shield may convince neutral parties and even a few hardliners of the need for action.

Depending upon the wishes of the Narrator, Alhana is probably at least tolerated by most citizens of Sithelnost. After all, now that the shield has drawn back and left them exposed to the outside world, they're going to need some protection. Alhana's allies, led by Jahran, can provide that protection.

The elves of Sithelnost may even rally around her cause. This might be due to her charisma and actions, but it could also be simple self-interest. With the rest of the Silvanesti on the other side of the shield, the town's residents might quickly embrace any link to their heritage. Of course, if the central government in Silvanost got word, the whole town could be cast out for consorting with a dark elf, but under the circumstances residents might consider the risk worthwhile.

If the Narrator chooses, Alhana and the rest of her company could conceivably take charge of Sithelnost. While protected by the shield, the town had little need of a strong military and let its defenses down a bit. Also, in part due to the wasting sickness, there are fewer soldiers here than in past years, and those who remain are poorly trained and equipped. This isn't to say that Alhana and her followers would stage a bloody takeover. But the elves of Sithelnost might be unwilling to urge Alhana to move on simply because they feel intimidated—or they might gratefully welcome her leadership, despite the dark elf stigma.

Exactly what happens with Alhana in any given campaign is up to the Narrator. If a course seems better suited to the direction in which he or she wishes to see the world of Krynn progress, then that's the way to go.

✦ **Alhana Starbreeze:** *Silvanesti female adult, insightful demeanor, Legend, 1*.* Ag 7C, Dx 7A, St 4A, En 5A, Re 8D, Pe 8C, Sp 8C, Pr 8B, Dmg +13 (longsword of fame) or +8 (horsebow of renown), Def -18 (plate armor of fame/-11, target shield of renown/-7).

✦ **Alhana Starbreeze:** female elf F14; AC -3 (plate mail +3, shield +2); MV 12; hp 94; THAC0 7 (+2 bonus with swords and bows); #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d8+5 (longsword +3, +2 spec. bonus) or 1d6+2 (longbow +2); SD +2 bonus to perception-related Int checks in the forest; SW Cha bonuses halved when dealing with non-elves; SZ (5'6" tall); ML fanatic (18); Str 9, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 17, AL NG.

Jahran Kaldeist

Jahran Kaldeist is a slender elf with the muscular build of an athlete. He wears his long hair without ornamentation or styling, allowing it to fall freely to the middle of his back. In his clothing, he favors the greens and browns of the forest, adorning his dress with amber and other organic jewelry.

Jahran has never quite fit in with his people. The hierarchical Silvanesti social system has always seemed to him more of a means of preserving the status quo of wealthy, powerful nobles than serving the people. When the people did benefit from the decisions of their leaders, their fortune always seemed almost accidental to Jahran.

After the War of the Lance, Jahran became one of the Silvanesti exiles who worked to restore his country after Lorac's Nightmare. A superbly talented scout, he served as the first priest of Chislev when the gods returned. After Porthios ended the Nightmare, Jahran used his magic to help repair the damage it had caused. After nearly three decades of self-imposed exile, Jahran had come home.

Despite the loss of his priestly powers after the Chaos War, Jahran has remained steadfast in his devotion to the principles Chislev espoused. He believes the goddess has not abandoned the world, for she is herself a part of the natural world.

Jahran was one of the first Silvanesti elves to seek out Goldmoon and the Citadel of Light when that institution was founded. He was there, in fact, when the magical shield closed off the borders of Silvanesti. Prevented from returning to his homeland, he has taken the opportunity to travel the free realms with companions, using his magic to give aid where he can.

He studied the elemental schools at the Academy of Sorcery, adding several of them to his magical repertoire. The additional training has allowed this insightful elf to regain the magic he once knew as a priest of Chislev.

Despite his history of opposition to the Silvanesti social order, Jahran longs for home. He sees the best hope for his race in the person of exiled Queen Alhana. In Jahran's opinion, Alhana possesses the character necessary to unite the Silvanesti people against the might of the Great Dragons and other menaces. He believes that Military Governor Konnal serves only himself. Further, he believes Konnal to be partially responsible for erecting the unnatural shield. And having seen the decaying trees at the edge of the Silvanesti Forest, the elf mystic knows something sinister is going on in his homeland.

Jahran is a skilled swordsman, so no card played against him is ever trump when he is armed with such a weapon. *{Jahran is a sword specialist.}* As an elf, he



also enjoys keen perception in the forest and acute smell and hearing.

Despite the fact that Jahran dislikes the Silvanesti system, others still associate him with its shortcomings. Thus, non-elves tend to assume he is as arrogant as most of his fellows.

Jahran can become a helpful ally to heroes who share his desire to see Silvanesti restored and the shield brought down. His knowledge of the Silvanesti Forest is substantial, and his willingness to defy Silvanesti caste customs makes him more likely to interact with outsiders.

✦ **Jahran Kaldeist:** *Silvanesti adult male, resourceful demeanor, Champion.* Ag 9D, Dx 9B, St 8C, En 6D, Re 7A (49), Pe 6B, Sp 8A (64), Pr 6B, Dmg +5 (scimitar) or +5 (crossbow), Def -1 (leather armor), also sorcery (pyromancy, hydromancy, aeromancy), mysticism (healing, alteration, animism).

✦ **Jahran Kaldeist:** male elf C6/W5; AC 8; MV 12; hp 28; THAC0 18 (+2 bonus with swords and bows); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (scimitar) or 1d6 (crossbow); SA wizard spells; SD infravision 30'; SZ (5'10" tall); ML champion (16); Str 16, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 12, AL NG.

The Legion of Steel

When the shield was raised, those hoping for elven unification felt disappointment. After Iyesta took her realm in the Plains of Dust, she set about trying to penetrate the barrier. (Irritated that the elves had found such an effective way to ignore her, she was determined that it wouldn't last long.) The Legion of Steel, which was heavily involved in the movement to unify the elves, decided to work with the dragon to attempt to get through the shield. At the same time Alhana Starbreeze and her son approached the Legion to gain help in their own efforts to enter Silvanesti. As penetrating the shield became an ongoing concern, the Legion decided to make the City of Morning Dew, on the northern edge of the Plains of Dust, a staging point for this operation.

The Legion not only works with Alhana, but also helps keep an eye on events in Blöde. As the Dark Knights push the ogres farther south, more groups of ogres find themselves living just outside the Silvanesti Shield. Occasionally, these ogres attempt to break past the shield, with little success. The Legion harbors concern that should the shield fall, ogre forces will overwhelm the Silvanesti Forest before the Legion realizes it. To this end, the Legion stands poised to respond quickly to any call for help that the Silvanesti might sound, and has also alerted Alhana and Porthios to this potential danger.



When the shield recently shrank, the Legion found its preparations worthwhile. The ogres indeed moved down to attack the exposed towns, but the Legion and the remnants of the Wildrunners and kirath in the area—with the help of the heroes—initially repulsed them.

Cyan Bloodbane

During his time in the Silvanesti Forest, Cyan Bloodbane has been very busy. Not only has he led the kirath on a merry hunt, frequently engaged the Wildrunners in skirmishes, and made himself a well-hidden lair beneath Tower Shalost, but he has also mastered the ability to alter himself into an elf. With this talent, Cyan has infiltrated the Palace of Quinari and insinuated himself as an advisor to Military Governor Konnal. Preferring to keep his involvement subtle, Cyan brought to the governor's attention Ril-lion Dawnbringer, whom he corrupted during the Summer of Chaos. Cyan has since gently guided Konnal's xenophobic fears to the fore, causing the normally reasonable man to become narrow-minded and dependent on Dawnbringer.

Dawnbringer knows Cyan's true form, and the dragon realizes this. As a result, it is only a matter of time before Dawnbringer will be removed from the picture—one way or another.

☛ **Cyan Bloodbane:** *Green dragon, great wyrm.* Co 13, Ph 60, In 18, Es 18, Dmg +50, Def -35, also mysticism (animism), sorcery (divination, enchantment, geomancy).

☛ **Cyan Bloodbane:** AC -8; MV 9, Fl 30 (C), Sw 9; HD 21, hp 120; THAC0 5; #AT 3+, Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d10 (claw/claw/bite); SA breath weapon (24d6+12), *water breathing*, *suggestion* (1/day), *warp wood* (3/day), *plant growth* (1/day), *entangle* (1/day), *pass without trace* (3/day), *snatch*, *plummet*, *kick*, *wing buffet*, *tail slap*, *stall*, *spells* (5 wizard/4 priest); SD immune to gases; MR 55%; SZ G (107' body); AL LE, XP 22,000.

Dark Knights and Ogres

Because of the Dark Knights' continual raiding of northern Blöde, the ogres of the realm are moving south. As the Dark Knights get closer to starting their all-out invasion of Blöde, they send out more raiding teams. All this activity has resulted in a majority of the ogres taking up residence in the southernmost finger of their land, which sits right on the former border of the Silvanesti Shield. Should the shield fall before the Knights reduce the concentration of ogres in the area, the Silvanesti elves will have a war on their hands. As it is, these ogres have already moved into the land exposed by the shield's retraction.

The Sinthal-Elish and Silvanesti House System

When Silvanos first ruled the fledgling Silvanesti state, he discovered that garnering the advice of some of its leaders helped smooth the way to a more powerful and cohesive nation by allowing those in it to have a voice. As time passed, this body of advisors came to be called the Sinthal-Elish, or the "Council of the High Ones."

Once the House and guild structure came into existence, the Sinthal-Elish contained the heads of the various Houses and guilds, as well as the head priest or priestess of each religion. Until Konnal dissolved the Sinthal-Elish shortly after the shield encompassed Silvanesti (Konnal found their arguments on the topic of the new Speaker and the exiled Alhana and Porthios distracting and detrimental to morale, among other things), this body of advisors served several purposes.

Although they would convene to discuss the state of Silvanesti at least once each year, the Speaker could call them together at any time for advice or announcements. Common occasions for convening the Sinthal-Elish included announcing the new Speaker after the death of the old, declaring war upon another state, or discussing how to approach problems such as mass evacuation of Silvanost (as during the War of the Lance).

While the Speaker occasionally gets taken to task by some of the more vehement members of the Sinthal-Elish, he is never obligated to follow suggestions given to him by this body.

Currently, the Sinthal-Elish is dissolved. Even were it to reconvene, several of the members present at the last meeting have died. As a result, no one knows the current balance of opinions on the council.

