

My Bloody Friggin Campaign

A fantasy world for the Fudge Roleplaying System

<http://wanderinghorse.net/gaming/fudge/>

Abstract:

My Bloody Friggin Campaign is a detailed overview of a fantasy gaming world. While intended for the Fudge System, this text is mostly descriptive, as opposed to rules-bound, in nature, and can easily be adapted to arbitrary roleplaying rules.

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1 Preliminaries

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Achtung: this document was recently ported in from a different word processor format and may still contain broken formatting elements (e.g., cross-references may point to incorrect section numbers).

1.1 Legal Stuff

Reading disclaimers makes you go blind (writing them is even worse), but these are requirements of FUDGE's license:

1.1.1 Fudge Legal Notice

About Fudge: Fudge is a roleplaying game written by Steffan O'Sullivan, with extensive input from the Usenet community of rec.games.design and other online forums. The core rules of Fudge are available free on the Internet at <http://www.fudgerpg.com> and other sites. Fudge was designed to be customized, and may be used with any gaming genre. Fudge gamemasters and game designers are encouraged to modify Fudge to suit their needs, and to share their modifications and additions with the Fudge community. The Fudge game system is copyrighted © 2000 by Grey Ghost Press, Inc. and is available for use under the Open

Game License. See the fudgerpg.com website for more information.

1.1.2 License

Like the Fudge system, this document is released under the terms of the Open Game License (OGL) version 1.0a (which is reproduced in full in section 15 of this document). This document is copyrighted (2007-2008) by Stephan Beal (stephan@wanderinghorse.net). Early versions of this document (before September, 2007, going back to 2003 or 2004) were distributed under the "classical" (pre-OGL) Fudge license.

That said...

The OGL defines the following entities as falling under the category of *Product Identity*:

artifacts, creatures characters¹, stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, formats, concepts, names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities, places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects.

(That is not the full list of what may constitute Product Identity, but only the parts which apply to this document!)

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As of this writing, no parts of this document are marked as Product Identity except for minimal references to third-party trademarks. Aside from occasional references to trademarks, there are no plans to include any material which is not modifiable under the terms of the OGL.

1.1.3 A Note about Gender

This document uses the same convention as the Fudge rules for gender: the GM is referred to use she/her, while characters and players are referred to using he/him unless context specifically calls for a female.

1.2 Credits

In no particular order, my many, many thanks go to Steffan O'Sullivan, Terry Pratchett, Ann Dupuis, the folks fudge@phoenix.net, Steve Jackson, Tom Higgins and the CounterMoves gang, Rusty Ballinger, Denver and everyone else who's inspired me along the way...

1.3 Inspirations

This work has had many significant inspirations, not to mention the innumerable minor inspirations from here and there. The major ones include:

- The Fudge roleplaying system, of course. While the rules seem odd at first, they are remarkably flexible and normally trivial to modify to one's needs. Despite the apparent over-simplicity of the Terrible to Superb ratings and wounds system, they really do fit in perfectly in a wide range of RPG contexts. The Mass Scale system finally provides the world with a realistic way of modeling combat between beasts of greatly varying sizes, something even Steve Jackson's extremely detailed GURPS® system fails to satisfactorily achieve.
- Terry Pratchett's Discworld™ series of stories. While they are classics for many reasons, I have always especially liked his attention to cultural detail.
- The Free and Open Source Software movement(s), because I am an Open Source developer. The magic system in this world is very much intended to parallel the study of computer and physical sciences in our modern world.
- TSR's Shadowrun™ games and Steve Jackson's GURPS® *Cyberpunk*, both of which inspired an "elfpunk" campaign (think "elves with mohawks and attitudes"). It is thought that the campaign world described in this work could easily evolve into an Elfpunk campaign at some point, sometime after magi.net magics fall into mainstream use.
- The Ellyllon species described here are directly descended from the same-named species in

¹ Can anyone explain to me what "creatures characters" is supposed to mean? It's written that way in the OGL.

GURPS® Fantasy Folk, published by Steve Jackson Games.

- Real life, namely mine. The magic system, especially, is built around my experience with software development and the philosophies which go along with it. Also, as an expatriot who has lived outside his birth country since late last millennium, and who has traveled quite a lot, cultural-level details also play a significant role in shaping this campaign world. Believe it or not, even ogres and trolls have cultures, even if they don't match anything which humans might recognize as cultures. One of this campaign's focuses will be exploring those differences in cultures.

1.4 Additional Resources

To find absolutely anything to do with Fudge simply start here : <http://www.fudgerpg.com/>

For some interesting generic campaign material, see:

<http://www.io.com/~sjohn/plots.htm>

2 Where Am I?

You are in My Bloody Frigging Campaign, a magical world of wizards, something similar to elves, ogres, dragons (but not fire-breathing), and many other fantasy elements. Oh, and it's the early days of the "magi.net", which you can most liken to "the internet, powered by primitive magic and naive ideals²." (The "dot" in the name magi.net is said to be the side-effect of a misinterpreted ink blot on the scroll where this name was first coined.)

This world, as described herein, is neither "high fantasy" nor "low fantasy," but more like "medium fantasy³." Magic has helped achieve many of the comforts and enlightenments that in our world technology has brought, allowing magic-using societies to live more comfortably than their real-world counterparts would. This is the justification for some of the social anachronisms in this world, as well several other campaign elements which normally "wouldn't happen" in a non-magical ecosystem.

The campaign world is described in terms of bits and pieces. Descriptions of some of the major places and personalities are given, but where exactly each city is is entirely up to the GM.

Most the the material here can easily be adapter to campaigns with stronger or lesser degrees of "fantasyism", as the GM sees fit.

2.1 Eco-political Overview

Politics are primarily feudal or pseudo-feudal, with a couple more democratic states and a few dictatorial states. A couple states are run by powerful wizards and one is even ruled by a dragon. Individual societies are not generally very multi-cultural, but there are a great many cultures in the known world. The various races normally live separately, and rarely live in each other's settlements, though trade is common. Open racial hatred and violence is rather low - most non-human races are looked upon by humans as curiosities rather than enemies, with some exceptions - ogres and trolls are almost never greeted in a friendly manner, and goblins always get the butt end of any deals.

While humans are the most populous race, they are not entirely dominant. The human population makes up an estimated 20-80% of intelligent population (it depends entirely on who's estimate you trust), and are the most-varied of the races in their choices of habitat; humans will live almost anywhere. They have military-enforced dominance in many areas. At least one militarily-backed Lidijn state exists, though Lidijn states are small by human standards. Ogres aren't bright enough to hold large populations together, but are physically formidable enough to carve out a territory for each tribe. Ellyllon rarely exert enough force to be called anything like a state.

Ellyllon rarely get involved in the political affairs of man, but Lidijn sometimes do, since they trade so much with humans. Ogres will sometimes involve themselves, on a small scale, with obviously more powerful humans who present such contracts as "we won't bother you as long as you stay on *that* side of the river."

Relatively little of the planet's space is inhabited by sentient creatures, and territorial expansion is common, mainly via military might and establishment of settlements in unclaimed areas.

Magic can play a large part in military battles, and many armies have at least one mage on site to cause some grief with effects like rains of stones or hails of phantasmal arrows. A powerful battle-mage is always good for a laugh in a battle. Even non-combat mages can often cause creative damage at times, and

² Ideals belonging to well-meaning individuals, of course.

³ The more powerful wizards, for example, aren't 23 year old studs who still have all of their strength and stamina left in them.

assaulting a walled city containing a several powerful mages is normally a sad idea indeed⁴.

2.1.1 Currencies

There is no one, single currency, and barter is used for many negotiations. Each major state has its own currency, and loyal sub-states in a feudal state will adopt the currency of their lord. Currency is usually minted as metal coins, but one lidijn state uses ceramic. Ogre societies do not print money, nor really comprehend what it's for; they deal only in trade (some of them consider a fair trade to be your crushed skull for all of your valuables). Ellyllon sometimes use shiny objects as trade items amongst themselves, but barter is typically used for anything significant. Most cultures have some form of tax system, which can range from trivial to exuberant, paid in the local currency or in goods. For example, a farmer might pay in grain while a weaver might pay in blankets or clothing, both of which the state may trade away to other societies for other items. Ellyllon societies rarely use any form of currency and normally have no sort of tax system. Ogre leadership get what it wants not through taxes, but by bullying others.

2.1.2 Literacy

Not everyone is literate - up to about 20% of the average large human city population can read, and much fewer in rural areas. Ellyllon and Lidijn are known to encourage reading and writing, but few other races push the point very much, and almost never push it until their cities grow past a certain size⁵. In some areas reading is suppressed by the local leadership, with only the upper crusts of society having access to the skills. All PCs may be assumed to be literate unless they come from a culture in which literacy is not common. Literacy is a skill, and a character's Literacy in his native language(s) is assumed to default to Intellect-1. A GM may wish to give "intellectual" character types, such as mages and librarians, increased starting Literacy levels to reflect the higher skills which are naturally attained by actively working with reading and writing, as opposed to casual users of a pen and paper. PCs may take a Fault of Illiterate in trade for another Gift. A Faulted illiterate is truly handicapped when it comes to reading and writing, and can never learn them above a Terrible skill level. This Fault should not be allowed in cultures in which literacy is not practiced, such as ogrish tribes, because in such societies a character is never likely to even know that he has difficulty in this area.

As always, it may be necessary for the GM to determine the specifics of Literacy in her campaign.

2.2 What shape is the continent? The planet? Where's the Map?

To most, the planet doesn't have a name - it's just the earth they walk on. To some it is called various things, largely depending on the religion. Some say it is flat, though modern science has seemed to have proved otherwise.

Does your character have the Geography or Cartography skills? No? Then you probably have no clue as to what shape your country is, much less the continent. You are far more likely to know approximately where the borders of your home state are, even if only in abstract terms ("the border runs along the Quy river, up to Darson. Where ever those are.").

There are no truly comprehensive maps of any major landmass, though some rather speculative maps do exist⁶. The "accurate" maps are generally put together by cartographers and explorers employed by the rich and are not generally available to the public, but it is not unheard of for ship captains and other travelers to have them. Races other than the humans generally do not have any large-scale maps, as they don't get out as much as the humans do. Smaller-scale maps covering popular trade routes and such are generally available to anyone who wants to buy them, but are not found in every standard adventurer supply store.

To reflect the general lack of knowledge of geographical and political boundaries, this campaign does not come with the conventional "world map". GMs are encouraged to only map out the areas they need to, and let the world grow from there as required. Readers familiar with Terry Pratchett's works might know about the *Discworld*(tm) *Mappe*. That was actually created by interpreting hints in many of the stories - it was not created in advance.

4 Let us now remember the Battle to Take Gre'Tui, where warships tried to assault the coastal town. The majority of the attackers were crushed by huge waves in the first half hour of the assault. Two ships were even swallowed by sudden rifts in the sea. It seems they had attacked the city on the day of the yearly meeting of the Wizards of the Coast, a group of water mages who live in the region.

5 And they realize that 40,000 people who can't read the sign saying, "Don't throw your trash in the street, by order of the Prince" poses a problem.

6 The legitimacy of the map in which the outline of the main continent matches the facial profile of King Redumis IV of Kaewark is highly suspect, as he funded the cartographer.

2.3 What cultures exist?

A huge number of cultures exist. Within human-controlled areas, cultures are primarily European-ish. There are no known parallels to real-world Asian cultures, as many of Asia's more refined practices are assumed to have evolved because of the relative geographic isolation of Asia - ocean on one side and inhospitably hot lands on the other which kept them well encapsulated for a long time. In this campaign the intelligent species have to spend more of their effort on daily survival, primarily because none is at the top of the food chain, and are not assumed to have developed as orderly, rules-driven cultures as were achieved in some early Asian societies in our world. In any case, there are no ninja characters.

The non-human cultures vary even more than the human cultures, and will necessarily be fleshed out as the campaign world is defined more clearly.