House Structure

Among the Silvanesti elves, knowledge of one's place in society is an absolute must. Even as Silvanos first gathered the elf clans together and accepted their oaths of allegiance, the current system of Houses and guilds took embryonic shape. Before Silvanos brought them together, only family or clan designations existed. But Silvanos fostered cooperation between clans by breaking them up into groups with different duties. Thus, the system of Houses was born.

Silvanesti enter their parents' House at birth and many remain within the same House until death. If an elf marries outside his or her House, one of the spouses generally changes to the other's House. A few Houses, such as House Protector, also allow elves from other Houses to join out of a desire to serve the realm in a new capacity. (For more information about gen-

eral House structure, see "Roleplaying a Silvanesti Elf" in the Prologue.)

House Royal

Once known as House Silvanos, House Royal consists of the direct descendants of Silvanos. These elves are responsible for ruling the Silvanesti nation. At any given time, there might be one or many people in this House: the Speaker of the Stars and his or her spouse, children, siblings and their descendants, and so on. Because this House derives from a single family, determination of high or low caste is made by position within the family. Those in the immediate family of the Speaker are of high caste while the rest are of low caste.

Since those of House Royal have strong blood ties to each other, it is almost impossible for them to make marriage alliances within the House. As a result, House Royal has the most freedom in regard to marrying outside the House. With the permission of the Speaker, members can wed pure-blooded Silvanesti elves in positions of power from any House but House Servitor. Once wed, the spouse becomes part of House Royal.

Current Status

Alhana Starbreeze and her son Silvanoshei are considered to be of House Royal by those loyal to her. However, relatives within the shield denounce her claim since she has been officially exiled. Instead, they now squabble over who has the right to be the Speaker of the Stars. The one thing holding the few of them together at this point is their dislike of military rule. As a body, they wish for Konnal to step down. The shield is a lesser matter to consider once House Royal is in command again.

Normally, the leader of House Royal is the Speaker, but in the current circumstances, Military Governor Konnal designated a temporary head of House Royal and gave him the title of Royal Advisor. Lorac Caladon's brother, Lothas Caladon (*Silvanesti ancient male, resolute demeanor, Master; or 14th-level mage*) acts as Konnal's and Kiryn's advisor. Though he is deemed too old and feeble to become Speaker, Lothas rules the House (which comprises him, his wife Thyanel, Kiryn, and Kiryn's younger sister Ryana, among other more distant relations) with smooth, yet unyielding composure. Although disappointed by Alhana's exile, he fully supports Kiryn's claim to the Silvanesti throne. His aged wife, on the other hand, wishes to see Alhana brought back. She and her husband have both weathered the bad winter well despite their age, and they debate politics animatedly every few weeks or so, with Ryana supporting Lothas and Thyanel's favored grandnephews in House Cleric supporting her.





Optional Rules

Narrators should think hard before allowing a hero to come from House Royal; relatively few members of this House exist, so they generally serve the Narrator better as characters. However, groups can include royal heroes if they remain within the parameters below.

- New Silvanesti heroes with a wealth score of 9 or more can belong to this House. In such cases, their wealth score and social status apply unmodified only within Silvanesti. While outside of Silvanesti (and away from the treasury), the hero's wealth score decreases. The player should draw a card and subtract the result from the original wealth score to determine the score outside of Silvanesti. Should the sylvan shield fall, the hero automatically gains an additional point of wealth to this adjusted score (not the original) while traveling outside the elven homeland.
- In AD&D terms, Silvanesti heroes from House Royal adventuring outside of their forest enjoy a 40 percent increase in wealth (gold pieces, gemstones, etc.) if and when they return to their homes. In such an event, they also receive a +4 bonus to their Charisma-based reaction adjustment.

House Cleric

Once the second most powerful Silvanesti guild, House Cleric has now fallen into a position below House Protector. Those of high rank within this House serve the various deities traditionally observed by the Silvanesti elves and oversee the lorekeepers for each temple. Elves of lower rank tend to become scribes for higher-ranking elves, recordkeepers for merchants, or even lorekeepers and librarians for the temples and House libraries.

In its earliest days, House Cleric comprised only the priests of various clans. However, time and circumstances (mainly the absence of the gods) have caused it to focus on recordkeeping and temple administration. Some members in the lower ranks question this shift in focus, but new tradition now binds them into their current role.

Since many positions of power exist within this House, a substructure helps define each elf's place. Not only does a traditional House head (normally of the faith of Astarin, the most significant elven god) help guide policy and prevent dissension between members, but several head priests and priestesses of the various gods' temples hold power within the House. These elves report to the House head and are theoretically equal in position. Their duties include running the main temple (normally in Silvanost) of their chosen deity and reporting to the Sinthal-Elish when called.

As with most Houses, marriage within House Cleric (even different deities) and to a member of House Royal is possible.

Current Status

After the gods left Krynn, House Cleric responded the same way it did before the War of the Lance: Members emphasized their lorekeeping abilities and continued their worship, even when they discovered that the magic granted to them by the gods no longer worked. Upon hearing that Goldmoon had discovered the mystic powers of the heart, the elves of this House sent emissaries to look into the matter themselves (against Konnal's wishes). By the time the shield rose, House Cleric had ordered itself once more. Although members continue to worship their chosen deities, they now use the powers of the heart to help them in their path.

Since those of House Cleric are most concerned with the preservation and enhancement of life, they urgently wish to bring the shield down. Although they barely acknowledged the draining of life from the plants and trees in Silvanost at first, they took notice when elves started suffering from the wasting sickness. After that, it was only a matter of time before they started supporting the kirath and House Mystic's efforts in finding out how the shield worked and changing it or destroying it. Since Konnal refuses to aid their cause and has increased his House's status at their expense, House Cleric also supports House Royal's wish to remove Konnal from control.

Within the past few years, a couple heads of House Cleric have fallen to the wasting sickness. As a result, the current head of the House is Lady Telisina (*Silvanesti elder female, capable demeanor, Champion; or 9th-level cleric*), former High Priestess of Quenesti-Pah. Stepping down from her previous title to lead the House, she came to the position somewhat reluctantly but has proven her exceptional leadership skills in these trying times.

House Protector

House Protector consists of those who defend Silvanesti. The Wildrunners, Windriders, and palace guards all work under the guidance of House Protector. As one of the biggest Houses, however, it is also one of the most diverse. In other words, those working to defend the borders or scouting in the forest don't necessarily have to be from House Protector. In fact, only those who join the Wildrunners, Windriders, or other established forces from outside the House must join the House formally. Those in the kirath were seen as temporary forces; they didn't have to go through the ceremony that would change their

House allegiance and status since their units could be dissolved at any moment.

Back in the time of Silvanos, House Protector comprised the leaders of the clans with the best martial power. Only the immediate families of the clan leaders and those of the leaders' best war advisors were allowed to accompany the leader into House Protector.

Because House Protector holds such a mixture of elves, caste is determined by position within the armies. The general of the Wildrunners actually commands the whole House Protector structure and all of its varied forces. The captains of the Wildrunners, Windriders, and so on all have equal rank within the House. Marriage within the House and to those of House Royal can occur. Only those of House Servitor cannot join this House in the Ceremony of Change.

Current Status

After the shield rose around Silvanesti and Konnal further secured his position as Military Governor, House Protector rose above House Cleric in importance. Now, all members in leadership capacities support Konnal and his stance on the shield. Only those in the lowest ranks even think about defecting to the anti-shield side.

Because Konnal has much to do in governing the realm, he has set up General Pellarin Calostin (*Silvanesti adult male, charismatic demeanor, Champion; or 10th-level fighter*) as the head of House Protector. General Pellarin is a very charismatic leader and helps Konnal maintain his grip on Silvanesti with his concern for each and every soldier under his command.

House Mystic

In the earliest days under Silvanos's reign, the elves had little understanding of the force called "magic." With the help of the Good dragons, though, three elves tapped the arcane powers—with catastrophic results. Without the control that the gods of magic later gave them, the wild magic this trio of elves unleashed caused all kinds of random, devastating effects. Although they accomplished their goal of defeating the Evil dragons, the elf trio left Silvanos's side when they realized that many elves wished them dead. When they came back later with a more controlled form of magic called High Sorcery, these three elves formed the kernel of House Mystic. As they gained students, their House grew in power. Several decades after their return, the head of House Mystic gained a seat on the Sinthal-Elish and became part of the Silvanesti caste system.

Elves in House Mystic possess and regulate magical abilities. Before the gods of magic left Krynn, this House trained elves with tendencies toward magic. Because members were willing to do this for other

Houses, they could also regulate and limit what types of magic were available to non-Mystic mages. Since only White Robes, or the magic of Solinari, were allowed within Silvanesti, House Mystic was also responsible for watching for mages following Nuitari's path and philosophy. Any Black Robes who are caught become dark elves, just as Dalamar the Dark did.

Within House Mystic, high caste elves train and oversee the magically gifted high-caste elves of other Houses. The head of the House and several members of his or her family are also responsible for determining whether an elf mage accused of using magic for Evil purposes has done so. If this is the case, that mage is exiled. Lower caste elves of this House oversee the training of lower caste elves whose gift for magic has evidenced itself.

Once the gods of magic left Krynn, House Mystic, looking back on history, realized that there must be another form of magic. Following the example and texts of the three elves who used wild magic, they developed theories and over the course of years trained themselves in the use of sorcery. Now they teach others the new schools of magic, watching closely to guard against anyone uses these gifts for Evil purposes.

As a rule, only those of Houses Mystic or Royal can marry a member of this House. Since House Mystic often interacts with those of other Houses, several unsuitable romantic attachments have caused problems with arranged marriages in the past. As a result, House Mystic emphasizes dispassionate distance between instructors and those they teach. This characteristic makes members of House Mystic seem even more cold and unapproachable than other Silvanesti elves.

Current Status

Those of House Mystic care little about who ultimately controls the government. As long as they can pursue their goals and maintain their status within Silvanesti society, they remain content. Because this attitude frees them of political concerns, they have been able to objectively consider the problems caused by the shield. As a result, those of House Mystic wish to study the shield so that they may attune it to draw on a source other than life.

Although they have not been able to posit theories about how to change the shield, their attempts at garnering information have uncovered the fact that only those who caused the shield to go up can affect it. Unfortunately, the head of this House, Lord Kardanon Lanthloran (*Silvanesti adult male, sensible demeanor, Master; or 15th-level mage*), has only a vague idea as to who these people were: woodshapers.





House Metalline

In the early days of Silvanos's reign, those who worked with metal belonged to various smaller guilds, such as the Mining Guild, the Smithing Guild, and so on. As time passed, however, Silvanos realized that he needed a more efficient method of organization. From that moment forward, any guild that dealt with metal belonged to House Metalline. The leader of House Metalline at first allowed the lesser guilds to maintain their structures and leaders, but gradually consolidated the various branches.

Members of House Metalline work with metal in some capacity. Not only are these elves in charge of mining or purchasing ore, processing it, and crafting it for sale, but they also supply House Protector with weapons for the troops at a minimal profit. Those of higher caste are either master artisans or in charge of getting the ore to the craftsmen. Those of lower caste often work as supervisors in the mines or the one refinery in Silvanesti, or as minor craftsmen and blacksmiths.

Because of their flexible attitudes, members of House Metalline tend to work well with other Houses. But while those involved with creating beautiful swords or other weapons gain respect from others, the rest of the House tends to be looked down upon except in times of war. Elves appreciate art and nature, but they don't hold metalworkers in esteem since they work with "dead" elements. This attitude explains why very few alliances are permitted outside of House Metalline, except to one of House Royal.

Current Status

Because elven swords are some of the deadliest works of art available, House Metalline once enjoyed considerable income from trade with the outside world. After the shield rose, however, House Metalline was affected almost immediately. The metal workers could no longer gain high profits from those outside Silvanesti.

Because of this lack of monetary support and the fact that the government no longer needs to purchase swords (since the ranks of the armies are continually thinning due to skirmishes with Cyan Bloodbane and deaths from the wasting sickness), members of this House dislike the shield. They and their new House head Lord Quimathon Oakleaf (*Silvanesti adult male, thoughtful demeanor, Adventurer; or 4th-level fighter*), believe that only raising Kyrin to the position of Speaker will improve their lots. This sentiment has led them to back Kyrin's supporters in House Royal and all of the shield-researching efforts of Houses Mystic and Cleric.

House Advocate

Once Silvanos defeated the dragons during the First Dragon War, he selected his most even-handed, cunning negotiators and formed House Advocate. He charged the new members of this House with engaging in diplomacy while looking out for the interests of his people.

House Advocate continues to handle all the diplomatic and legal issues of the Silvanesti government and merchant system. Elves born into the higher avenues of House Advocate tend to be groomed for diplomatic or advisory positions throughout the government. Those of lower caste become advisors to merchants, other Houses, or village and town governments. Not only do they ensure that Silvanesti law and tradition are followed, but they also supervise the validity of written contracts. In the case of verbal contracts, common in mundane transactions, they often serve as witnesses and help ensure that the parties follow through on their commitments.

As part of a smaller House, members sometimes marry into House Royal or House Cleric. In such cases, the newlywed relinquishes his or her advocacy duties and becomes a member of the spouse's House.

Current Status

One of the few neutral groups in Silvanesti, elves of House Advocate look to tradition for answers to any given question. Although they prefer isolation from the outside world, they find deplorable the use of a shield suspected of draining life.

Members of this House do not care for the current status of the government—having a military governor goes against tradition. They support Kyrin as Speaker. Current House leader Lord Sivalon Lightleaf (*Silvanesti adult male, tight-lipped demeanor, Champion; or 7th-level bard*), who took over leadership of the House recently, refuses to consider other candidates (and openly ignores any mention of the dark elves Alhana and Porthios). He and the House show flexibility only on the issue of renewing efforts toward an alliance among all elves. House Advocate can rarely be convinced that strict tradition is not good in all cases.

House Mason

A forward-looking leader, Silvanos knew that one day he would build a city that contained all the clans of elves. To this end, he gathered the best stoneworkers, architects, and masons from the various clans and brought them together under the name House Mason. The elves of House Mason make and use the supplies that create buildings and other structures. Those of higher caste are trained in the architectural arts necessary to build the graceful structures of Silvanost and

other Silvanesti towns. Those of lower caste supervise the workers who actually build the structures or attain the resources necessary to erect them.

Because House Mason comprises many families, members most often marry among themselves. As a result, they present a united front to the rest of the world and show no dissension within the House. While other elves respect this unity, they dislike dealing with House Mason because of the builders' tendency to be inflexible and unable to consider other viewpoints without calling a House meeting.

Before the gods of magic left Krynn, members of House Mason often used magic to form buildings out of crystal and stone. The supervising elf usually performed the easier enchantments (such as basic stone-shaping) while one of the higher-caste builders added luxuries like running water and cued light, cooling, and heating.

Current Status

Several of the higher caste elves of this House have approached House Mystic to learn various schools of sorcery, including enchantment (so that magical effects can be made permanent—if the price is right). At the same time, some members of this House discovered an inherent ability to shape stone without using formal spells. With their artistic ability, not only can these elves work wonders such as twining columns of stone trees, but they also can repair chipped stone.

Since the shield appeared, this House has become even quieter than before. When high-caste members heard rumors that the shield was draining the very life from the Silvanesti Forest, they abandoned their neutral position on the matter and sent out a team of their best stone- and earthworkers to attempt burrowing beneath it. Their work proved fruitless.

The leader of House Mason, Lady Temilla Rathenas (*Silvanesti adult female, stubborn demeanor, Master; or 11th-level fighter*), reflected on the matter for a year, then approached Konnal with a request to remove the shield. After meeting with refusal, these elves decided to keep an eye on the government to figure out the source of the shield. Using their gifts for stoneworking, they formed narrow secret passages within the walls of Konnal's residence. Since the work was long and hard, they only recently completed the effort. Now House Mason listens.

House Gardener

Shortly after Silvanos gathered the elf clans, he selected the best farmers and established House Gardener. Their skills varied widely, as most of the clans hadn't settled down into one area before Silvanos took up the mantle of leadership. By bringing the different clan farmers together in this fashion, Silvanos pro-

vided for the future of his people by ensuring a stable food supply.

Members of House Gardener generally include the farmers and other growers of cultivated plants. Those of high caste live in Silvanost and either maintain the Garden of Astarin or sell grains, fruits, and vegetables throughout Silvanesti. Elves of lower caste own and work the small farms that dot the forest and the larger farms that remained outside the shield when it rose.

Elves of House Gardener have an affinity for coaxing plants out of the soil and an intuition for making stronger hybrids of various botanical specimens. Over the years, this intuition has become an active part of a gardener's life, allowing him or her to breed fantastically bright flowers and succulently sweet yet hardy fruits and vegetables. As an added bonus, some members of House Gardener can sense oncoming weather changes and threats of blights or other plant diseases before they become problems. To keep these traits pure and strong, those of House Gardener consider marriage alliances very carefully and unite only with each other and House Royal.

Current Status


When the shield blocked entry into and out of the Silvanesti Forest, most of House Gardener's base found themselves separated from higher caste members in the cities and villages. As a result, those within the shield had to work harder to cultivate enough food to feed the elves inside the forest. At the same time, only House Gardener immediately stepped forward to protest the shield's existence. Ultimately realizing that protest was useless, the new head of House Gardener, Lord Selverin Althonos (*Silvanesti adult male, meticulous demeanor, Adventurer; or 6th-level mage*), focused on more practical matters: feeding the Silvanesti.

To this end, he decided to turn the outer regions of the Garden of Astarin into flowering vegetable beds. With the help of House Woodshaper, the elegant trees of the garden gradually became fruit-bearing. Over time, although the change wasn't apparent to those outside House Gardener and House Woodshaper, the Garden of Astarin became one of the most important sources of food for Silvanost.

Through this project, Lord Selverin discovered that gardeners with the mystic animism ability could convert citizens' personal gardens from purely ornamental to food-producing within a week or two, depending on the size of the garden. For a small fee (one-tenth the garden's weekly yield), he offered this service to the citizens of Silvanost so that they would be prepared when the stores of grain ran out.

When an unexplained phenomenon drained all the life out of the Garden of Astarin, Lord Selverin and the heads of Houses Woodshaper and Cleric managed to meet the demands of restoring it (see "The Death of





Life" in the Prologue). House Gardener and most of House Woodshaper allied to destroy the shield. With information provided by a former woodshaper's journal entry (see "The Raising of the Shield"), their Houses have come closer than any others in determining how to destroy the shield. Unfortunately, the woodshapers who helped raise the barrier are now dead.

House Woodshaper

Although Silvanos saw the need to create House Gardener to ensure a food supply for his people, he found that many of his people had a stronger affinity for the wilderness. They seemed to have a knack for making the uncultivated plants and trees around them grow stronger and truer. They also disliked the idea of using their abilities on plants that would soon end up on a dinner table. So, in his wisdom, Silvanos created House Woodshaper for those elves who possessed the gift of shaping the trees around them.

The elves of House Woodshaper work with wild plants and trees. Although they have some of the same abilities as those in House Gardener, their gift to make trees grow tall and strong seems to derive from wild nature spirits instead of mere intuition. Those of higher caste live in an amazing Silvanost building constructed of woven trees. From there, they direct the lower caste woodshapers who live and work in the forest.

To keep their blood pure and talents strong, members of House Woodshaper refuse to marry outside of their House. Their philosophy of preserving the purity of their bloodlines extends to an overall philosophy of maintaining the purity of Silvanesti blood. Of all the Silvanesti Houses, members of House Woodshaper are the most united in their disgust toward half-elves.

As the heroes who helped restore the forest to its original beauty after Lorac's Nightmare twisted it, woodshapers also wish to isolate Silvanesti from the rest of the world. House members dislike the idea that forces outside their control could damage their forest. As a result, all members of House Woodshaper worked together to restore and expand the hedge barrier surrounding the forest.

Current Status

After Rillion Dawnbringer told Padarrin Oakbranch (a high-caste member of House Woodshaper) that he had discovered a way to seal Silvanesti's borders from the outside world, Padarrin announced to the rest of the House his intention to do so. Under oaths of secrecy, the woodshapers left the meeting. When the shield came into being, they rejoiced.

Soon after, however, the life-draining effects of the shield evidenced themselves. Upon finding Padarrin's journal entry (see the inside front cover of this book),

the new leader of House Woodshaper, Mastershaper Nithel Silverfern (*Silvanesti adult male, innovative demeanor, Adventurer; or 5th-level ranger*), consulted his House. The woodshapers decided to attempt to unmake the shield. Although they repeatedly fail, they continue their efforts to bring it down—often ignoring other issues altogether. For more information about the woodshaper hero role, see *Citadel of Light*.