2.4 What's the calendar look like?

Despite all the unknowns regarding the world's geography, mathematicians and skywatchers from several cultures have independently come to determine the length of a year quite accurately: 380 days. The single moon revolves around the planet once every approximately 29 days. Partial eclipses sometimes happen, but full eclipses do not. The moon is not as coincidentally aligned with the sun as ours is. (Scientific trivia: our own moon slowly slips from it's orbit, and one day, in the very far future, will also not be able to produce eclipses.)

The number of seasons, months, etc., is different from culture to culture. Some examples include:

- The Ilijijn territories around Ae'udua (section 13.1) recognize four seasons, Wommno ("no warm", or "cold", meaning winter), Wommkun ("warm coming", or spring), Womm ("warm", or summer), and Wommkuno ("warm going"). The season Womm is centered around the summer equinox, and Wommno around the winter solstice. Each season is broken down into 95 days, with days-long festivals held to mark the changing of seasons. Ae'udua is blessed with a remarkably comfortable, stable climate and predictable seasons, and their calendar has revolved around it for many generations. Every 6th day is conventionally ohtari (day of rest), and few laborers work on that day.
- The Ilijijn of Do'udua (section 13.2), in the subtropics, have evolved a different calendar. They have three seasons, Womm, a shorter Wommshi ("warm wet", rainy season), and Woumm (hot). They split each season into sets of 3 months each, but do not have festivals to mark the changing seasons. Some Do'uduans celebrate the summer equinox and winter solstice on religious grounds, but those events do not play a significant part in the calendar. As in Ae'udua, every 6th day is conventionally a day of rest.
- Most human nations have settled on the same, unduly awkward, system mankind has used for hundreds of years. The human calendar closely matches that of Ad'udua's, but the lengths of the seasons can vary slightly from region to region. Months play a much more important role, and a year has a total of 13 months (the superstitious fear of the number 13 never specifically developed in this world). Most months contains 4 weeks of 7 days, with an occasional leap-day inserted here and there. The year contains several major holidays, one in midwinter, one in spring, two in summer and one in the autumn. In most societies, the last two days of every week are considered a minor holiday, and many laborers do not work on these days, nor are public governmental offices open (except for law enforcement, of course).
- The Ellyllon calendars vary widely from clan to clan, and often are not formalized as more than an engraving on a local stone or woven as a tapestry. The race recognizes the equinox and solstice, but each culture places different significance on them. Some cultures see them as the border between seasons, some see them as middle-points, and some place no significance on them. Ellyllon generally do not have a need to keep accurate calendars, and most simply measure the time in seasons (of which there are normally four) and years, referring to "suns" (days) when necessary days ("The princess marries in ten suns! Aren't you excited!?!").

2.5 Divine entities?

Are the gods real? To many people, yes, though they will almost all argue about which gods and how many of them there are. You've never seen a god, but you've certainly seen things which you cannot otherwise easily explain. Whether you believe in them is up to you. The world's societies have widely varying tolerances of freedom of religion.

Some theorists speculate that spirits are divine⁷, or even that "divine intervention" is really "spiritual intervention." There are all kinds of theories, however.

⁷ Spirits are sometimes bound into mortal service in the form of skeletons or zombies. They are in fact often willing to be bound.

2.6 Types of characters?

Some suggested types of characters:

- Mercenaries of all types are sought to explore areas and/or claim them for states seeking more power.
- Traders of all types are desired for bringing in more money to any locale, or to carry specific goods here and there.
- Mages are almost always sought, especially for enchantment.
- Explorers (and supporting cast).
- Thieves, bandits. There is no such thing as a Thieves' Guild, however, at least not a public one.
- Border patrol.
- Or even politicians, if that's the focus of your game.

2.7 Sexual equality

It would be nice to think that a society enlightened by such wonders as magic has evolved to a point of complete sexual equality. And it might happen... in one particular society. This world is made up of many societies, though, and the chances of that happening everywhere, or even most places, in this world are remarkably slim.

Most humanoids, like almost every other mammalian species, have these prejudices burned into their behaviour by millions of years of evolution, and escaping them requires more than giving someone a right to vote and having access to the same jobs. Most cultures in this imaginary world are very male-dominated, with men filling the hunter-gatherer roles and women filling the homemaker roles. There are a number of reasons for this, none of which we will go into now.

Some cultures, particularly some non-human tribal cultures, have much finer lines of distinction between the sexes, with each person filling whatever role they are capable of. In some more prosperous cultures, some women have taken especially well to academic careers, such as teachers and mages of all types. Magery, in particular, is a field which cannot be choosy about those it takes in, due to the limited number of people with an in-born talent for it (i.e., the Magery Gift). This is not to say that girls and boys are treated identically by their wizard tutors - some mages are more or less flexible than others when it comes to handling mixed-gender classes. While there are a female warriors on the battlefield, they are few, far between, and don't wear bikini-style outfits. Most are mercenaries, mages, or officers from ruling families (though few nobles would send a daughter into battle, some do for political reasons of their own).

The topic of sexual equality is not intended to infringe upon play by limiting what characters a player may choose. It is here primarily because:

- To add a bit of realism. No human cultures have achieved total sexual equality, and it is very unlikely that any parallel universe of ours has, either. Hopefully it will happen someday, but it is unlikely to happen before the next major intellectual revolution mankind goes through.
- To give the GM a point with which to challenge PCs in interesting ways. What will the party do if the merchant boss refuses to meet with the female leader of the group, but the PCs need the information he's got? On the flip-side, in this world most men are truly pigs, and the party's female member might very well be able to use her charm to get things the party really needs... like a 30-second distraction so they can get past a guard, or maybe she can appeal to the merchant boss in a way the male PCs can't.

The battle of the genders is not intended to be the focus of the game, in any case.

3 Character Creation

The text below assumes a point-based system for creating characters. Alternately, with the GMs consent the characters can simply be built using a "reasonable number" of Gifts, Faults and skills, without regard for point values. Which exact system used is in general not important for this world - GMs should use whatever system they prefer.

3.1 Attributes

All characters have the following attributes:

- Strength - physical power.
- Health - physical well-being.
- Dexterity - general agility.
- Perception - general attentiveness to detail and to one's surroundings.
- Intellect - intelligence, learning capability, reasoning, etc.

- Will - strength of mind.
- Mana - a measure of how much magical energy a character may channel. This energy is used to power spells and magical items.

They follow the standard Fudge rating system, Terrible (-3) to Superb (+3). When making attribute checks for things which may fall under various attributes (like Grip on Reality, which may be Intellect or Will, or both), the GM should feel free to make the roll against the average level of more than one attribute.

Characters should start with 3 free attribute levels, though the exact number will depend on the character creation system used by the GM. Steffan O'Sullivan's "Five-point Fudge" is especially well suited for this game.

For purposes of trading attribute levels, PCs should not be allowed to get free levels by reducing their Mana attribute - only characters who take the Magery Gift get extra points by taking lower Mana scores. For other PCs, a lower Mana attribute rarely comes into play (only when powering magical items). Attributes may be traded to and from Gifts and skill points using the trade-in values set by the GM.

If the GM has a magic system which does not use a Mana attribute then the GM should ignore all references to it here, or adapt these references to his own variant of this attribute.

3.1.1 Optional Rule: Meaty Fellas

Characters with Great or higher Health or Strength may chose to purchase one of either the Hit Points Scale 1 or Wound Boxes Scale 1 Gift. If both attributes are Great or higher, both Gifts may be purchased (but not Scale 2 of either Gift). These Gifts must be purchased normally, but these Gifts are otherwise not normally available to PCs.

3.1.2 Mana Attribute and Mana Points

The Mana attribute represents a character's inherent capacity for absorbing ambient magical energy, which is distinctly different from his ability to use the energies skilfully. Spells cost Mana Points (MP, or simply mana) to cast, and these are taken from a caster's "mana pool", which recharges over time. See Magic, in section 9, for more details.

Note that all characters, even non-mages have a Mana attribute, and this mana may be used to power magical items. In some cases it may even be channeled from a mundane character by a mage.

3.1.3 Optional Rule: Mana Scale

GMs who want to beef up, or under-power, some races when it comes to magic may do so my applying a racial Mana Scale. The scale is added to the Mana attribute when calculating available mana points, and may have other game effects at the GM's discretion.

3.1.4 "Plus levels" for attributes and skills

GMs who want more granularity in attributes are encouraged to use a "plus levels" system. One way to do this is to break up attribute/skill levels like this: Terrible, Terrible+, Poor, Poor+, etc., on up to Superb+, or even Superb+4+. The extra plus means that in contests based on that level, the player rolls one extra dF, discarding the die if it rolls a -1. A different way to interpret it, at the GM's discretion, is not to roll an extra die, but simply ignore any one minus which is rolled in contests based on that attribute.

3.2 Fudge Points (FP)

Each character starts with 3 FP, which may used in play to fudge results or to increase attributes, as described in the core Fudge rules. The GM will give out FP during (or after) play, as she wishes.

3.3 Five Point Fudge

This campaign is well-suited for use with the Five Point Fudge rules, available from:

<http://www.panix.com/~sos/rpg/fudfive7.html>

3.4 Alternative PC creation: free-form, collaborative

This campaign is not focused on "PC balance", a trap too many games get too caught up in. It is very

suitable for a starting group of PCs to have widely differing capabilities. Perhaps the GM wants one of the PCs to be a long-time veteran, with several Great combat and survival skills, while the party's mage just dropped out of magic school after his first year, and only knows how to shoot a puff of smoke to hide his escape as he runs away.

To reflect such mixes of characters, the following "system" for creating PCs is recommended.

First off, the GM should already have a good idea of where her campaign is starting out, culturally speaking, where it will be physically based, and what types of PCs are most suitable. The GM should explain the world to the characters, *as their PCs would know it*. From there, a character creation session revolves around a dialog between the GM and the PC's player. The player should make up a background story, interacting with the GM to ensure that it fits in her view of the world, and to allow the GM to fill in the world's gaps as they go. Along the way, the GM can either assign skills on the spot or wait until the end and come up with a proposal. The player is encouraged to suggest skills along the way and to elaborate his character concept when doing so will justify the skills the PC will have. This needn't apply only to skills - a PC who spent his whole life studying magic in a dark room is likely to have lower than average Strength and Health, and probably higher than average Intellect plus a few levels in skills like Research.

Ideally, the GM and player will come to a mutually agreeable set of skills. The GM may outright assign skill levels, assign a specific number of skill points to spend in given areas, or allow the player to select starting skill levels from a set of skills the GM deems appropriate for the character story.

The process can be even more satisfactory when multiple players and the GM design their characters at the same time. Even if the PCs don't come from the same area, this is a good chance to build up a history of the campaign through the stories the players come up with in character design.

Here is a sample dialogue demonstrating how we might get from character story to Fudge statistics:

Player: Kyle Smith is a born athletic and leader. As a child, he was always the first picked to play on any team and always chosen as team captain. He could capture rats better than any kid on his block.

GM: Let's call that the Charismatic Gift and a tendency for increased Strength and Dexterity (we won't decide their values now).

Player: His father worked as a machinist, specializing in small parts. His mother was a typical homemaker, raising he and his three siblings, two younger sisters and one older brother. In his teen years, Kyle became fascinated with the military after seeing a military parade.

GM: Which city?

Player: Um... let's say Aachen, the mid-sized capital of Paarmädls.

GM: Fine. [Writes down that Aachen is now the capital of Paarmädls in her campaign.]