House Servitor

Silvanos created House Servitor initially as a way to bring the elves of the Elderwild (later known as Kagonesti) into his caste system. Though he respected the wild elves, their system defied the classification he had imposed on the other clans. Their nomadic ways encouraged the development of their hunting and survival skills, but little else. When Kagonos, the Pathfinder of the Elderwild, refused to accept Silvanos's offer to join his people, Silvanos created House Servitor from those whose menial jobs didn't fit into any of the existing Houses. Later, Silvanos's descendants would enslave the Kagonesti into House Servitor.

House Servitor is the lowest House in the Silvanesti caste system. It includes the servants of other Houses, slaves, and laborers. Within the House, those of high caste assign tasks to other House members, perform light duties in high caste households, or supervise other servants. The lowest caste members of House Servitor are the slaves. In the past, these included Kagonesti and even half-elves. Although fewer of them exist now than during Sithas's reign in the Kinslayer War, slaves still work for the Silvanesti.

Because House Servitor holds the lowest position in the realm, members don't intermarry with other Houses. Even within the House, high-caste servants marry other high-caste servants, leaving slaves to marry slaves (if allowed) and laborers to marry laborers. All of the other Houses sometimes allow for "marrying up" into a higher position, which never happens in House Servitor.

As servants, members of House Servitor do not receive some of the benefits that members of the other Houses have. For example, spellcasting is discouraged in House Servitor. If a member shows an affinity for magic, House Mystic will steer him or her away from it. Only when a House Servitor member must learn to control magic to avoid harming others will House Mystic agree to teach the budding sorcerer. This type of thinking permeates all other aspects of a servant's life, including the call to a deity's service, a desire to develop natural abilities, and so on.

Current Status

As always, House Servitor continues to serve without regard to what goes on around it. However, as the only

House that comes into frequent contact with all levels of Silvanesti society, members know many things. The head of House Servitor, Trevalor (*Silvanesti adult male, cunning demeanor, Adventurer; or 6th-level thief*), is a wily elf with the ability to garner information and use it to the advantage of Good. Of course, none of the other Houses pay attention to him openly, but he occasionally receives midnight visitors to his small home near the Thon-Thalas River in Silvanost. Trevalor uses his servant network to position pieces of information and prompt members of other Houses into certain actions.

Other Houses and Guilds

The Houses listed above are the major Houses of Silvanesti. Countless other smaller Houses and guilds exist for occupations such as seamstress, jeweler, gemcutter, sandalmaker, and so on. Each of these lesser guilds tends to align itself with one of the greater Houses. For example, the seamstress and sandalmaker guilds ally themselves with House Clothier, the House responsible for making or acquiring different clothing materials and assembling them into apparel. Similarly, the Stoneworkers Guild works closely with House Mason. Those of higher caste within the various Houses and guilds tend to be leaders or master crafters, while lower caste elves are the skilled laborers who support the masters and leaders.

As with the larger Houses, the smaller Houses and guilds intermarry among themselves as much as possible. Occasionally, a match between a guild and its associated House (or even between guilds such as jeweler and gemcutter) occurs, drawing these smaller associations closer together. Over the years, some of the guilds intermarried enough with a "patron" House that they became a part of the House instead of remaining independent. Such is the case with the former Mining Guild and House Mason. Now the miners work directly for House Mason without the "Guild Leader" they once possessed. Finally, some Houses or guilds get lost or dissolved. For example, House Mariner dissolved over repeated quarrels with the Dimernesti, who were once Silvanesti elves of House Mariner transformed by the Graystone.

Current Status

The dramatic and deadly circumstances in which the Silvanesti find themselves have caused the lesser Houses and guilds to work closer together than ever before. As death counts mounted in the winter of 33sc, many of the smaller guilds found themselves reporting directly to a greater House. As winter slowly recedes, the lesser guilds must decide whether they wish to continue receiving the assistance of the larger Houses or attempt to stand on their own again.

Geography of Silvanesti

Over the years, the Silvanesti elves have groomed their lands into their idea of perfection. A region of breathtaking beauty, the forest feels more like a large garden than an untamed wilderness. Even within their cities and towns, the Silvanesti have molded stone and wood to suit their ideals. This shaping of nature causes many to stand in awe of the abilities of the Silvanesti elves—or shake their heads in regret over the control that these elves exert over their natural surroundings.

Throughout this section, adventure hooks related to various locations appear in colored type next to this icon (🏠).

Barrier Hedge

Before the Silvanesti Shield came into being, travelers to the forest first encountered a thick, tall hedge. House Woodshaper grew this hedge before the fall of Istar when Silvanesti isolationist policies were at their strongest up to that time. House Protector provided a Wildrunner border patrol to stop persistent outsiders from passing through this tangled hedge. During the War of the Lance, the chromatic dragons and Lorac's Nightmare destroyed most of the hedge. Now, however, this barrier has disappeared altogether. Silvanesti elves near the shield when it rose know that the barrier hedge died at exactly the same time as the shield sprang into being. Over the next day, light breezes blew away the skeletal, ashen remains of the hedge.

- 🏠 Now that the Silvanesti Shield has receded in some places, its boundary no longer coincides with the former location of the barrier hedge. However, some travelers have recently reported that they tried to walk through this area only to be met by an invisible, scratchy barrier. Is this an invisible version of the hedge? If not, what is it? Who, if anyone, is responsible for this phenomenon?
- 🏠 An elderly woodshaper who was in Solace when the shield rose has begun replanting the newly-exposed ground with a deadlier form of barrier hedge. The seedlings grow quickly under his care, and the barrier promises to be truly nasty to any who try to pass. The branches have razor-sharp thorns that actually reach out to those within a foot of it. Unfortunately, these young plants no longer recognize the woodshaper as their provider and have pinned him to the ground with their branches. Can the heroes free the woodshaper before the life bleeds out of him? If they get too close, the branches of the 3-foot-high hedge reach out to grab them. The hedge is also strangely resistant to magic.





The Forest

The loving hands of House Woodshaper have cultivated the Silvanesti Forest to reflect the elven ideal of the perfect wilderness. While the coniferous and deciduous trees do not grow in straight rows, a pattern does exist. The woodshapers determine the amount of room that a tree needs to grow straight and true and ensure that no other tree infringes upon that space. As a result, the Silvanesti Forest seems rather spacious compared to the Qualinesti Forest before Beryl took over.

❖ A strange, blue-glowing ivy has started strangling an oak tree that appears to weep a silver sap. If the heroes stop long enough and seem sympathetic, the dryad of the oak next to the ivy-covered one approaches the heroes and sadly tells them that this ivy has been feeding off the tree for a long time now. She fears that between the shield and the ivy, the tree won't live past its next winter. If asked what kind of ivy this is, the dryad tells the heroes that it appeared shortly after a long, hot summer many years ago. It didn't grow much in its first seasons, but then, over the last eight or nine seasons, it expanded rapidly. Now the oak tree is losing its battle against the ivy and is weeping its sorrow.

If the heroes attempt to pull the ivy off, they find that it burns their hands. Only those with animism or those who have the gifts of House Woodshaper can safely remove the ivy. Once removed, the "tears" that silver the oak's trunk seep into the bark and vanish. The dryad rewards the heroes with an oak leaf full of an ointment that negates contact poison.

Silvanost

As the capital of the Silvanesti elves, the great city of Silvanost contains many locations and characters of interest. Taken as a whole, however, Silvanost sometimes overwhelms those not native to the city. For example, the spell-shaped marble and quartz buildings of the city absorb moon- and starlight and radiate it back in a soft glow. A popular myth states that non-Silvanesti who see the forest and the city become so enraptured by it they wish never to leave the area again. Silvanost sprawls across the northern half of Fallon Island in the midst of the great Thon-Thalas River. (See maps in the color section of this book.)

Ferry

Most visitors to Silvanost must cross the Thon-Thalas to enter the city. During the city's early days, traditional ferryboats used rope lines or magic to move passengers from Fallon Island and the mainland.

However, priests of the Blue Phoenix later enlarged several turtles to do the job.

As time passed, these large turtles bred, creating even more turtles to replace the older ones. When Speaker Lorac's Nightmare twisted the forest and tainted the river, most of the turtles died. Thankfully, when Porthios and his forces cleared the forest of the Nightmares, the kirath discovered several turtles and a clutch of large eggs. Since then, this clutch has hatched, and now large turtles pull barges between the island and the mainland. Even the drain of the Silvanesti Shield hasn't stopped these strong creatures from performing their job.

❖ **Giant turtle:** *Domesticated creature.* Co 6, Ph 16, In 2, Es 4, Dmg +1, Def -4.

➤ **Giant turtle:** AC 1; MV 3, Sw 9; HD 4+4; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1, Dmg 2d6 (bite); SZ L (8' long); Int low (5); AL N.

Residences

All residents of Silvanost dwell in spell-shaped towers and houses of stone and crystal surrounded by private gardens around. Lower-caste elves have towers only four or five stories high or houses of one or two levels, located on the outskirts of the city. Higher-caste elves possess towers or tower complexes standing ten to twelve stories high, located toward the city's hub. The buildings grow taller as one approaches the center of Silvanost, where the Tower of Stars and the Palace of Quinari are the highest buildings in the city. The colorful gardens that surround these remarkable towers stretch out from the residences for about as far as the tower is high.

The design of a tower (or other residence) and its surrounding garden shows the House and standing of its owner. Merely by glancing at someone's home—and succeeding at an *average Perception* action {or *Intelligence* or *Heraldry* check}—a Silvanesti elf can determine volumes about that individual's standing and position in society, as well as something about that person's family history.

Even the lowest of the Silvanesti still carry themselves like royalty, especially when dealing with outsiders and non-elves. This attitude has not softened since the creation of the shield. If anything, the trials of the Silvanesti seem to have further distanced them from other races and cultures.

❖ **Silvanost residents:** *Silvanesti adults, various demeanors, Unknowns.* Co 7, Ph 5, In 6, Es 5, Dmg +4 (sword), Def 0 (or by armor type).

➤ **Silvanost residents:** AC 10; MV 12; HD 2; hp 10; THAC0 19 (+1 bonus with swords and bows);

#AT 1, Dmg by weapon; SD infravision 30'; SZ M (5' to 6' tall); ML steady (11–12); Int average (8–10); AL varies (usually Good or Neutral).

Palace of Quinari

As the residence of the Speaker of the Stars—and the burial site of Silvanos—the Palace of Quinari (named after Silvanos's wife) stands taller than all of the other residences in the city. Its triple-storied three wings of rose-colored marble radiate from a 300-foot tower. Green-streaked colonnades fashioned in an imitation of a unicorn's horn face each of the three wings.

The central tower of the palace contains the family quarters of House Royal and the Hall of Balif. Bronze doors standing 18 feet high and etched with protective runes prevent anyone not of Silvanos's blood or binding (i.e., marriage) from entering the central tower. Because of its special construction, a conversation uttered at one end of the hall can be heard at the other end. The three wings contain various assembly chambers and residences for those serving in the Palace of Quinari and the Tower of the Stars.

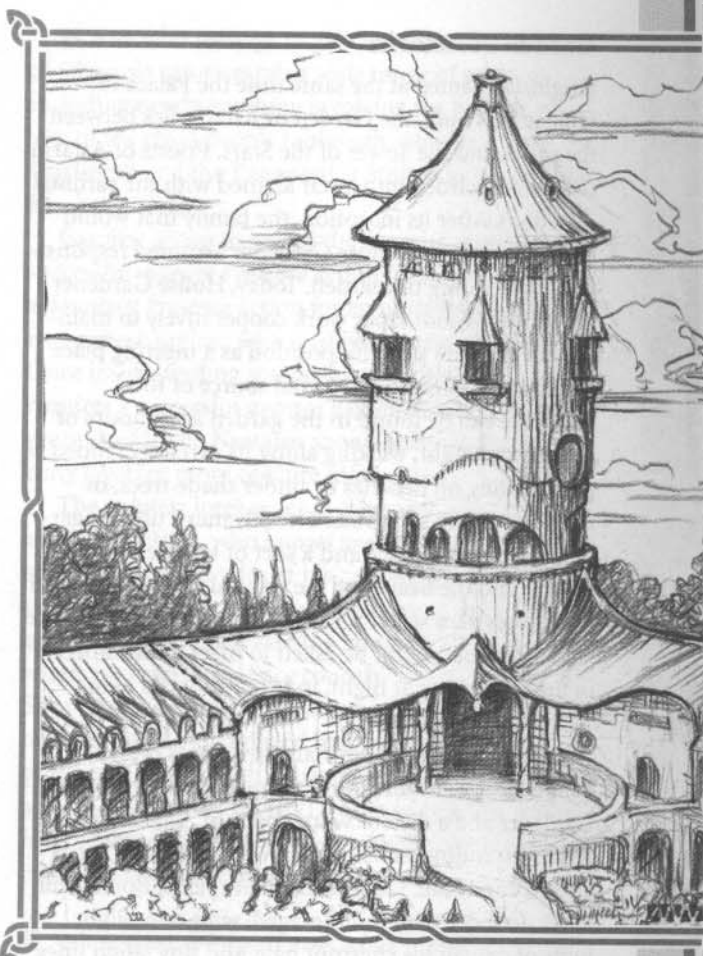
One such servant is Gloranna, a maid in the palace. She has the light hair and refined features typical of Silvanesti elves, and captivating blue-violet eyes. Although only a servant of House Royal, Gloranna carries herself with great pride in her position. She is concerned over the ultimate fate of the throne of Silvanesti, but she generally keeps her opinions to herself. Gloranna is equally repulsed and fascinated by outsiders. She might be willing to pass on rumors and palace gossip if approached in the right way.

✦ **Gloranna:** *Silvanesti female adult, practical demeanor, Unknown.* Ag 5X, Dx 5D, En 4X, St 4D, Re 5C, Pe 5B, Sp 6C, Pr 5C, Dmg +2 (dagger), Def 0, acute hearing.

✦ **Gloranna:** female elf 0-level; AC 10; MV 12; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1, Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M (5'5" tall); ML steady (11); Str 10, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12; AL NG.

✦ A disturbance catches the attention of the heroes as they pass the Palace of Quinari. A servant speaks in a loud, frightened voice, claiming that a ghost is talking in the Hall of Balif. If the heroes investigate, they learn about the Hall of Balif and its strange acoustics. The servant knows that whispers to be heard clearly across the hall but remains convinced that the ghost of a past lord murmurs within when nobody else is around but him.

If the heroes can find a way past the Wildrunner guards, they can experience the whispering that the servant was talking about. They hear a female voice



talking to a male voice about Kith-Kanan, and then the voices switch to whispers about the coming of Takhisis. Are these the voices of the past? What causes them to sound out? And what can the heroes learn if they stand there long enough?

Tower of the Stars

The Tower of the Stars stands over 600 feet tall. At night, moonlight strikes down through an opening in the top and hits a spot in the center of the audience hall in a breathtaking silvery cascade. Seven steps lead up to the emerald and wood throne that the Speaker sits in. Military Governor Konnal does not use the throne; symbolically, it sits empty, waiting for its rightful occupant to be named.

Although the Speaker and his family lived in the Tower of the Stars before and during the Kinslayer War, that changed when royal son Kith-Kanan formed Qualinesti. Now Governor Konnal uses former Speaker Lorac's tower room as his own residence. Originally, he needed someone from House Royal to use a Key to Quinarost to open the Tower of the Stars each time he wished to enter. By sponsoring Kiryn as a possible Speaker of the Stars, however, Konnal gained the use of Kiryn's key; through the Royal Advisor, he convinced the young candidate to reset the crystal-and-platinum device to respond to Konnal's life force.

Garden of Astarin

Originally planted at the same time the Palace of Quinari was built, the Garden of Astarin lies between the palace and the Tower of the Stars. Priests of Astarin formed the garden into a star aligned with the cardinal directions. After its inception, the family that would eventually become House Gardener assumed responsibility for tending the garden. Today, House Gardener and House Woodshaper work cooperatively to maintain the garden's peaceful position as a meeting place for Silvanost citizens and a vital source of food.

People can be found in the garden at all hours of the day and night, walking along its carefully tended paths, sitting on benches or under shade trees, or reclining on the soft grass. The Silvanesti use the garden as a meeting place and a sort of temple to honor Astarin and the beauty of the natural world. Silvanesti sometimes plan secret meetings and rendezvous in the garden. Heroes might be asked to meet with someone in the garden late at night, in order to avoid being seen talking to outsiders.

One of the almost permanent fixtures of the Garden of Astarin is Boreal, an old member of House Gardener and a devout worshipper of Astarin, who has been tending to the garden for almost as long as anyone can recall. Despite his many years, Boreal still looks no more than middle-aged, with only slight hints of gray in his chestnut hair, and tiny laugh lines around his green eyes. He seems to know everything that goes on in the garden and spends his days quietly tending the plants and honoring Astarin. Boreal is secretly also a member of the kirath and believes the shield is a grave threat to the survival of Silvanesti. If an opportunity arises, he may secretly try to contact heroes to recruit their aid, with or without the knowledge of his fellow kirath.

♣ **Boreal:** *Silvanesti male adult, observant demeanor, Champion.* Ag 8C, Dx 8B, En 7C, St 7B, Re 6C, Pe 6B, Sp 7A (49), Pr 6C, Dmg +6 (sword), Def -3 (chainmail), also acute sight, mysticism (animism, channeling, sensitivity).

♣ **Boreal:** Male elf R9; AC 3 (chainmail, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 65; THAC0 12; #AT 1, Dmg 1d8 (longsword); SA priest spells (4/4/3/2/1); SZ M (5'3" tall); ML steady (12); Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13; AL NG.

Temples

Before the War of the Lance, House Cleric held a position just below House Royal in terms of power. This was a result of the Silvanesti elves' strong religious beliefs in the deities of Good. Because the elves hold their gods in such esteem, the religious leaders had temples built in Silvanost for each of them. Although diminished in followers (and once again lacking active gods), these temples still operate as centers of aid and meditation.

Temples exist for each of the gods of Good, and each temple serves a different function in Silvanesti society. The Temple of E'li, for example, provides guidance on matters of judgment and leadership, and is often visited by members of House Royal seeking wisdom and insight. The Temple of Quenesti-Pah is a house of healing, solace, and recovery for those in need.

There also exist temples to some of Kryn's gods of Neutrality, particularly the Tree of Life and the Winged One, the gods of wisdom and of industry, respectively. However, as only half- or non-Silvanesti may serve these gods, these temples are understandably small affairs.

Silvanesti Gods

This list provides the Silvanesti elf names for certain gods. If a name isn't listed below, the elves call that god by his or her common name.

Common Name	Silvanesti Name	Role
Branchala ^G	Astarin	Music, art
Habbakuk ^G	The Blue Phoenix	Nature
Majere ^G	Matheri	Faith, dreams, meditation, control, industry, organization, martial arts, insects
Mishakal ^G	Quenesti-Pah	Healing
Paladine ^G	E'li	Patriarch of the gods
Sargonnas ^E	Kinthalas	Revenge, rage, deserts, volcanoes, fire
Shinare ^N	Winged One	Wealth, industry, trade
Takhisis ^E	Dragon Queen	Domination, cruelty, destruction
Zivilyn ^N	World Tree/Tree of Life	Wisdom

^GGood deity, ^EEvil deity, ^NNeutral deity

Although the number of priests has been diminished by the absence of the gods, those left continue to prove steadfast in their faith. Many Silvanesti remain faithful followers of the gods, just as they did after the first Cataclysm.

One of the most respected priests in Silvanost is Sendelecia, the high priestess of Quenesti-Pah. Sendelecia is a gentle healer, and her quiet faith and strength of purpose serves as an inspiration to others. She currently finds herself quite busy dealing with the manifestations of the wasting sickness, and she has begun to doubt whether even her powers and her faith are strong enough to deal with this crisis.

❖ **Sendelecia:** *Silvanesti female adult, compassionate demeanor, Champion.* Ag 5D, Dx 5C, En 5C, St 5C, Re 5C, Pe 6C, Sp 8A (64), Pr 8B, Dmg +2 (staff), Def 0, also mysticism (healing, mentalism, sensitivity).

❖ **Sendelecia:** female elf P9 (Quenesti-Pah); AC 10; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 16; #AT 1, Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA priest spells; SZ M (5' tall); ML elite (13); Str 9, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16; AL LG. **Spells (6/6/3/2/1):** Choose any spells from the *Player's Handbook*, using the following limitations: major access to all, astral, charm, divination, and summoning spheres; minor access to animal and sun spheres. (See inside front cover for spell casting rules.)

❖ The bell in the Temple of Astarin has begun to toll once every fifteen minutes—on its own. Each time it rings, people stop what they're doing and look up at it, wondering what terrible omen they're witnessing. If the heroes investigate further, they discover that it started ringing itself like this on the day the High Priest of Astarin died from the wasting sickness. What causes this ringing? What does it mean? Can the heroes stop it—or should they? And what happens if they succeed?