Player: At 16 he joined the local military forces. While training was a lot more difficult than he had expected, he kept at it, and his natural athletic talent and leadership qualities took him far. At 20 he was already a veteran of three battles and a commander of 100 men. At that time, he was ordered to join forces with another troop in an area being invaded by the neighboring state. Contrary to intelligence reports, his forces were hugely outnumbered. His men were slaughtered and he was left on the field to die. Amazingly, he awoke a day later in great pain, but not quite dead. Unable to travel, he crawled into the woods, lit a fire, and just thought for a while. He could return to his home, and maybe get another command, or maybe be demoted. He didn't want that life any more, though. The sight of his men falling left and right beside him had hit him deeply, and he resolved to stay away from Aachen. (His family certainly believes him dead, and he has an ongoing guilty conscience about this.) In the following months he moved further into the woods. He was able to salvage a great deal of useful tools from the battlefield, and learned to hunt with a bow and arrow. He sometimes came across Ellyllon who appeared curious about him, but they never threatened him, so he didn't threaten back.

Kyle is now 24. He has spent the past 4 years living in the woods in the borderland between Paarmädls and the no-man's land north of Eagul. Having tired of hunting every day, he has taught himself to smoke his meat and fish so that they last longer. While the forest doesn't have many plants which are terribly suited for human consumption, he has learned to digest a great variety of forest greenery. Medicinal plant usage, unfortunately, has escaped him. Luckily, his good shape has kept him free from major illness, and the one serious injury he got after falling from a tree was healed by an ellyl who had heard his cry. Some of the ellyl have occasionally talked to him using magic, and he has developed a fairly good relationship with some others, even if they cannot communicate beyond what body-language can convey. All in all, though, he attempts to give them a respectful distance, as he doesn't want to be seen as encroaching upon them. They wield magic and don't speak his language, and that makes him

a little nervous.

His guilty conscience about leaving his family, particularly his younger sisters, still haunts him, and he often considers returning to them. He is afraid, however, of being hanged as a deserter.

...

The GM and player could go into a lot of back-and-forth here, expanding the story, suggesting and justifying certain attributes or skills, etc. For demonstration, we will cut it down to a few terse statements by the GM:

GM: Okay, so Kyle's got Good Strength, Dexterity, and Willpower, other attributes at Fair. He has the Gifts of Charisma and Amazing Health - he never gets sick and heals more quickly than average. He was once a Great combatant, but years of no swordplay have left him (and his sword) a bit rusty: we'll give him Good overall melee combat skills. As a former commander, he also knows Tactics at Fair. Because he has to continually hunt for survival, he's developed a keen sense of using a bow, giving him Great bow skill. He also has Fair "Bow Maintenance", meaning he can repair bows, make bowstrings, improvise bows from natural materials, etc. The last four years have taught him to live in the rough: he has Great Woodland Survival skills.

You've left us some room for bringing in past experiences into play, with the stories of the Ellyllon, immediate family, and military position. I'll give you two Fudge Points for those.

Other than Kyle being Extremely Poor, I won't assign any serious Faults at the moment, but I'm going to reserve the option to add a Fault or two later. Should Kyle return home and find himself marked as a deserter, he might develop an Outlaw or Enemy Fault. Even if all goes well, he might develop a Dependent Fault (mother, younger sisters). We'll see what happens.

From there, the GM or player should flesh out the details such as the exact skill levels for "lesser" skills (those not included in the character story). The GM may also opt to simply assign a number of levels for the player to distribute as he likes.

It might appear that players can maximize PC capability by simply telling longer stories. To some degree, this is true: a novel-length tome about the adventures of the PC would be a good basis for starting hero-level PCs!

To show another, much briefer, example of collaborative character generation:

Player: Grok ogre. Grok lift heavy things. Grok throw rocks. Girls no like Grok, say stupid and ugly. Grok leave mean home to work in mine for human. Human treat Grok much different. Pay Grok. They not mean, but also not nice. No human girl like Grok. Say "iiiiieee" and run. Maybe Grok leave and go somewhere else.

GM: Okay, we've got Grok the Invalid, fourth of five siblings, uglier and stupider than the lot of them. He's got Great Strength, Terrible Intellect, Mediocre Willpower, and other attributes at Fair. His only skills are Brawling, at Good because he's always been picked on and had to fight a lot, and Throw Rock, at Good, which allows him to throw fist-sized rocks pretty well (that's an ogre fist). Grok has the Fault of Gullible, as a side-effect of his underwhelming intellectual capacity. He is Unattractive (on an ogre-relative scale, that is), due to natural deformations around his head. He has no Gifts and no noteworthy talents, but few people are willing to say that to his face. Grok has just left his work at a human mining operation, where he accumulated a small sum of money. He has no clear concept of what money is really for, but he knows that people covet it, and therefor jealously guards it. He has no idea how long he worked at the mine, nor how long he's been walking away from it. He's got a Terrible sense of time. He's on the road with his small bundle of belongings, and has absolutely no clue what he's going to do next. Maybe the mine wasn't so bad, after all.

From there we can spring right into Grok's first adventure:

GM: Grok hears horses, and after a moment he can see the shapes of three mounted humans about 200 meters up the road, heading casually his direction. He does not believe they have seen him, or at least they don't appear to be galloping towards him. What is Grok going to do?

Player: Um? Grok look for place to hide. Side of road. Wait until Grok can smell humans, then decide. Mmm... horses *good!* Grok not had horse since... since... *long* time! Grok look for rocks to throw!

We can only hope that Grok's physical capacities can help him survive life on his own, as his brain isn't helping much, and his stomach is helping a bit too much. Still, with the right GM and player, Grok can have

just as much fun adventuring as anyone else.

4 Skills

This campaign is really open to any skill system. Text regarding skills is generally worded such that the skills can be adapted to any Fudge-based skill system. We will normally assume a Five-point Fudge system (or similar).

For our purposes, skills are treated as being relatively abstract in nature, and we will not go into too much detail about their exact uses. See below for some examples.

If a player wants a very specific skill (Cutlass or Long Bow), the GM should reduce it's difficulty by one level.

No Superb skill levels are allowed starting out.

4.1 Increasing Skills During Play

The GM has at least three options for increasing skill levels during play:

1. Allow Fudge Points to be converted to Skill Points at 1 FP per SP.
2. Assign skill points based on the skills a character uses in play or explicitly studies during down-time.
3. Assign skill level increases as she sees fit.

There is no reason that these approaches have to be mutually exclusive. All of them can reasonably be used in the same campaign, with the same PCs and GM.

4.2 Sample Skills

A very short list of sample skills:

- **Combat:** Dodge, Shield, Sword, Staff, Bow, Crossbow, Brawling, Axe.
- **Survival:** One skill for each major terrain type: Woods, Swamp, Desert, Rain Forest, Underground, etc.
- **Social:** Merchant, Etiquette (per culture), Language (by language).
- **Day-to-day:** Riding (per animal type), Cooking, Literacy (per language).

GMs and players are encouraged to come up with whatever skills they feel the campaign calls for. The "Fantasy Fudge" section in the printed copy of *Fudge*, from Gray Ghost Games, has a rather long list of skills which would fit well into this campaign. Additionally, the Five Point Fudge page has many suggestions for skills (see section 3.3 for the URL).

4.3 Skill Groups

Aside from purchasing specific skills, GMs may wish to allow broad skill sets. Some example are Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons, Thieving Skills, and various Colleges of Magic.

Broad-based skill groups cost more than learning specific skills, but give the character some degree of proficiency in a much wider range of activities. The suggested cost for a skill group depends on the exact skill system you are using. Some suggestions:

- If using point-purchase system, broad skills purchased cost three times the normal number of points.
- If using Five Point Fudge, or a variant of it, broad skills are purchased as normal, but have a -1 starting level. Thus, if a player assigns one of his Good skill level to his mage's College: Fire, his skill in that College will be Fair. If the GM is using the extra-points option of FPF, raising the skill level of a broad group should cost two points.

In any case, it is recommended that broad skill groups never be allowed to be learned at higher than Good (or Great, for a very lenient GM). To achieve Great skill in anything requires some degree of specialization. Thus...

Characters may purchase both specific skills and skill groups. If a character decides that his general combat skill with Melee Weapons is too limited by its maximum level of Good, he can later decide to purchase the Two-handed Sword skill, and may gain greater skill with that specialization. Skills purchased in this way are considered to be one level of difficulty lower (never lower than Terrible) because he already knows the basics and theory behind the skill. This level adjustment also applies retroactively if a new Skill Group is purchased which covers existing skills, but the character does not get any skill points back from such change. Characters with several related, though specialized, skills may, at the GMs consent, be assumed to also have some level in an associated broad skill group.

4.3.1 Sample Skill Groups

Here is a sample list of skill groups:

- **Melee Weapons** - swords, axes, halberds, fists, etc., and fighting against opponents who wield them.
- **Missile Weapons** - bows, crossbows, slings, thrown spears, etc.
- **Thieving skills** - climbing, hiding, searching, sleight of hand⁸.
- **Leadership** - strategy, tactics, boosting morale, etc.
- **Survival** - finding food and shelter in a variety of climates. Specific skill examples are Survival: Swamp, Survival: Woodland, or even more specifically, more focused skills like Hunting, Fishing, and Build Fire Using Rotating Sticks or Flint.
- **Animal Handling** - caring for and riding common beasts of burden, farm animals, etc.
- **Politics** - familiarity with heraldry, powerful families, perhaps some etiquette knowledge, etc.
- **Social** - etiquette, streetwise, local cultural details, artistic performance.

Some magic systems, including the one originally written for this campaign, assume that mages may produce arbitrary spells by combining skills from several broad Colleges of magic. In such systems, Colleges may be treated as broad skill groups.

The GM will need to define the range of skills covered by any specific group, so that players can know whether their PCs need to specialize more in any areas. (GM to Player: "No, your broad Animal Handling skill *doesn't* cover herding squirrels.")

4.4 Skill Disuse

For GMs and players who want to add a tiny bit of realism to the lives of their PCs...

Optionally, a character who rarely uses a specific skill may forget the skill, at least temporarily, or need more time when using it for the first time in a long time. This is especially applicable to skills known at low levels of expertise. This is realistic - often times people learn only enough of a skill to get them by once or twice, then never use it again. How often have you said, "oh, it's been ages since I've done that, I don't remember how to do it off the top of my head." The character may have to do a quick "refresher course" to be able to use the skill again.

For mysterious cosmic reasons, this rule *never* applies to the Bicycle skill and *always* applies to the Remember Birthdays and Aniversaries skill.

When used, this rule should not be allowed to bog things down. Perhaps a spell caster needs to double his time to cast Freshen Breath after having lived alone in his workshop for three years. Perhaps the magi.net mage can't *quite* remember if the mana streams need to be ordered blue, red, green, brown, white, or was it brown, green... And the "I was a good archery student at school, but now I'm an accountant" character might need a couple practice shots to get the feel of the bow when his village is suddenly attacked by a flock of massive, psychotic wombats.

5 Combat

Keep in mind that the combat rules given in this section are the ones intended for use by the author of this campaign. The campaign world itself is not tied to any specific combat system, and the GM is (as always) free to use a system of her choice rather than the (few) rules given here.

5.1 Combat Rounds

Combat happens in simultaneous combat rounds, per Fudge section 4.22. Each combatant picks a combat action (attack, defend, run away, etc.), then rolls an Opposed Action resolution vs. the appropriate skill, with a GM-set difficulty. The Fudge standard combat options are also allowed, except where explicitly "overridden" below.

5.2 Attack Options

Generally, any combat-related skill can be used as an attack option. Normally a Poor result is needed to hit a like-sized target in melee combat. Ranged weapons normally need a Fair or better result, unless the target is immobile or very large/small.

⁸ Perhaps add Fast Talk if the character has Good or better Intellect.

5.2.1 All-out Attack

When a combatant takes this option, he gets a +1 to his combat roll, but the opponent (if attacking him) also gets a +1 to hit the attacker, who has let his defenses down momentarily.

5.3 Defense Options (a.k.a., Active Defense)

A character may choose to actively defend himself instead of attacking. One method is the the Dodge skill (defaults to Dexterity). If the defender has a weapon which can reasonably be used for parrying, the defender's skill with that weapon can be used in a parry roll. Dodges may be treated exactly as a normal attack, but where a "hit" means the character avoids being hit, assuming he rolls better than his adversary.

The Combat Reflexes Gift gives a +1 to active defense rolls roll. Flight skill may be used in place of a dodge if the defender is airborne.

5.4 Optional: to-hit modifiers for Scale

This optional rule formalizes to-hit modifiers for relative Mass Scale of targets:

- For each 3 full Scale levels a defender is larger than an attacker, the attacker gets a +1 bonus.
- For each 3 full Scale levels a defender is smaller than an attacker, the attacker gets a -1 penalty.

These modifiers apply on to the chance to hit a target, and are not counted when calculating damage. Calculate damage as if the rolled degree was modified by the Scale modifier. Damage is of course also always modified by the *relative Scales* of the combatants, as per normal Fudge rules.

Example:

Pele (Scale 0) normally needs a Poor result to hit an ogre (Scale 3), sitting not far from him, with a bow. The ogre is 3 full Scale levels larger than Pele, so Pele gets a +1 to-hit modifier. He rolls a Fair result, modified by +1 for Good. He hit with a +2 relative degree, but damage is calculated as if he had only a relative degree of 0 (that is, minus the +1 modifier).

Example:

Pele is now shooting at Doaboba the ellyl (Scale -8) and needs a base result of Mediocre to hit the target. His to-hit modifier is -2. Again he rolls well: a Great roll, modified by -2 for a Fair result, which means a +1 relative degree. When calculating the damage, he uses his unmodified relative degree of +3 (again, that is the relative degree *minus* the -2 modifier).

Example:

Doaboba fires back at Pele. The GM rules his base to-hit target is Mediocre. He rolls his dice, hosing it with a Poor result. The result gets a +2 Scale modifier, for Fair. That hits, but for damage purposes we use the rolled relative degree of -1, which means that his bigger target was easier to hit but still difficult to do significant damage to. Good thing those arrows are poisoned...

5.5 Resolving the Attacks

When two combatants engage in one round, the combatant who rolled the highest relative result wins the combat round; an attacker scores a hit, and a defender successfully avoids being hit. If neither fighter makes his skill roll, or the relative result of the combatants' skill rolls is zero, the round ends in a standoff.

The defender's Damage Resistance is subtracted from the Damage, and the remaining is applied to the defender⁹ using standard Fudge rules:

Damage = Scale + Strength + Weapon + Relative Degree

Damage Resistance (DR) = Scale + Armor

The GM is free to introduce other Fudge options like damage modifier rolls.

Note that the Strength of a weapon might not be that of the character - missile weapons, in particular, might have a different Strength score than their wielder.

⁹ Do not confuse the word "defender" here with a character who used active defense that turn - in this context it refers to whomever is hit by an attack.

6 Gifts and Faults

Characters start with one Gift and may take up to three Faults in trade for extra Gifts, skill points, or attribute levels. Each Fault taken gives one extra Gift. Gifts and Faults are very abstract, and need not balance each other perfectly as long as the GM and player can agree on the combinations. A short list of some campaign-specific Gifts and Faults is given below. This list should be added to, and players are free to recommend their own. The GM may wish to consider some Gifts or Faults as "Minor" Gifts or Faults, and count them for only half value.

Characters may not take both the Gift and Fault form of any Scale-related Gifts or Faults, regardless of which Scale they apply to. For example, a character may not take Wounds Boxes Scale +1 and Wound Boxes Scale -1.

GMs are encouraged to come up with their own lists of Gifts and Faults (or recycle them from sources such as published Fudge material). This chapter details only a handful of Gifts and Faults.

6.1 Age

Anything other than "normal adventurer age" (17-40ish for humans) is a Fault:

Baby: Terrible in all attributes except (ideally) Health. See below.

Child: -2 ST, -1 INT, HP Scale -1, +1 Scratch wounds box, -50% Skill Points.

Upper-middle-aged: -1 ST, -1 DX, +50% Skill Points.

Old: -2 ST, -2 DX, +1 INT, HP Scale -1 or Wound Boxes Scale -1, +100% Skill Points.

The attribute adjustments are not cumulative. The skill point adjustments apply to starting skill point totals, and are not gained automatically if a PC ages during play. GMs will need to adjust that for the skill system they are using.

Exact age ranges are race-dependent and may be supplied by the GM if it ever becomes important.

Babies:

Babies of *all races* are a special case. They are inherently "cute", and almost always gain a Cuteness bonus of +3 in all social situations, even when faced with those who might otherwise be hostile to them (though then at "only" +2). It is an unexplainable and universal cosmic phenomena that to females of all races, every baby is "the most beautiful baby in the world, *yes he is!*" In the presence of a baby, especially a close relative, females universally find themselves uncontrollably saying things like, "I've never seen such beautiful blue eyes!" and "isn't he *just so cute?* Can I hold him?" Mothers of two or more children are often, but not always, able to control these outbursts.

6.2 Appearance

Most beings, regardless of race, are considered to be of average appearance to other members of that race. While humans might find ogres to be ugly, Brok might just find Forga to be extremely beautiful. Exceptionally good or bad appearance may be taken as a Gift or Fault, respectively. The Gift provides a +1 to any reaction rolls in which an especially pleasant appearance might make a difference. Likewise, the Fault gives a -1 on such rolls. An unattractive appearance can take many forms, from disformations (inborn or from injuries), an unusual hump on the upper back, or "maybe he just looks funny." Likewise, attractive appearances take on many forms. The GM may allow Very Attractive/ Unattractive, with a +2/-2 modifier, for 2 Gifts or Faults, or even a Gorgeous/Hideous Fault worth 3 Faults. A PC who is both Attractive and has the Gift of Charismatic is likely to turn heads when he or she enters the room, whereas Unattractive Charismatic characters might find that their natural charm overwhelms, or at least cancels out, any negative reactions due to their unfortunate physical appearance.

Races with distinctly different ideals about personal beauty are not likely to be affected by any appearance modifier. For example, most humans appear equally ugly to all ogres, and *vice versa*, and neither is likely to be affected by the other's relative appearance level.

6.3 Brainpower Scale

This scale is most appropriate on a species level, and not to distinguish individuals within a species (that's what the mental attributes are for). Each positive level (one Gift) of Brainpower Scale gives a +1 to most Intellect and Will rolls (the GM may veto this bonus in specific cases). Starting skill points are calculated with this bonus. This bonus affects most usage of mental skills. This can be justified via faster thinking processes, a greater general comprehension level, etc.

Each negative level (one Fault) does exactly the opposite. The Fault may be explained by lower memory capability, poor forward-thinking skills, slower thought processes, etc.

6.4 Combat Reflexes

Gives a +1 on active defense rolls, plus in other GM-determined combat situations. One with this gift never panics in combat. If initiative rules are used, characters with this Gift get +1 (assuming dF dice) or +2 (assuming d6) to their initiative rolls.

6.5 Enemies

Someone is out to get you. It may just be the newspaper boy to whom you still owe two Ae'udian Crowns, or maybe it's a member of the king's squad for handling "special cases." If you're a dragon, maybe it's every knight in shining armor who's ever ridden a horse in search of a maiden to rescue. The frequency of occurrence and power of the enemy can be used to help balance out other Gifts, if desired.

6.6 Fudge Scale

By default all action resolution is resolved using 4dF. Each positive level of Fudge Scale (one Gift) gives the character one extra die to roll during action resolution. Each negative level (one Fault) subtracts one die (maximum negative level is -4). Thus our Castle Guards, at Fudge Scale -3, will only roll 1dF in combat. But remember, with higher Fudge Scale comes the possibility of bigger blunders.

The GM may allow players to alter Fudge scale without it costing a Gift or Fault.

As an alternative, the GM may rule that any -1 results rolled with such "extra" Fudge dice may be ignored. The end effect is that a higher Fudge Scale might help and will never hurt.

6.7 Hit Points Scale

Hit Points Scale is generally more suitable on a species level, rather than a per-individual Gift or Fault, and may not be taken by PCs without GM consent. Each positive level (one Gift) adds one hit point to each of the damage levels on a character's record sheet. Thus the damage track looks like this:

HP Scale	Scratch	Hurt	Very Hurt	Incapacitated	Near Death
1	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13+
2	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17+
3	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+

Each negative level (one Fault) reduces the number of hit points, though not in exactly the same manner as the Gift does:

HP Scale	Scratch	Hurt	Very Hurt	Incapacitated	Near Death
-1	1	2	3	4	5+
-2	0	1	2	3	4+
-3	0	0	1	2	3+

This scale does not affect the number of wound boxes except in the case of a Fault: if a character with this Fault has 0 points for a given wounds level, all hit boxes for that level are also lost. Thus a character with HP Scale -3 has no Scratch or Hurt boxes - he gets Very Hurt if anything damages him! A character with this Fault is not affected by Hurt or Very Hurt dice penalties until he is actually wounded.

6.8 Magery (Magical Aptitude)

Magery is the inborn ability to "work with" magic, and the term "mage" technically refers to anyone with this Gift, though it is also used to mean people who cast spells. This may be purchased in up three levels, each costing one Gift. It is a prerequisite for all but the simplest of spells, and higher levels are a prerequisite for

the most powerful spells.. This gift may only be raised or gained after play begins with GM permission.

As a campaign bonus, each level of Magery gives the character some additional points to spend on skills. If using Five Point Fudge, treat each level as a single point of "general" skills, except that they skills purchased must be related to magic. If using a different skill system, then each Magery level should provide a few free levels of magic-related skills. These bonus points may not be saved up, nor traded for attributes. They represent the relative ease with which the character uses magic.

6.8.1 The Letter M

Some spells use the letter M to describe range, cost, duration, or effect, like "duration: M minutes," "affects M target creatures," or "Mana cost: 5-M" In these contexts M represents the Magery score of the caster.

6.9 Magic Resistance

This Gift is essentially the opposite of Magery, making a character more resistant to magic (all magic, desired or not). Each level of Magic Resistance gives a +1 to resist any resistible magic effect. Effects which are not normally resisted may have a lesser effect on beings with Magic Resistance, at the GM's whim. Some beings may have resistance only to certain types of magic. This could be reflected as a larger bonus to resist, or a lower "Gift value" for the Gift. Magic Resistance and Magery are mutually exclusive - a character may not have both.

6.10 Photographic Memory

The character remembers everything he thinks about remembering. This Gift reduces the cost of all mental skills by one point (minimum cost of 1 SP). The character's Intellect score is treated as being 2 higher for purposes of calculating starting skill points. If using Five Point Fudge then this gift should give the character one free skill level in a group for each point he spends in that group. For example, if he allocates 2 points to Combat skills, he would get 2 free levels to spread amongst his chosen Combat skills.

The player should be allowed to take notes as desired during play, and refer to them whenever desired. Additionally, if the player asks a question of the GM regarding something the character has seen, the GM must answer honestly (meaning giving the information truthfully, as the PC would interpret it).

Counts as 2 Gifts.

6.11 Wound Boxes Scale

This Gift/Fault is similar to Hit Points Scale, except that it gives (or takes) wound boxes. More than 3 levels of either must be approved by the GM.

Gift levels (not cumulative):

Level 1: +2 Scratches, +1 Hurt

Level 2: +2 Scratches, +1 Hurt, +1 Very Hurt, +1 Incapacitated

Level 3: +4 Scratches, +2 Hurt, +2 Very Hurt, +2 Incapacitated

A damaged character with this Gift still suffers skill penalties when wounded after one appropriate wound (Hurt or Very Hurt), and does not suffer the penalty per wound box (that is, if a character has 2 Hurt boxes and both are scratched off, he still only suffers a -1 penalty).