Libraries

One of House Cleric's chief duties is maintaining temple libraries. Not only do members catalog and store books and documents, but they also keep files on births, deaths, treaties, and other matters of public record. The Temple of E'li tends to hold documents related to the state, the Temple of Astarin maintains bardic records, and the Temple of Quenesti-Pah's library contains records of births and deaths.

Considerable wisdom is recorded in these libraries, dating back even to the Age of Dreams. Such ancient texts are precious and lovingly cared for by the keepers of the libraries. The priests of the World Tree, though not full-blooded Silvanesti, focus diligently on maintaining wisdom from the past.

Heroes who manage to gain access to the libraries of Silvanost can research a wide range of subjects, including nearly anything involving the history and lore of the elven people (although information on Qualinesti and the Kagonesti is limited following the Kinslayer War).

Gaining access to one of the libraries requires a successful *average Presence* action for a Silvanesti elf or a *daunting Presence* action for an outsider. {A *Charisma* check suffices, with a -4 penalty for outsiders.} Once inside, finding sought-after information requires a successful *average Reason* action {or *Intelligence* check}. The Narrator should increase the difficulty level for more obscure information.

The greatest lorekeeper in Silvanost is the master bard Valenothus, who knows and studies the ancient stories, songs and tales of his people. A traveler in his youth, Valenothus has lived in Silvanost since shortly before the shield rose. He is somewhat arrogant where his own people are concerned—he's proud of Silvanesti accomplishments and tends to look down on outsiders as uncivilized barbarians. Those who prove him wrong with a display of culture or artistic ability can earn his respect. Doing so requires a *challenging Presence* action {or *appropriate artistic proficiency* check at a -4 penalty}.

❖ **Valenothus:** *Silvanesti male adult, independent demeanor, Master.* Ag 7C, Dx 7B, En 6C, St 5B, Re, 8C, Pe 7B, Sp 6B (36), Pr 8A, Dmg +3 (short sword), Def -2 (leather armor), also acute hearing, mysticism (mentalism).

❖ **Valenothus:** male elf B11, AC 8 (leather); MV 12; hp 58; THAC0 15; #AT 1, Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SA wizard spells (3/3/3/1); SZ M (5'6" tall); ML steady (12); Str 12, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 17; AL N.


Other Population Centers

Several smaller towns and villages dot the forest. Each of these towns features the same type of architecture found in Silvanost, but since they're smaller, the towers and houses there do not rise quite as high.

Alinosti

The sleepy river town of Alinosti contains a mixture of Houses and guilds. One of the stop-offs on the Thon-Thalas River, it supplies the nearby towns of Brattalnosti and Felinosti with goods from Silvanost. It also supplied Kurmost until recently, when the shield's retraction left that coastal town exposed. In addition, Alinosti used to send trade goods from outside the forest to Brattalnosti, but the shield prevents that now.





The town's leader is Eleanon Heran of House Cleric (*Silvanesti middle-aged male, thoughtful demeanor, Champion; or 10th-level cleric*), though his rule is currently disputed. He took over after his predecessor died a few months ago. Another elf of equal rank in Alinosti, Netha Riallanthalsa of House Protector (*Silvanesti adult female, contemplative demeanor, Master; or 11th-level fighter*) leads the garrison of the river patrol stationed in the town. Currently, the patrol and some of the townspeople wish for Netha to rule Alinosti instead of Eleanon, as they prefer her military experience.

- ☞ The heroes approach the town of Alinosti and notice that the elves have gathered around the town's well. A young elf stands on the lip of the well and shouts that the well water contains some strange abomination. If the heroes investigate, they discover that something unusual does live in the well. Why is it down there? Does it guard some treasure? The Narrator can choose a water creature from the *Book of the Fifth Age*, the *Bestiary* supplement, or the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*® tome.

Balinost and Ravinost

The twin cities of Balinost and Ravinost lie across the Thon-Thalas from each other. Created shortly after the Tower of the Stars was built in Silvanost, the twin cities each have different functions. Balinost contains the main tanneries and smithies of the Silvanesti nation. Ravinost, on the other hand, works mostly with grains, textiles, and building materials. Between the two of them, all manufacturing processes are represented.

Since the shield started draining the elves' life energy, however, the Houses and guilds in these two towns have experienced production problems. For one thing, Silvanesti is cut off from the Trueheart Mines. In addition, these elves also used to import various raw materials needed to create products. Now that they no longer receive shipments, items made from metals or grains are rare.

The cities are traditionally ruled by the current leader of House Metalline (for Balinost) and House Mason (for Ravinost).

- ☞ The heroes see two beautiful towers, one each in Balinost and Ravinost, rising above the cities' smaller towers. The identical towers appear in the same location within each town. As the heroes near one of these cities, however, the tower in Balinost slowly wavers away into nothingness. If the heroes investigate, they discover that the "Lost Tower of Balinost" was destroyed during the Dragon Purge. For some reason, however, its image appears to all visitors as they approach the city, and then disappears. If the heroes go to the spot where the tower once stood, they discover a set of smaller towers

rebuilt on the site of the Lost Tower. The residents of these three towers report no ill effects, yet they seem healthier than the elves around them, and so do the plants that grow in their gardens. What has caused this phenomenon? If the heroes further research local records, what will they discover?

Brattalnosti

Members of House Woodshaper formed Brattalnosti out of trees to be an outpost. It resembles Solace in that it has residences in the treetops, but the trees are giant oaks and maples, not vallenwoods. Also, the residences are much smaller than those in Solace.

Although the town receives a few supplies from Silvanost and Alinosti, it mostly sustains itself. With the rise of the shield, however, most of Brattalnosti's inhabitants live among the upper reaches of the trees, remaining constantly on the lookout for signs of new ashen wastes forming.

The current leader of the town is a woodshaper named Tenara Maplestem (*Silvanesti adult female, cautious demeanor, Champion; or 7th-level ranger*). She took over after the village elder, her father, died a few months ago. Now she leads this town with an eye toward defense from the dragon Cyan, who has recently started plaguing it.

- ☞ When the heroes approach Brattalnosti, its inhabitants are all standing in a ring outside of town, holding hands. They seem to be keeping some kind of vigil. As the heroes watch, the elves raise their hands simultaneously and sing out in a loud mourning wail. If the heroes move in closer, they discover the elves encircle a sapling that shudders at the sound of their cry. Suddenly, its branches swing about furiously, trying to hit the elves that surround it. One of the elves drops a lighted torch onto the tree, and all of the elves move back, hands still held, and watch the sapling burn. Why are they doing this to a tree? Can a tree act in such an aggressive manner?

Felinosti

Although Felinosti sits close to the eastern coast, it no longer lies right on the water as it once did. Back when the Silvanesti and the Dimernesti were working together, House Mariner established two towns to help start off sea explorations: Felinosti and Qualune. Once relations between the Silvanesti and Dimernesti fell apart, the elves of Felinosti moved their town farther back into the forest. After the shield came up and the wasting sickness struck, the citizens of Felinosti panicked, packed up, and left for Silvanost or Brattalnosti.

- ☞ In this ghost town, the heroes find no residents—except for one young child. He was inadvertently left behind when the elves moved away and has grown

up alone for two decades. Although he knows some of the common tongue and some Silvanesti, he doesn't trust the heroes. In fact, if they approach him, his wild talent in spectramancy kicks in, causing him to become invisible or create strange light effects that are beyond his control. How do the heroes help this young elf? Will they take him to House Mystic in Silvanost for magical training?

Kurmost

Before Lorac's Nightmare twisted the forest, Kurmost was an important coastal town. A trail led from Alinosti to Kurmost, allowing trade to and from Silvanost. Once the shield rose and cut off Silvanesti from the sea routes, Kurmost found its docks and ships isolated from the mainland. Worse, as time passed with no outside trade, the town found itself depending increasingly on aid from Silvanost and Alinosti. Caravans traveled to Kurmost regularly.

Two years after the shield's appearance, a caravan from Alinosti discovered a ghost town where Kurmost used to be. The town was dead, its residents vanished. Trees in the area had completely withered into ash. Now Kurmost is an ashen waste avoided by all the elves in the forest. Tales told among the kirath speak of strange, distorted faces appearing in the part of the shield nearest the town and occasional moans.

As the heroes enter Kurmost, they hear something whimpering nearby. Seeking out the source of the sound, they find themselves led out of town toward the new boundary of the Silvanesti Shield. If they continue to pursue the noise, they reach the shield—and see strange faces in it. If someone in the party lost a relative or friend to the wasting sickness, that person's image coalesces within the shield and tells the heroes something they need to know (such as the location of a treasure, the clue to a quandary facing them, a teaser to start them on another adventure, and so on). The information they receive might even steer the heroes wrong.

Larune

Larune's past lies in the story of the three wild mages who used magic during the Second Dragon War (see the description of House Mystic). When one of them, Parys Dayl, quit the trio, Kayn Wynstal decided to study on his own as well.

Fayal Parran, the remaining elf, left for another part of the forest, building a small cottage. Soon, several students joined him, causing the cottage to become a cluster of small buildings with a graceful tower in its midst. Called Larune, this small community followed a neutral god, which is forbidden to the Silvanesti.



During the Second Dragon War, Fayal left to help Parys and Kayn battle the dragons, and the outside world eventually forgot those remaining in Larune. Occasionally, an emissary would secretly make him- or herself known to the Speaker and help with problems that the deities of Good could not. When Lorac's Nightmare darkened the forest, the few elves left in this community went underground, letting their small buildings fall to ruin under the Nightmare's strength. Although they come out into the daylight sometimes, these neutral sorcerers and mystics tend to stay beneath the forest floor. Their leader, Yallan Thalasiaiana (*Silvanesti adult male, distant demeanor, Champion; or 8th-level wizard*), possesses much knowledge about the history of magic.

- ❧ The heroes stumble across a middle-aged elf trapped by a pile of ash that used to be several trees. Unfortunately, she is almost unconscious from lack of air. If the heroes help her regain consciousness, they discover that she was on her way back home after visiting Silvanost. She won't tell them where her home is, but in her weakened state, she clearly can't make it there herself. Will the heroes pursue the question until they find out about Larune? If so, what do they discover about the underground elves?



Phalinost

The village of Phalinost contains several generations of House Protector scouting families. Members of a few other Houses reside here as well, but they do so merely to help support the village and the families within it. Despite the shield's drain on the elves, the residents of Phalinost support Military Governor Konnal, since his grandfather was the town's former leader.