Fault levels (not cumulative):

Level 1: -1 Scratch, -1 VH

Level 2: -2 Scratches, -1 Hurt

Level 3: -3 Scratches, -1 Hurt, -1 Very Hurt, -1 Incapacitated

7 Intelligent Races

The world has a variety of intelligent races, most of which are available for use as PCs. Each race is briefly described below, along with a list of Gifts and Faults which all members of the race inherently have. These Gifts and Faults do not count toward a character's starting allotment, and some racial Faults can be bought off if the GM consents to it. Racial Gifts cannot normally be traded away.

Some races, not listed below, are rumored to exist, or once existed but were wiped out¹⁰.

7.1 Minimum Mana

(The following only applies if the campaign uses a Mana (or similar) attribute.)

Some races are magical in nature, and have a minimum Mana attribute requirement. All members of the species start out with that Mana score at no cost. A member of this race will die if his Mana attribute (not his *mana pool*) ever goes below that minimum. Mana reduction does not happen under normal conditions, and is not a daily threat, but it can happen. This death may be immediate or drawn-out (with a chance for escape), depending on the nature of the mana change and the GM's whim.

Some races may not actually die if they drop below their minimum, but may lose certain capabilities, take on new Faults, or be banished to a more magical dimension. Specific examples include dragons and Ellyllon, both of which are highly magical in nature. At a very minimum, they would lose their flight capabilities if their Mana drops too low. As always: GM's decision.

7.2 Languages and Literacy

Races typically have a racial language, but these get bastardized and abused over time and distance. While most humans can communicate with each other, that's no guaranty they will understand each other correctly¹¹. Traders often learn at least one language other than their native tongue, and knowing four or more languages is not unheard of. Written languages do not all use a common alphabet. Characters with the Literacy skill must purchase it for each language they wish to be literate in. The GM may allow some forms of literacy (or some languages) to default to the skill level in another language. A modern-day example of this is Norwegian and Danish - the languages are similar enough that speakers of either can normally understand the other. GMs should keep in mind that even amongst similar dialects of the same language, words are often used in completely different ways. Again, another modern-day example of this is the American term "pissed", meaning "angry", compared to British, where it means "drunken." When the PCs find a scroll written two centuries ago, it may very well use a much different dialect than the one the PCs know, just as modern written German looks rather different than the German text of 200 years ago.

7.3 Dragons

Dragons are highly magical creatures which, despite popular myth, do not breath any substance other than air. Perhaps a bit warmer than human or dog breath, but not hot. They are rather long, with four legs and massive teeth. They are agile, quicker than their appearance would suggest. Their speed and raw strength, combined with their claws and teeth, make them deadly combatants. Their front two "paws" are mostly prehensile, but not suited to fine-detail work. (It's not as if ripping a knight in two requires any finesse.)

Despite their being extremely magical in nature, and quite intelligent, it is uncommon for them to make great use of magic for spell casting. Few members of the spell-casting races are willing to teach dragons, largely because the temperament of dragons is not always non-lethal towards "small creatures" in their vicinity. Another reason is because those who practice magic well enough to teach a dragon understand that once a dragon learns how to cast fire spells, the nearby towns are not safe¹². This is not to say that no dragons cast spells. It is not uncommon for a dragon to learn Communication magic. They have a native language, but do not normally speak humanoid languages. They can teach and learn skills, assuming they can communicate. They typically live solitarily or in couples, but groups are sometimes seen. Unless hungry, a dragon normally pays little attention to smaller beings in its vicinity, treating them as modern Earth humans treat pigeons on the sidewalk, or as a turtle would treat a passing beetle. They are confident in their ability to eat whenever they damned well please, and therefore make no rush about finding their next meal.

Dragons attack with their claws, by biting, or even with their tails. They normally get only one attack per combat round, but they may be able to swipe at two or three, especially with their tails (this all depends on how much detail the GM wants in combat).

They have Good eyesight and a Great sense of smell, and female dragons have the ability to "smell" whether another dragon is related to them or not. A female can recognize her mother, father, and siblings by smell even if she has never seen them before. More distant relations can be detected, at a difficulty proportional to how far removed the relation is (GMs call - grandma should be easy, 3rd cousin might be difficult).

10 Or both: they are rumored to have been wiped out.

11 A classic example of one such misunderstanding is an American asking, quite innocently, of a Scot, "can I give you a ride?"

12 Of course, there are those who think that torching a village or two is a great way to spend a weekend.

Except when a female is "in heat", she is unlikely to accept any advances from male dragons, and they are fully capable of holding off aggressive males. Non-dragons cannot tell the difference between male and female dragons without a *very* close inspection. They breed at long intervals, at least waiting until their current litter of children have moved out or been killed, and some dragons never have more than one litter. Pregnant females gestate for 3 months then lay eggs, normally between 2 and 4 of them. The eggs hatch after 4-5 months, giving way to mostly-aware, but quite clumsy, baby reptiles.

Young dragons stay with their mother some years (estimates say between 4 and 10, but nobody but mother dragons really knows for sure). During this period, the mother teaches them to speak the dragon tongue (it is not unduly complex), trains them to hunt, and of the dangers of some of the smaller folk. Dragon mothers invariably raise their children in very secluded areas, preferring even to avoid the company of other dragons, as males are sometimes threats to the young offspring of other males. Though adult dragons each need their own space, and normally live some distance apart, many dragons maintain regular communications with their mothers and, indirectly, their siblings. Many continue learning skills from their mother for many years, but few maintain direct relations with their siblings, simply out of disinterest. Dragons are not terribly emotional creatures, and do not maintain tight emotional relationships with one-another, with the exception of female dragons raising their young, who have a built-in instinct to protect the young, and are particularly vicious when their brood is threatened.

It is not at all unheard of for a dragon father to take an active role in raising children, but most males do not attempt to do so. Females rarely request such help, and some refuse it. Adult males are normally considered a threat to children because female dragons refuse to mate while caring for children, and this often frustrates male partners to the point of violence. When a female's biological clock says she has to mate, however, she simply won't take no for an answer from any male she fancies.

Dragons are relatively common in some places, while wholly unknown in many other areas. Humans almost invariably try to exterminate any dragons found in the vicinity, though in some areas dragons are given sacrifices (normally food in the form of livestock), either in return for being left alone or in return for protection. They are very calculating creatures, and good forward-thinkers, and intelligent enough to negotiate if it seems in their best interests. Few dragons are outright fools.

Like alligators, dragons continue grow as long as they live. Nobody is certain how long they live, but some estimates say 200 years or more. A great number of dragons die before reaching adulthood, often from too many swords being stuck in their bodies. After reaching adulthood a dragon is relatively safe from humanity - they normally cannot be defeated by anything other than strong magic or siege equipment. Dragons do not appear to get "mentally old" until very late in their life - normally within a year or two, sometimes less, of their death. An old dragon who allows himself to grow weak might die under the weight of his own formidable armored scales.

While dragons have no native economies, as humans know them, some collect items which might be valuable to other races. Some dragons collect for trade, some to show off how many knights they've killed, and some just because they like the way the metal shines. Many dragons do not hoard anything, much to the disappointment of the adventurers who kill them in hopes of finding a huge mound of gold.

A GM may wish to allow dragons as PCs. Dragons are normally Fair in all attributes except Health, which is normally Great. Their overall intelligence level is approximately that of humans, but their thought processes and world views are *much* different, and dragons have much different personalities than humans do.

At least two dragons are known to have involved themselves in human affairs. One is the king of Duin (section [13.5](#)). The other was reportedly involved in a partnership with a human warrior: The two would travel from land to land together. The dragon would attack a village and the warrior would come in and "kill" it, but only after negotiating a handsome reward from the local rulers for "ridding the land of this menace!" Their scam went on for years before they both disappeared.

7.3.1 Racial Gifts and Faults

The Mana attribute (if used in the campaign) starts out at Great. If it ever somehow drops below Great the dragon will suffer GM-determined afflictions (at a minimum, loss of flight ability, and at worst, death).

One free level of the Gift of Magery

Enemies (normally, the older the dragon the more enemies he has)

Flight skill (level depends on age - see the chart below). Winged, max speed is about twice as fast as a horse, and much faster when diving. Against ranged weapons, Flight may be used in place of the Dodge skill (GM's discretion).

+1 Perception, +2 when using sense of smell

+1 Will

7.3.2 Dragon Age & Scale (no pun intended) Chart

Age (% of max)	STR Scale	Mass Scale	Combat Skill	Flight Skill	Armor	Claw/Bite Dmg
Baby (0-5%)	2-4	0-1	Fair	Mediocre	+1	+1
Young (6-15%)	5-6	2-3	Good	Fair	+2	+2
Adult (16-60%)	7-8	4	Great	Good	+3	+3
Old (61-80%)	9	5	Superb	Good	+4	+3
Ancient (81%+)	10	6	Legendary	Good	+5	+3

(GMs are of course encouraged to tweak this table to suit their needs.)

When calculating combat damage or defenses involving a dragon, its *Strength Scale* is used when it *deals* damage and *Mass Scale* is used when it *receives* damage. That is, Strength increases damage and Mass reduces it. Dragons' masses are unusually low for their size and strength, as they are flying creatures.

7.4 Ellyllon

The ellyllon are a slender, fairy-like, winged people standing between 16 and 22 centimeters and weighing less than a kilogram¹³. Though they may fly up to several hundred meters above the ground with no problem, they rarely fly above the treetops because birds of prey often attack Ellyllon. Their wings are large, curvy, and butterfly-like, though considerably more durable than butterfly wings. Each wing design is unique, much like each human's fingerprint is individual. Their wing colors range from browns to blues and greens, sometimes with brighter colors like yellow, orange or red. Most have an iridescent quality. Because of their beauty, the wings are often sought after for use in jewelry or artwork in lands which do not have native ellyllon (those which have them know better than to wear or display body parts of their neighbors).

They rarely live in settlements of other races, but most will often communicate with travelers they meet, regardless of their race. They normally live in heavily-wooded areas in temperate or warm climates, though they are also known to populate swamps. Ellyllon often learn many different magics, but few learn any magics at very high levels. They typically live between 40 and 60 years. Ellyllon normally live peacefully with other races in their area, and group in widely-varying populations: tribes of 30 or 40 to cities of thousands spanning a kilometer or more. They normally make their homes inside trees, though some prefer to nest amongst a tree's branches. They nest in family groups. The government varies from society to society, with a benevolent monarchies or matriarchies being most common (an elected mayor in one society, and general consensus in another). It is essentially unknown for Ellyllon to go to war with any other race - they generally prefer frolicking in the woods and getting on with life over fighting. In some areas, however, the Ellyllon are known for playing non-fatal pranks on the local humans or lidijn. Pilfering small objects from travelers is a common pastime of ellyllon youth, though the value of the objects plays no role - it's done only for the excitement (the type of excitement adults generally grow out of).

Ellyllon sometimes trade with other races, but when they do so it is normally only symbolic, as other races generally don't have much an ellyl can make great use of¹⁴, and vice versa. Ellyllon weaving, however, is renowned as the finest in the world by the larger races - none of the others can work with such small knots, and the detail in Ellyllon tapestries is unparalleled. Many human collectors consider it a shame that the Ellyllon never weave tapestries larger than about 1 square meter.

Most Ellyllon societies push the ideals of education, more-so than the other races, and most Ellyllon are fully literate in their native language.

Because of the constant danger from larger air-borne predators, Ellyllon rarely wander around alone. They normally learn spells to fend off such threats but they can't cast them while a large bird is pecking at their bellies, thus the general habit of group travel.

Ellyllon will readily use poisons to bring down prey and foes, and have no inherent sense of honor telling them that they must stay within an opponent's striking range. Rules of a fair fight, to an Ellyl, include flying high above an enemy and dropping things (like deadly spells and poisoned darts) on them. It is rare that an Ellyl learns to effectively use more than one hand weapon (if any), and they almost always have the Bow skill. This is a cultural preference which is not pervasive amongst all Ellyllon societies, but it is the norm. It is almost unheard of for Ellyllon to kill one another, and severe crimes are punished by banishment or

13 Adl Brite was an extremely large Ellyl, weighing in at a massive 3 kilos. Unable to get very high off the ground, he was swatted down one day by a playful cougar.