The current village lord is a section leader for the Wildrunners. Alexian Trilion (*Silvanesti adult male, conventional demeanor, Adventurer; or 6th-level fighter*) makes the defense of this village his highest priority.

- ❧ The heroes are sent on a mission to deliver a message from Silvanost to Phalinost. Just as they are about to enter the village, a few renegade elves approach them, claiming that they are the outside guard. The renegades ask the heroes for their message. What do the heroes do?

Qualune

Qualune was once a town devoted to supporting the sea explorations of the combined Silvanesti and Dimernesti marines. When that relationship fell apart due to repeated quarrels, the citizens of Qualune evacuated to Silvanost. Not long after, a majority of House Mariner disappeared inexplicably.

- ❧ If the heroes pass through the empty town, they accidentally fall into a cave that runs under the city. Once there, they discover a few interesting items: a moldering doll, an empty gem-encrusted nest 5 feet in diameter with fragments of shell in it, and a moldy journal. What was the nest for? If they read the journal, what truths will they uncover about lost House Mariner?

Shanarah

As a coastal fortress, Shanarah barely hangs onto life. Originally built by House Protector, this fortress once contained a large Wildrunner garrison. However, due to its proximity to the shield, many of the troops stationed there died of the wasting sickness. The fortress now serves as a Windrider outpost. The griffins and their riders can land here to replenish supplies or rest for short periods, but seldom stay long. At any given time, fewer than a dozen troops occupy the fortress.

Solune

After three elves visited the gods of magic (see "Larune"), they came back with knowledge of High Sorcery. One of the three, Parys Dayl, left his brothers in magic and established a tower called Solune. When the three mages were summoned to help defeat the

dragons in the Second Dragon War, Solune was left empty and fell to ruin.

Now the tower serves as a secret kirath base. The scouts use it to take shelter and leave messages hidden in the cracks and crevices of its walls. While the kirath feel comfortable in the tower, sometimes unexplainable phenomena occur. One such example happened to a trio of kirath who hid inside the tower from a Wildrunner patrol. A strange sleepiness overtook them. When they awoke, several days had passed.

- When the heroes enter the area around the tower, they see another group of people nearby. Should they hail the strangers, the other party hails them as well. If they approach, the other party gets closer. All the heroes' actions are mirrored, until they stand within easy viewing distance of the unknown group. Then, the heroes realize that they face their doubles, with the exception of one random party member who is absent from the duplicate group. The "doubles" realize this, too, and exclaim over the fact that they see in the heroes' group the exact likeness of a comrade who died within days of their party's formation.

Suddenly, the party member in question spasms and turns as insubstantial as a ghost. After some time for roleplaying, the doubles tell the heroes to find the resting place of their comrade to restore the troubled member of their group to a solid state.

Tarithnesti

Located on the Thon-Thalas River, Tarithnesti was founded by members of House Mystic. They built a magnificent tower in the center of the small village. After a time, the mages living in the village started trading magical items created in the tower and mundane supplies needed by the northern farmers. As a result, more Silvanesti arrived to help support the mages' work.

By the time of the War of the Lance, this sleepy little village had become a sleepy little town. Gyleanos Craftweaver (*Silvanesti elder male, clever demeanor; Hero; or 17th-level wizard*), an ancient mage in charge of Tarithnesti, foresaw that something ill would befall the forest and determined to spare his town from it. After making his preparations, he fell asleep and imposed a dream reality upon Tarithnesti.

The town sleeps still. But in the streets, residents' play out their dreams in semicorporeal forms. Most of the dream activities are harmless or mundane—people going through the motions of their work days—though occasionally a nightmare occurs.

- The heroes enter Tarithnesti. At first it appears a normal town: Residents simply incorporate the newcomers into their dreams, carrying on conver-

sations, serving them food, and so on. If the heroes stay past nightfall, however, events turn strange—students fret over lessons they have never undertaken, people appear in public without clothes, and other incidents from archetypal dreams start occurring. Can the heroes figure out that they've entered a dream reality? And if they can, should they leave the situation alone or try to wake the residents? What happens if they wake Gyleanos himself?

Towers of E'li

Created before the first Cataclysm, the Towers of E'li still house priests of the faith. Little is known of these priests since they prefer to keep to themselves. The only duties they perform for the outside world are helping those in need and keeping a light burning in each of the towers' upper levels to help guide ships. Strangely enough, they seem to remain hale and hearty despite their proximity to the Silvanesti Shield.

Their leader, Therian Cletheri (*Silvanesti adult male, decisive demeanor, Champion; or 8th-level priest*), occasionally sends one of his priests to the Temple of E'li in Silvanost for the latest news.

Tower of Shalost

In a large clearing in the western part of the Silvanesti Forest stands the Tower of Shalost, and nearby a village of the same name. Once the resting place of Waylorn Wyvernsbane (a druid who fought dragons in the Age of Might before falling into an enchanted sleep for centuries), the tower now holds two different residents: Cyan Bloodbane and Waylorn's ghost.

Cyan took up residence here after discovering that the elves avoided the tower. Once he figured out how to get in, he made a few adjustments to the lowest chamber. One of them includes a tunnel under Waylorn's crystal bier that leads to Cyan's underground lair. Although he must use a smaller form to traverse the passage, the lair itself is as big as he could wish. It also contains a veritable jungle of vegetation, thanks to the stones of continual light that once provided illumination for Waylorn's resting place.

The Tower of Shalost's other resident haunts the tower's top. After being released from the tower during the War of the Lance, Waylorn Wyvernsbane wandered the lands of Krynn, looking for a dragon to kill. When the Dragon Purge started, he found one—in Kendermore. As a great gout of flame from Malystrixx's maw took his life, Waylorn thought with regret of the tower that he had left behind in Silvanesti. A strange yank suddenly deposited him on the tower's upper level—as a ghost. Now he haunts the upper levels of the tower, wailing his regret to the world and unable to do anything about the dragon that resides in his tower.





Elven Artifacts

Elves are known for their mastery of the magical arts. In ages past, the elven nations crafted some of the most powerful magical items known on Krynn. Although the powers of High Sorcery and the True Gods have left, many examples of ancient elven magic still exist in the Age of Mortals.

These powerful magical items are legendary among the elves of Silvanesti and many other people of Krynn. They are not treasures in the traditional sense, but rather suitable goals for heroic quests like the adventure in this book. For this reason, no game statistics are provided for these artifacts. Narrators may choose what powers an individual artifact has and who may use it, based on its description and the needs of their own campaigns. These items have an air of mystery and wonder about them.

Each item has a history and description, including any known powers or properties. Ideas for Narrators to build an adventure or quest around the artifact also appear below, in colored type.

The Diviner of Life

Created during the Age of Might, the Diviner of Life is a 4-foot staff made of what appears to be clear, hollow glass. Each end is capped with a band of interlaced gold and steel 6 inches long. A swirling white fog is visible within the glass section. When the keyword is spoken, the fog clears completely. If the staff then touches any living being, the life force of that being registers as a bright green line extending from the bottom of the staff to a level commensurate with the individual's health. Generals used the Diviner to test the battle-readiness of their troops. The staff can also detect illusory beings and undead, which do not register any life force whatsoever.

Since the Diviner measures life force, it would prove an invaluable tool for understanding and learning more about the nature of the Silvanesti Shield. The heroes from this adventure have already learned that the shield drains the life force of those inside to maintain itself and that the shield itself possesses sentience. The Diviner might provide a means of measuring the shield's life-draining and the power of the shield itself. Silvanesti sorcerers and scholars may seek it for that reason, along with anyone else interested in learning more about the shield. Of course, the shield may not *want* to be studied. Perhaps it has unknown abilities it can use to block the heroes' quest.

The Diviner would prove useful against many of the undead and creatures of Chaos still inhabiting Krynn. It would also be a boon to the leader of an army. Any of the elven nations might seek to find it and place it in the right hands (such as those of Silvanoshei). Naturally, the dragon overlords and their minions would want the Diviner for themselves, if only to keep it from potential enemies.

The Diviner may help in locating a particular life force and measuring its strength, making it of interest to Skie in his search for a means to find Kitiara's spirit in the depths of the Gray and place it in a new, living body.

The Heart of the Irda

The Heart of the Irda is the basis for the adventure in this book, but there are other quests and adventures heroes can undertake involving the Heart.

The Heart may hold the key to overcoming the life-draining effects of the shield throughout Silvanesti. As such, it is likely to be of great interest to the various factions of Silvanost, Blöde, and to Cyan Bloodbane. Whoever possesses the Heart has a powerful weapon in the struggle for control of Silvanesti.

The Heart of the Irda is a powerful artifact and, as such, should be carefully tended and watched. Silvanesti is hardly a safe place to leave such a mighty item. Perhaps the heroes are asked to carry the Heart to elven holdings in Ergoth for safekeeping, or even to place the Heart in the hands of a neutral party like the Citadel of Light or the Tower of High Sorcery, where its powers can be guarded from the forces of Evil.

As an artifact of the ancient Irda, the Heart may hold secrets unknown to the heroes or anyone except the lost members of that race. With the Irda apparently gone following the Chaos War, the Heart may contain magic and mysterious lore known only to them. It may also prove instrumental in a quest to undo the curse that turned the Irda into ogres, bringing some or all ogres back to the state of grace they enjoyed at the dawn of history. Of course, many ogres may have no wish to be "improved" in such a way and would seek out the Heart to destroy it or control its power. Perhaps some clever ogre leader wants the Heart to corrupt his race even further, granting ogres the power, beauty and intelligence of the Irda, combined with their own brutish strength and evil nature. Such a new race would pose a dire threat to all of Krynn.

The Icon of Truth

The Icon is a white marble rectangle 6 inches tall, 4 inches wide and 1 inch thick, carved in the shape of a book and encrusted with jewels. The Icon represents the *Tobril*, the book held by the god Gilean, symbolizing all knowledge of the gods. It serves as a means of discovering the truth; stories tell of the Icon dispelling illusions of all kinds.

The Icon was once held by the elves of Silvanesti, but its fate since the War of the Lance—when it was used to help overcome the dreamweb created by the green dragon Cyan Bloodbane—remains unknown. Some believe that the Icon's power left Krynn with the True Gods, while the faithful believe the gods may have intentionally left behind the Icon as a link to their power and knowledge. If so, the Icon may become one of the most valuable artifacts of the modern age.