14 Though the handkerchiefs made by the humans do come in very handy, and the silk ones make nice blankets and shawls.

magically-enforced enslavement, and the offenders are conspicuously tattooed. Ellyllon often use tattoos to denote one's rank or social status. Some even have magical tattoos which can be changed at will.

Because of their very high voices and small diaphragms, when speaking to non-Ellyllon an Ellyl cannot normally be effectively understood from a distance of more than a couple meters.

Despite the stereotype, not all Ellyllon live lazily in the woods and play pranks on lone travelers¹⁵ - at least one Ellyllon society could be compared to the Incan empire, pillaging every village they find and killing indiscriminately¹⁶.

Ellyllon have never learned blacksmithy because the heat damages their wings. They do not mine, but sometimes trade with other races for metal. When they work metal, they do so with magic, but metals are very rarely used for anything other than weapons or ornaments. They avoid traveling underground if they can help doing so, and in their mythologies demons normally come from out of the ground¹⁷. This is why Ellyllon normally burn their dead, and never bury them. In some societies the Ellyllon offer their dead as food for the area's meat-eating birds, though the reason for this varies from mythology to practicing practical ecological solutions.

An Ellyl who loses his wings will normally die of depression within a few weeks. At a minimum he will suffer great mental trauma and probably take on new mental Faults. Loss of one's wings, even one of them, is considered one of the worst tragedies that can befall an Ellyl. Tales of children from the larger races tearing wings from Ellyl are often used to frighten Ellyllon children.

A Very Hurt Ellyl cannot sustain flight - he may attempt make an "emergency landing" somewhere nearby (Fair difficulty vs. Flight skill, with failure resulting in more wounds).

Pregnant Ellyllon gestate for 4 months before birthing a cocoon-like egg. The cocoon will hatch in another 6 to 8 weeks¹⁸, and the ellyl will become an adult at about the age of 10. Ellyllon females normally birth 2-5 children in their lives. Despite their short gestation period, females would appear to be able to conceive only during certain irregular, and unpredictable, cycles. The females "know" when it is there time, but generally cannot predict its coming nor how long it will last - maybe days, maybe months.

Most Ellyllon partner up for life, though a widow or widower sometimes remarries, especially if he or she has no offspring. There is a strong cultural taboo against sex outside of marriage in most Ellyllon societies, but some more remote societies do not have this taboo. Most Ellyllon are hopeless romantics, and sex "for the sake of sex" is much less of a driving force in Ellyllon nature than it is in, say, humans or lidijn, not to speak of goblins.

It would be a fair question to ask why Ellyllon are not captured by the larger species and kept as pets or curiosities. In fact, a few are but they are always either magically enslaved or raised in captivity since a very young age. Ellyllon in general have shown enough magical adeptness to make mundane attempts at containing Ellyllon an exercise in suffering, thus they are seldom sought as pets. There is an occasional human who thinks that keeping one around brings good luck, however, so subjugation of the race is an issue to some small degree. They are not hunted as food by any intelligent race because there's simply not enough meat on them. Some animals, however, have no compulsion against eating a passing ellyl.

The Ellyllon language is a beautiful one, with far more vowel sounds than most languages. It is next to impossible for larger races to natively imitate because the vocal range is so drastically different. It can be learned on a different vocal scale, though. Ellyllon unused to listening to larger races may not understand even if the speaker is fluent in the language, due to the difference in vocal ranges.

Because of the inherent instability of a platform supported by the flapping of wings, Ellyllon are at -1 to attack skill (and possibly other skills) while flying. However, they while airborne they can use their innate Flight skill defensively, making them difficult to hit because they can move freely and quickly in any direction. The GM may allow them to use their Flying skill level as a substitute for a Dodge skill (or the like).

When it comes to protecting their territory (which normally means keeping it hidden), the ellyllon are masters of their domain. They use every sort of trickery to keep their secrets, and are known to frighten intruders away without ever having to reveal themselves. When a party wandering through the forest finds unexplainable, weird things keep happening, Brave Robins just won't leave them alone, deep howls and large shadows in the distance, etc., they may be the recipients of a subtle "don't go there!" message from the local ellyllon. When this happens, it is normally a good idea to not walk in the direction in which weird things happen. If it's *not* the ellyllon, it's probably *also* a good idea to turn around!

15 Though if you're in Friijn, they certainly do.

16 Fortunately, Ellyllon are too small to rape their non-Ellyllon victims.

17 And, myth says, the goddess Ayrjed saw fit to give the Ellyllon wings, so that they could avoid the earth-bound demons.

18 Or not. An unhatched cocoon is burned.

7.4.1 Racial Gifts/Faults

Strength/Mass Scale: -8

Inherently magical creatures, the Mana attribute (if used in the campaign) starts out at Good. If it ever somehow drops below Good the ellyl will suffer GM-determined afflictions (at a minimum, loss of flight ability, and at worst, death).

One free level of the Gift of Magery

+1 Dexterity

+1 to Perception rolls, learned from constantly being on the lookout for large birds of prey and playful wildcat kittens.

Flight, winged, max speed is a bit less than a sprinting human.

Flight skill: Great. Can be used in place of an active Dodge ability.

Hiding skill: Great (Superb and higher are very common)

7.5 Goblins

The Goblins are a small, mountain-dwelling, slightly xenophobic race of humanoids. To be fair, their xenophobia is a learned behavior - goblins are often on the butt end of any deals they enter into with larger races. They are short-lived, generally argumentative, and often bitter about their "low status" when it comes to interacting with other races. These traits have held them back from interacting socially with the other major races on a large scale. They are extremely social within their own ranks, however, and there are very few lone goblins. Goblins generally dislike like being alone, and tend to spend all waking hours in the presence of other goblins¹⁹.

Goblins are not expansionists, and tend to stay in the mountains, but will fight if their homes, mines, or hunting grounds are threatened. When they do travel, it is normally to pillage - inter-tribal rivalry is quite common, though goblin settlements lack the numbers to support outright war. They mostly live underground, in the caves they create during their mining work, though some live outside.

Some goblin tribes live as roaming trade caravans, carrying goods and news from one goblin settlement to the next. They are sort of the Red Cross of the goblin world - they are seen as a clearly neutral party in all of the rivalry which permeates goblin society, and to attack such traders would bring the wrath of many other tribes. Tribes normally do not exceed 400 goblins, partly because so many are killed in inter-tribal fighting and partly because goblins are not particularly efficient farmers or hunters, and therefore cannot normally sustain large populations. At least one goblin tribe is known to be led by a deranged human, and is known to have farms. Tribes often split up once they realize they have grown too big to manage.

Goblins are small, slightly smaller than Lidijn, and will generally avoid combat with larger creatures if they can avoid it. They normally stand between 100 and 140 centimeters high. Physically appearance varies drastically from goblin to goblin, from cute-and-cuddly looking to something to give children nightmares. Physical appearance has little, if anything, to do with the actual behavior of a goblin, however²⁰. Most are lazy creatures who would rather be playing, eating, drinking or procreating than doing anything else. They are easily excitable, however, and also easy to keep entertained. Almost each and every one of them would have loved Charlie Chaplain.

Not known for their fighting prowess, goblins rely heavily on superior numbers to succeed in combat, preferring 5 to 1 odds or better. Their weapons and armor are normally metal, but of low quality²¹. Goblin guards/patrols normally learn one melee weapon at Fair, and miners can be considered to have Pick-axe skill at Fair²². Hunters learn Bow or Spear at Fair.

They mine and work their own metal, and mining is a very common goblin occupation. They often use metal currency of some sort within their tribes²³. With the exception of their shaman, they do not normally tolerate "academic" occupations within their society, preferring that one "work for his place in the tribe." Criminal offenders are often killed by their fellow tribe members. Goblin crime is unique in that committing a crime is not technically against their law - *getting caught* doing something illegal is against the law²⁴. They justify that if you get away with it, it's legal. Crimes include killing another goblin without a good reason and having sex

19 When given a choice of races. A goblin adventurer would settle for the company of his dungeon-hacking mates.

20 Though some who have encountered goblins discount that, claiming that, "evil is as evil looks."

21 Indeed, almost all goblin-made goods are low quality relative to the works of the other races.

22 Note: due to its inherent imbalance, a pick-axe is at -1 when used to parry. Goblin pick-axes have +2 ODF.

23 Though getting two tribes to use a common currency would be a neat trick.

24 Admitting to a crime is usually considered the same as getting caught.

with the partner of a socially-superior goblin²⁵.

Goblin females gestate for 6 months, giving birth to 1-2 children at a time. Adulthood is reached by the age of 10. Females generally have 3-6 children during their lives, and up to 10 is not unknown.

Goblins older than 30 are rare, and 40 years appears to be the absolute limit. It is not unknown for a goblin to be born with Magery, though the difficulty in finding a goblin teacher ensures that few goblins ever really attain any magical might²⁶. Goblin mages normally become tribal shamans, though some use their skills in the mines or for hunting. Few ever have a chance to learn any formal spells, but might work out some rudimentary rituals to work minor magics. Elder shamans normally teach their skills to their apprentice (if any), but not all are so willing to share.

Goblins are sometimes said to be, "the race most likely to be the first to die out from the disease of Human Expansionism." While they are deeply bitter about their status, when approached with good manners and shown respect as living beings, goblins are normally quite agreeable people. Most would, despite their pride, happily agree to live in the more comfortable settlements of the more advanced races.

Goblins have only a simple written language, consisting of an inconsistent set of pictographs, each representing a concept, and often leaving lots of room for ambiguity and misrepresentation. Their spoken language is not nearly as expressive as those of the larger races. Curiously, this is partially because the widely-varying shapes of goblins make many complex sounds more or less difficult for each member, so the language is reduced to the least common denominator when it comes to vocal sounds. You won't hear any rolled R's or unlauded vowels in goblin speech, for example. It is a rough language, with lots of hard consonants.

When PCs come into contact with goblins, the GM is encouraged to emphasize their widely varying physical attributes, to give the PCs something they can relate to each goblin. For example, if the goblins are described as "the short, disproportionately round one" and "the skinny one with long, pointy ears", PCs may come up with nicknames, like Tubby and Pointy. This may help the PCs cross the mental gap from goblins-as-monsters to goblins as an intelligent (if often widely misled) species.

7.5.1 Racial Gifts/Faults

Strength/Mass Scale: -2

Will -1

Night Vision (not quite catlike, but good)

Cowardice, Xenophobia, and other mental/emotional Faults are common, but not required.

Goblins as a whole are slightly less intelligent than humans and lidijn, and somewhat more intelligent than ogres.

7.6 Humans

The single-most space-taking race. They are the average. You know what they're like.

7.7 Lidijn

Lidijn (pronounced LAY-dane) is the native word for a race of slender, graceful people standing between 130 and 155 cm tall. They almost never live in human settlements, preferring an independent life, though many lidijn trade with nearby humans or goblins. Their voices are higher-pitched than humans, with adult males having a vocal range equivalent to human boys, and adult females having a voice much like that of human girls, though sometimes rather shrill and annoying to human ears. They live in almost all terrains, some in permanent cities and some as nomads in the plains, deserts or woodlands. Most lidijn know at least a small handful of spells, typically ones which help them in their day-to-day work. By human standards the lidijn have many mages, but given that they are all born with the Gift of Magery, relatively few lidijn dedicate their lives to the study of magic. They very often learn one or two artistic skills, like the ability to play an instrument or sing or dance exceptionally well. Dancing and singing are common parts of many lidijn customs, and the folk are not at all embarrassed by public displays of merriment. When traveling in groups, lidijn will often sing traditional songs to both pass the time and frighten away most violent animals. Many humans consider lidijn to be hyperactive, but this is more of a stereotype. When necessary, however, they can be uncannily quiet,

²⁵ Climbing the social ladder is a common past-time of many goblins, and thus few goblin kings remain in power very long.

²⁶ There is a story of an exceptional goblin who came to the valley in search of a human teacher. After eight years of apprenticeship the goblin returned to the mountains, claiming he would take leadership of his tribe, and "bring them into Modern Times." No one is quite sure what became of him.

and most non-city-dwelling lidijn are masters of hiding amongst trees, reeds, or whatever is available. They make excellent woodland scouts.

Lidijn is both singular and plural form of the word. Humans often abbreviate it to "lay" (singular) or "lays" (plural), though this is not a considerably nice term, and is avoided when one does not wish to come across as racially insensitive.

Their language is a pretty one, with many sing-songy sounds, and has two forms: High and Common Speech. High Speech is the mostly-original lidijn tongue, and is used in all formal dealings and often used in trade. Common Speech is used in day-to-day life, but each region develops its own dialect, and dialects are not always completely understood by "foreign" lidijn. When a non-lidijn learns the language, assume it is High Speech unless noted otherwise.

Lidijn gestate for 8 months, single births being most common, and twins uncommon. Adulthood is reached around the age of 15. Lidijn typically live between 60 and 80 years, though a few have been known to live past 100. Their long age is attributed mainly to their culture having more mages, especially healers, than most other races. This increases their lifespan considerably over those of more primitive cultures.

Despite all of the apparent similarities between humans and lidijn, they do not appear to be able to create offspring together. This does not stop them from pairing up now and again, however.

Humans often envy lidijn for their more comfortable lifestyles, inherent Magery, and their grace. Such envy is normally expressed as awe and wonder, rather than violence. Lidijn in general are almost always well-received by humans. Of all of the intelligent species, lidijn and humans have more direct contact than any others.

7.7.1 Racial Gifts/Faults

Strength/Mass Scale -1

Dexterity +1

Magery 1

Free skills: Dancing and a musical instrument, both at Fair level

7.8 Ogres

The largest of the humanoids, ogres range in personalities and form almost as much as humans, but rarely mix with humans except perhaps to trade. Some enter service with other races as heavy laborers or in the military. They are not especially well-known for any particular skill, unless you count the fact that few intelligent beings will willingly face an ogre in fair combat. Humans normally fear ogres, and often attack single ogres if there is little chance of any human casualty. They tend to live in tribes of 10-50. In some locales ogres and the other local races are at war, while in other areas they trade, or at least generally leave each other be. Ogres typically live between 30 and 45 years, though most die under violent circumstances before then. It is not unknown for an ogre to have Magery and know a few spells. These ogres almost invariably become tribal shamans, who's exact roles varies from tribe to tribe, from leader to advisor to the tribal doctor.

Ogres have learned much from watching the other races, and some farm, and a small number also mine metals for use in trade with other races. Some allow themselves to work as miners or soldiers for other races, and ogrish infantry are highly feared on the battlefield (but their day to day maintenance is more than most commanders can tolerate). Some tribes even attempt to mimic the lifestyles of successful neighbors, but their uncreative nature makes this difficult for them.

Ogres are generally not creative enough to use slang in their language, and only invent new words with great difficulty. Curiously, most speak a remarkably pure form of the original ogrish language (though many words have fallen out of use in some areas, e.g. ogres which live in the desert might have lost the word for snow). Ogres have no formal written language, but do sometimes use a very primitive hieroglyphic-like writing, made up of simple yet somehow logical symbols.

Due to their gullibility and formidable physical statures, ogres have sometimes been talked into supporting charismatic madmen or powerful wizards. A few ogres freely hire themselves out as soldiers, and several reputable mercenary bands of ogre soldiers operate around the world.

There have been many independent attempts at enslaving ogres. It might seem like a worthwhile idea to force an ogre into digging your mines, plowing your fields, or building your castle. However, experience has shown over and over that it takes so many men to adequately control an unwilling ogre, that it's just not worth the effort. You're better off with the eight men working than with one ogre working and eight men constantly keeping an eye on him. Most enslaved ogres have eventually, often spontaneously, rebelled, always leaving an ugly mess behind them. While there is little sense of goodwill and brotherhood towards ogres, most

kingdoms have come to grips with the idea that ogres are here to stay. Ogres are often the target of much "political interest" from various kingdoms, as no king wants his neighbor to hire the ogres away as soldiers. Ogres make extremely effective brute-force soldiers, and no king wants his soldiers to have to face them in battle. Sometimes rulers have been known to send out massive squads of soldiers to eliminate whole ogre villages.

7.8.1 Racial Gifts/Faults

Strength/Mass Scale +4 (some travelers tell of tribes of pygmy ogres, probably of Scale 2)

Brainpower Scale -1

-1 Mana

-2 reaction from most other races (various negative reputations, depending on where one lives).

Good Sense of smell: +1

Fault: Uncreative creatures, ogres rarely invent any new concepts, and their lifestyle has been fairly static as long as anyone can remember. They can be taught, and some do mimic other races they meet, but few non-ogres are willing to directly attempt to teach an ogre anything at all.

Common faults include Gullibility and various Odious Personal Habits (though these habits may not be odious in the context of an ogre tribe). Eating uncooked meat (without even gutting the animal first), a near-complete lack of personal hygiene, and their general lack of a nudity taboo are habits which often disturb members of other cultures.

There are no reliable reports of "half ogres", the offspring of man and ogre, but such stories are sometimes used to scare children. The term half-ogre is sometimes used to mean "particularly unattractive," as in, "damn, now he's a half-ogre, ain't he?"

8 Monsters

The world is full of things which go bump in the night. Some of them just shuffle around, making soft noises. Some of them push over castles. The high amount of magical energy in the world has certainly influenced the variety in the Monster kingdom. Despite popular portrayal of "monsters" in fantasy gaming, the monsters listed here will generally try to escape death when they can - if they are heavily wounded and escape is an option they will generally attempt it²⁷. Also, despite common belief, monsters live within a more-or-less balanced ecosystem, and characters will not find hoards of different species of monsters in every second room of any abandoned underground structure.

Many of the monsters listed here are named using a "descriptive name." Many localities will have local names for these beasts.

8.1 Brave Robin

This little bird is actually harmless, but *it doesn't know that*. During mating season, Brave Robin males try to impress the females by antagonizing any larger creature they can find. The larger the better. On the ground, they hold up their wings, making themselves look much larger, while hopping around on their little feet and peeping violently. In the air they flit around the target, peeping madly the whole time but never actually attacking. They normally continue their "assault" until one of the following happens:

- The "foe" moves out of bird's territory.
- The foe dies. If he plays dead (just lies still) the bird will do a brief victory dance, flitting and jumping around the body of his defeated foe. After a moment the robin will get bored, or get the attention of a female, and fly off.
- If the robin becomes seriously threatened, he will leave, but may continue to peep at the foe from a distance.
- It is not unknown for the robin to be eaten or otherwise killed. Some 3/4ths of Brave Robin eggs hatch male birds, but far fewer live long enough to breed.

The robins do have a few "foes" they won't antagonize, at least not up close. These include anything which looks (to them) like a cat or large snake (small snakes get no mercy, and might even be pecked at).

Even to ellyllon, Brave Robins are not dangerous, only annoying. Some ellyllon villages use nearby robins as early warning systems, and may even keep some around to subtly drive casual forest wanderers away from the ellyllon village.

27 There are, of course, stubborn members in every race who just don't know when to run.

8.2 Flying Mouth

Scale 0

All attributes at Fair except Intellect (Poor).

Natural Armor +1

Natural Attack (bite) +2 damage, Fair skill.

Magical Flight, Fair skill

These sperm-shaped, 2-meter long carnivores fly around looking for carrion or live meat. They cannot fly more than about 2 meters off the ground, but can stay airborne as long as they like (but not while sleeping). They often travel in groups of 3 to 8, and are well-known to farmers as killers of livestock. They very rarely attack groups of humans, but lone travelers may be subject to attack by herds of Mouths. Mouths move rather silently, and can normally surprise potential victims who do not have animal-keen senses.

8.3 Giant Swamp Toad

Scale -1

About 1 meter in diameter, these oversized Kröte are not dangerous to Goblin-sized and larger folk, but pose a serious threat to Ellyllon. They sit silently in wait until prey crawls or flies by. They blend in well with the swamp, giving a -2 penalty on any rolls to spot them as long as they are still. They can hit most moving targets within 2 meters on a Fair roll and immobile targets on a Poor roll. The target takes no damage but is immediately hauled into the toad's mouth unless it makes both a Good Dexterity roll and a Good Strength roll (assuming Ellyllon scale). The average Ellyl normally fills the mouth enough to let an arm, leg, or wing hang out dramatically for a moment before the toad swallows it. Digestion is invariably fatal for the victim.

Some swamp dwellers claim there's good eating on one of these. Swamp-dwelling Ellyllon tend to mercilessly keep their areas clear of these animals.

8.4 Liches

While these are generally considered to be stories to scare children with, the stories are common enough to warrant some comment. Liches are powerful undead creatures risen from the bodies of powerful mages who are into that sort of thing. Nobody knows for sure the magics involved, but some speculate the spells are unique for each individual. Liches are said to command armies of undead soldiers and live in dark mountaintop castles. There certainly haven't been any such reports in recent memory²⁸.

8.5 Skeletons

Skeletons come in two varieties: those bound to spirits (undead) and those animated by pure magic (non-undead, also called animated). They are typically Fair in all attributes, except for intelligence, as described below. Raising a skeleton requires magic skills and a largely-intact skeleton. The exact magic skills need depends on the type of skeleton (undead or animated). Only those familiar with the different types of skeletons can visually tell the difference between them, and only after observing one for a moment and making a Fair Intellect roll.

Skeletons cannot speak without additional magics (normally requiring the Mind or Air colleges).

Skeletons fall apart, losing their magic, when they reach the Incapacitated wound level. They may be re-animated if the GM decides that the wounds were not great enough to damage too many bones.

The Mana costs shown below assume a magic system based on the Gramarye.

8.5.1 Undead Skeletons

Magics: Body, Spirit, Control

Cost: 12 MP + 12 MP per scale level. Negative scale gives -1 MP per scale, minimum cost of 4 MP.

Difficulty: Good, +1 for every level of skeleton's Intelligence over Poor.

Undead skeletons can be quite intelligent, and are capable of creative activity, but are bound to serve their creator and cannot knowingly pervert their master's commands²⁹. They are often used to lead groups of

²⁸ Mad Bubba Aelkin, from Wattack, will swear up and down the long-dead mayor of the town has risen from the dead and is plotting to re-control the village.

²⁹ A blundered roll to create an intelligent skeleton may raise the skeleton with a malicious spirit. If the

Animated skeletons.

Undead Skeletons are immune to Mind magic, but most Spirit magic affects them.

8.5.2 Animated Skeletons

Magics: Body, Motion, Control

Cost: 8 MP + 8 MP per scale level. Negative scale gives -1 MP per scale, minimum cost of 4 MP.

Difficulty: Great (Optional: Good difficulty if all bones are first joined together with string)

Non-undead (animated) skeletons are not intelligent, and are not capable of creative activity. They can obey only simple tasks. The caster can "take over" the skeleton's movement at any time as long as he is within sight of the skeleton. This requires 2 MP per minute (+1 per scale of the skeleton³⁰), but normally no skill roll is needed. Most physical skills performed "through" a skeleton will carry a penalty. This is not a form of possession, just physical control over the motion of the skeleton.

Being mindless and soulless, animated skeletons are immune to any Mind- or Spirit-based magic.

8.6 Trolls

Strength: Great

Dexterity: Good for combat purposes, but manual dexterity is Poor.

Health: Superb

Intellect, Will: Fair, but the overall intelligence level is only slightly higher than that of an ape.