The faithful of Gilean, along with nearly any other followers of the True Gods, may seek the Icon of Truth, hoping it can provide a link to the gods and their new home somewhere far beyond Krynn. Even if the Icon cannot communicate with the gods, it may still contain a measure of Gilean's power, or a message, bit of lore, or secret the gods wished to leave for their faithful followers. Of course, someone in possession of the Icon could *claim* it contained whatever he or she wanted, but the Icon probably would not allow itself to be used falsely.

Since the Icon represents the *Tobril*, and the *Tobril* held the High God's divine plan, then perhaps the owner of the Icon could use its knowledge to *become* a god! The mere possibility would be enough to interest Malys, and probably some of the other dragon overlords as well. The heroes would have to keep the Icon from falling into the wrong hands or a new and terrible dark age could descend over Krynn.

The Icon of Truth could prove useful in solving nearly any mystery. Supposedly it contains all the knowledge and wisdom of the gods, so there is very little the Icon does not know. It may be the key to any number of mysteries of the Age of Mortals, from the secrets of sorcery to the true nature of the Silvanesti Shield. Many individuals would have an interest in gaining possession of the Icon or ensuring that no one ever finds it.

The Icon of Truth possibly has some connection to the Herald, said to embody Krynn's memories and also associated with Gilean. Perhaps the Icon is like the Tower of High Sorcery in Wayreth (as described in *The Last Tower*), an intelligent artifact able to manifest a human form in order to interact with others. Or perhaps the Herald gained his vast knowledge from the

Icon in some way. The Herald might also seek the Icon of Truth for various reasons, from safeguarding the knowledge it represents to learning the truth about his own mysterious past.

Mantooth

This broad sword is known by many names: Spellcleaver, Darkstar, Magefool, and Mantooth. The sword inflicts additional damage against sorcerers and enchanted creatures. While unsheathed, it also can cut through sorcerous barriers and block spells directed at its wielder.

Mantooth proves deadly against sorcerers, so any enemy of sorcery might seek it out. The Academy of Sorcery would certainly be interested in acquiring and studying the weapon, if only for the peace of mind derived from knowing its whereabouts. Perhaps the Master of the Tower of High Sorcery knows something about the fate of Mantooth, though if he does, he hasn't said anything about it.

A powerful weapon against creatures of enchantment, Mantooth could be wielded by a hero against the remaining creatures of Chaos as well as the dragon overlords and their minions. No doubt the Knights of Solamnia and the Knights of Takhisis would eagerly claim the sword for their own, and the Legion of Steel would welcome the chance to use such a powerful weapon against the magical menaces facing Krynn. The knightly orders would certainly court any hero who carried the sword—and might deem the hero unworthy of Mantooth if he or she refuses their offers to join their organizations.

With its power to cut through sorcerous barriers, Mantooth could slice through the Silvanesti Shield like a razor through paper. The wielder could pass through the shield at will and inflict serious long-term damage on the shield itself—perhaps even destroying or permanently weakening it. Anti-shield factions might seek out the sword, while those supporting the shield and the isolation of Silvanost would want to keep the sword out of their hands. Since Mantooth would also prove a very effective weapon against Cyan Bloodbane and his plans for Silvanost, the green dragon has good reason to prevent any hero from obtaining the sword.

The Silvanesti Shield itself might perceive Mantooth as a threat to its continued existence. If the sword lies somewhere within the shield, then perhaps a portion of the shield always covers that area, even when the rest of the shield retracts. This phenomenon could lead heroes to investigate and discover the resting place of the sword.





Quinari's Key

This magical key, long associated with the wife of Silvanos, is unlike the other artifacts described here in that it has no actual physical form. Legends say that the Key may be an intricate phrase of music that opens the door to a secret location, and that it will be rediscovered at the Silvanesti's time of greatest need.

What exactly does Quinari's Key unlock? Much lore about this artifact may have been lost from previous ages, and the Key may have functions unknown even to the wisest Silvanesti scholars. The Key may unlock secret rooms or passages within Silvanost, particularly within the palace named for the ancient queen. These places could contain treasures from previous ages, ancient elven lore and magic, or perhaps something that the elves of Silvanesti wanted to keep imprisoned for all time. Opening the lock that responds to the Key may lead to vast treasure—or another Cataclysm.

Quinari's Key may be able to provide passage through some of the doors and traps of the Tower Shalost, lair of the green dragon Cyan Bloodbane. If so, then perhaps the ghost of Waylorn Wyvernsbane helps guide the heroes to the Key and tells them how to use it to enter the Tower. If Cyan discovers a threat to the security of his lair, he would certainly take steps to protect himself, most likely by manipulating Military Governor Konnal and implicating the Key-holders as enemies of Silvanesti.

The Key's magic might even provide a means of passage through the Silvanesti Shield. The prophecy associated with this unusual artifact points to the current crisis facing the elves, some lorekeepers claim. The secrets the Key unlocks might protect the finder from the effects of the shield, allowing him or her to enter and leave Silvanesti as desired. It might even hold the secret for protecting all the people of Silvanesti from the effects of the shield. Of course, some do not want to see the shield compromised—including the shield itself. The possibility also exists that the secret of the intangible Key lies somewhere *inside* the shield, presenting the problem of how to get to it.

Redeemer

Also known as Wyrmsbane, this blade is the mate of Wyrmslayer, the legendary sword of Kith-Kanan. Redeemer is a longsword that inflicts additional damage against dragons and draconians, particularly black and sea dragons. Wyrmsbane is immune to the imprisoning power of Baaz draconians and allows its wielder to locate desired objects.

Obviously, the dragon overlords and their minions have good reason to want to see Redeemer, Wyrmslayer, and other *dragon-slaying swords* destroyed, or at least kept out of the hands of would-be dragonslayers. It may be beyond the power of even the overlords to destroy these weapons, forged with the magic of a previous age, but they can certainly hide them away deep in their own lairs to keep them out of the wrong hands.

As the mate of Kith-Kanan's Wyrmslayer, Redeemer (or Wyrmsbane) would make a powerful symbol in the hands of an elven leader, recalling the glory and wisdom of Kith-Kanan and the end of the Kinslayer War, a symbol of power and unity for the elven people. Silvanoshei might be destined to bear Redeemer as the "redeemer" of his people, provided that heroes exist willing to risk great danger to seek out the lost sword and bring it to him. Of course, other would-be leaders would prefer to see Redeemer in different hands, such as those of Kyrn Starbreeze or even Governor Konnal.

Weapons like Redeemer have a way of turning up at the place and time where they are most needed. The sword is a powerful weapon against all dragons and would prove particularly effective against black dragons like Onysablet. Heroes looking for a weapon against Sable might follow rumors and clues about Redeemer, pursued by draconians and other agents of Sable who want to capture the sword themselves. Or the heroes might accidentally stumble upon the blade in a lost treasure trove without knowing what they have discovered—at least, not until a draconian or thief recognizes the blade and tries to take it.

The ghost of Waylorn Wyvernsbane from the Tower Shalost might help guide heroes toward Redeemer. In life, Waylorn was a would-be dragonslayer; he could become a patron of sorts to a group of heroes fighting the dragon overlords.

PLAYING *THE SYLVAN VEIL* WITH THE ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® GAME

To help you use your either the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules system or the SAGA® game rules with this adventure, this book provides both sets of statistics for all major characters, creatures and encounters. This page offers additional guidelines for AD&D® players. Only the *Player's Handbook* and *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide* are needed to play *The Sylvan Veil*, although the "Translating Game Statistics from the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Game" reference card in the *DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE®* Dramatic Adventure Game might prove helpful as well.

ACTIONS

You can easily convert most SAGA actions into AD&D ability checks by applying a modifier according to the difficulty of the action (see the "AD&D Ability Check Difficulty Table," below). For example, an *easy Strength* action in the SAGA game becomes a Strength check +2 in an AD&D game. If the Dungeon Master thinks a particular AD&D proficiency should apply to the action, players should roll a proficiency check rather than an ability check using the same modifier. In other words, if play calls for a *challenging Reason* action to understand a bit of sorcerous lore, the DM may call for a Spellcraft proficiency check at a -2 penalty. Suggested ability checks appear in the adventure text in colored italic type after the SAGA action description.

AD&D ABILITY CHECK DIFFICULTY TABLE

SAGA Ability	AD&D Ability	Action Difficulty	Ability Check Modifier
Dexterity or Agility	Dexterity	Easy	+2
Strength	Strength	Average	0
Endurance	Constitution	Challenging	-2
Reason	Intelligence	Daunting	-4
Perception or Spirit	Wisdom	Desperate	-8
Presence	Charisma	Impossible	-12

ATTACKING AND DEFENDING

SAGA attacks call for an action, while AD&D attacks require an attack roll. The Dungeon Master may also require an attack roll instead of an ability check for actions involving accuracy or weapon skill, such as shooting an arrow with an attached rope to scale a cliff.

In cases where SAGA heroes would attempt an action to defend against a spell, trap, or similar effect, AD&D heroes should attempt the appropriate AD&D saving throw.

MONSTERS AND MAGIC

This book provides AD&D statistics for creatures and magical items alongside their SAGA statistics. However, the Dungeon Master may need to refer to the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide* or *MONSTROUS MANUAL™* accessory for more details concerning these statistics.

SPELLCASTING

The style of magic used in the Fifth Age is quite different from that used before the Second Cataclysm. Fifth Age magic is a freeform process that each spellcaster can shape to his or her individual style. How, then, are you supposed to use the AD&D game rules to roleplay spellcasters in the Fifth Age? While we have no hard and fast answer to this question, we do have a few suggestions.

- ☞ The easiest method is to allow wizards and priests to cast spells normally. While this does not accurately represent all changes that the Second Cataclysm wrought on the world of Krynn, it does provide DMs with a familiar and comfortable magic system.
- ☞ Alternatively, wizard and priest characters may be freed from the necessity of memorizing spells. Spellcasting PCs learn spells and keep spellbooks normally, but may cast any of their spells at a moment's notice. They must, however, keep track of how many spells of a particular level they cast each day. Spellcasters may never exceed the number of spells they would be able to cast using the normal AD&D rules (i.e. a 4th-Level wizard could cast a total of three first-level and two second-level spells).
- ☞ Finally, if the DM has access to a copy of the *PLAYER'S OPTION®: Spells & Magic* book, all spellcasters may be treated as Channellers.

In all cases, it is up to the DM to regulate exactly which spells a PC has access to based on the schools and spheres he or she knows.

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WILLIAM W. CONNORS
AND MIRANDA HORNER

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ISBN 0-7869-1329-0



9 780786 913299

U.S. \$18.95

5 1895



CAN \$27.95

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