Scale: 2-3

Regeneration: One Scratch heals each 4 hours. Other wounds heal more slowly: the lowest-level Wound Box is regenerated (reduced one level) per day. That is, after all Scratches are healed, a Hurt wound is reduced to a Scratch.

+1 to Perception rolls regarding smell or hearing

Hit Points Scale +1

Wound Boxes Scale +1

Natural Armor: +1

Natural Attack: +1 damage, skill: Good

Trolls are filthy, unintelligent humanoids who come in a variety of sizes. They are tall and lanky, very hardy creatures, capable of digesting just about anything organic, and exceedingly difficult to kill. Trolls appear to be magical in nature, and their tough, rubbery skin has an unusual green tint. Their dark-colored hair grows thinly all over the body, their heads, chests, and genital areas having more hair than the rest of the body. They wear no sort of clothing, not even simple furs.

Trolls heal very quickly, and any troll which is not *thoroughly* killed may be able to regenerate enough to rise again! Trolls can survive at least as long as humans without eating, so one left on the battlefield with an incapacitating wound will eventually regenerate enough to get up and walk away (and he'll probably be *really hungry!*). Though completely dismembering a troll normally does the job, the only sure way is to completely destroy it with fire, acid, severely destructive magics, or the like.

In combat trolls will fight hand-to-hand unless they can find something to use as a club. Anything but lumbering, trolls are flexible and strong, and merciless combatants. Unlike the stereotypical film-based monsters, these beasts don't stand over their prey and gloat, going for some sort of dramatic presentation. Instead, they move quickly and their prey is dead. Then they eat it, possibly after several trolls have ripped its limbs off while fighting over the corpse. Trolls will eat carrion when live no prey can be found.

Trolls sometimes live alone, partnering up long enough to mate, but most live in small tribes lead by the strongest and most aggressive male. Females look after their children until the children wander off on their own (normally around the age of 3-4) or integrate fully into the tribe. They have no language more advanced than grunts, growls and such, and cannot communicate many ideas more complex than can be expressed by a modern-day ape (not counting the ones who are scientifically trained to communicate!). Trolls often hunt alone, though hunting parties are also quite common. While individual trolls will not normally attack groups of humanoids, hunting/scavenging parties are known to raid villages or suburban areas.

GM makes animation rolls in secret, the caster may not immediately realize this.

30 unless it is of a smaller scale than the caster, in which case the MP cost is not changed.

9 Magic

GMs should feel free to use their own preferred magic system - the campaign itself does not rely so much on specific rules of any given system. Nonetheless, GMs, should try to keep the cultural effects of the magic rules in mind for purposes of world development. The GM should choose one (or two, or three) system(s) and stick with it (or them). By considering how the magic rules might affect how magic is used in the large scale and long term, the GM can get a better idea about how various aspects the magic system might affect society as a whole. For example, cheap and easy enchantment of magical items will lead to household use of magics, whereas difficult and expensive enchantments will always remain the properties of the rich and powerful.

The magic system designed specifically for this campaign is called from *Yet Another Gramarye*, and is available as a separate document. In this world, normally only mages learn any magic, but simple spells may be learned by non-mages with the GM's permission. Spells learned by non-mages should have their difficulty level increased by one for purposes of learning and using the spell - the Magery Gift provides a much better internal sense of magical energies, which are difficult for non-mages to tap into.

9.1 Magics which do not exist

Some magics simply do not exist in this world, or are only rumored to exist. These include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Light-based invisibility (i.e., making a caster see-through). If the caster was invisible, light would pass through his retina, blinding him. Mind-based "invisibility", where a target's mind is tricked into not seeing the mage, does exist, as do various forms of hiding spells based on illusions.
- Inter-planar travel. Some claim to have done it, but rumors are many and facts are few.
- Resurrection. When you've gotta go... you're gone. Communing with souls is practiced by some but is decried as necromancy by most.
- Protection From/Detect/Find [name of abstract, ill-defined concept]. Specifically, Protection From Good/Evil, per se, do not exist, because Good and Evil are undefinable. For something as generic as Detect Lies to work the caster must specify what he believes the truth is (which rather defeats the need of using magic to detect the opposite of that "truth"). Magics like Protection from Water/Fire/Earth are feasible because they target tangible concepts, so to say, but the sort of protection must be defined when the spell is created. For example, does Earth pass through the caster, stop when it hits him, or avoid him in a way similar to an anti-magnet? All three might be useful in different contexts, and might be different spells altogether, depending on how much detail the GM and players want to introduce into the campaign's magic system.
- Temporal Magic - time itself cannot be manipulated. If it *can* be done, only some gods can do it. If there are any gods.
- Teleportation and "gate" magic. Magics for rapid transport do exist, but not for traveling *that* fast. Rumors of such magics abound, but the PCs should not have immediate access to them. The GM should think carefully before introducing such magics, as the effects on cultures are even greater than those which the automobile brought about in our world. Witch-hunt mentalities could easily become a problem once the fear starts to set in that a wizards can pop into one's home or castle at any time... especially after the first teleporting assassin kills a ruler or three this way. Anything could happen, really, which is why it is best left out of the campaign if the GM wants any sort of cultural stability in her world. On the other hand, if you want the world to be going through a massive cultural revolution, introduce it freely. It will affect many aspects of travel, trade, and military, along with introducing many major side-effects in seemingly unrelated areas (e.g. goods which previously could not be transported long distances are suddenly opened to new markets).

9.2 Magic and the Environment

Magical energies have played a large part in shaping the ecosystem of the world, the flora and fauna as much as the cultures. In some parts of the world is practically overflowing with mana, available to those who know how to tap into it. There are stories of those who have come across literal pools of magical energy, ready to be tapped by any mage.

9.3 Hoyle's Household Magic

Hoyle's Household Magics is a classical work, and most cities with a decent literacy rate have at least a couple copies floating around. Hoyle was a wizard who got the great idea to first teach all of his new students how to keep his home clean. He taught them magics for washing dishes, dusting the floor, lighting fires (and putting them out), dusting the rugs, stirring dishes, and all manner of other household-related magics. While many students despised that part of their training, it did teach them important fundamentals for their later studies in Control, Air, Fire, Water, and Earth magics. A couple of his more enterprising students left to go

make a business out of teaching the staff of noble households how to get ahead of their game using a bit of magic. While not every non-mage can master all of the various cantrips, many of them are learnable by anyone without a specific aversion to magic (e.g. the Magic Resistance Gift). Specifically, spells explicitly requiring knowledge of specialized magical colleges, like Start Fire and Boil Water, are not castable by non-mages.

Every now and then Hoyle publishes an updated edition of his work. He makes very little money off of his book, however, because it is copied and re-sold by many outside of Hoyle's homeland.

For most purposes, anyone who learns Hoyle's book, a Mediocre difficulty magical College skill, can cast any of the basic cantrips in the book. Mages may also adapt them in new ways. All are very simple, requiring only a Poor difficulty roll unless noted otherwise. The GM may require knowledge other Colleges of magic, like Fire or Water, for some effects (lighting candles, boiling water).

The list of basic cantrips includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Dustaway.** Costs 2 mana. Removes all dust and other extremely light materials in 4 square meters and deposits it in the center of that area, ready to be scooped up and disposed of. This is an easy way to clean up after spilling a bag of flour.
- **Stir Dish.** Costs 2 mana. Causes a spoon, fork, or similar utensil to stir a specific dish for up to 5 minutes. The caster may change the stirring speed and direction, or move the utensil to another dish, by willing it so. Used for mixing dough and ground meat, scrambling eggs, and mixing soups.
- **Slice 'em, dice 'em.** Cost 2 mana per minute. Causes a knife to chop up vegetables, meat, etc., which are laid in front of it. If no choppables are within approximately 1 meter it stops chopping (this is a built-in safety measure in the spell). The caster must watch over the cutting, and feed choppable material to the blade, but the knife will cut much more quickly and accurately than most people can do so by hand, without any risk of cutting a finger in the process.
- **Beat Rug.** Costs 2 mana per rug. Cast by first hanging a rug, blanket, or similar across a line, then activating the spell. The rug behaves as if being beaten by invisible sticks, though anyone standing in front of it will not feel anything. The rug will be beaten until no more dust comes out of it. No unusual harm will come to the rug.
- **Wash.** Costs 3 mana per tub of wash. Causes a sink or tub full of dishes or clothes to be washed, as if by an invisible helper. A bar of soap, rags, and such, should be placed beside the tub, and the helper will make use of them. The spell ends when everything which was in the tub when the spell was cast has been washed. Cleaned dishes or clothes are placed beside the tub, or on a nearby drying rack if one is provided while casting the spell. One casting is enough to clean a large sink full of dishes or a few articles of not-too-dirty-clothing. Extremely filthy clothes (stained with goblin brains, dragon blood, and ogre crap) might need to be washed individually to get them clean.
- **Spilled Milk.** Costs 2 mana for a glass-sized spill, or 3 mana for up to 4 liters. Causes liquids to evaporate away within a few seconds. The caster must touch the spilled liquid while casting, and only parts of the spill contiguous to the part(s) the caster touched will be swept away (this is to keep unspilled drinks in the area from draining when someone casts this spell nearby). The effect takes only 5 or 10 seconds or so. GM may require Water College or at least a couple Water spells before learning this.
- **Uproot.** Costs 1 per square meter of plants uprooted. Causes small plants and weeds within 1 square meter, centered around the caster, to be uprooted. Anything a child could not pull out of the ground will not be affected. Primarily used to help in harvesting potatoes, turnips, carrots, and such. More powerful, non-cantrip variants of this spell exist for use on large farms, and are normally made up of Control and Earth magics.
- **Mend.** Costs 1 mana to mend a small hole, 2 for large rips. Takes 1-5 minutes. Given sufficient raw materials (needle(s), thread, and cloth for patching, if needed), this spell sets to work patching a designated hole. Requires a Fair difficulty roll, due to the continuous fine manipulation the spell needs. The quality of the mend is determined by the skill roll: a Fair result is noticeably a patch, where a Great or higher result results in nearly good-as-new work. The spell can also mend buckets, baskets, and such, given appropriate materials. Mending magical materials might disturb their magic in unpredictable ways (as might ripping them in the first place).
- **Stay Fresh.** Costs 1 mana per liter of liquid (like milk), loaf of bread, or similar-sized meat product. Effectively halts aging of the food for a day, prolonging the shelf-life of foods. While the spell is in effect (it can be recast if needed), milk won't curdle, fish and meat won't rot, bread won't grow mouldy. It does not destroy any existing mold or bacteria (not that anyone in this world knows what a bacteria is). A common clever use of the spell is keeping cut flowers looking good longer. More powerful variants of this spell are often used by food merchants to extend shelf-lives of food by weeks. Some use enchanted cartons in which all contained foods are magically kept fresh for long periods. (Campaign note: such containers effectively replace real-world refrigerators, which were invented in our world to preserve food.)

Everyday household items enchanted with a spell from Hoyle are becoming quite common in large cities. Each is normally enchanted to work a few times per day, after which it must recharge for a while, drawing in

mana during its down-time.

GMs and players should feel free to improvise any number of Hoyle-style spells during play, or come up with interesting uses for the basic cantrips. Some of them come in handy during more conventional adventures.

9.4 Enchantment

The business of "enchancing" items - binding magical effects to them - is quickly becoming popular in major cities around the campaign. Any mage with the right skills can make a fairly good living by creating simple day-to-day magical items for sale at the local market. Some commonly-seen items include light-sticks (analogous to modern-day flashlights), auto-stirring spoons and bowls, self-cleaning eating utensils and clothing, etc. Enchantments are especially popular in both the war and entertainment industries.

Enchantment is assumed to a spell College, a broad skill group, which mages must learn in order to be able to bind magic to objects long-term. The limits as to what types of objects can be enchanted, and what spells may go into them, are left to the players' and GM's imaginations. By clever mixing of various Colleges or specific spells, mages may come up with some interesting items indeed.

9.4.1 Time and mana costs of enchantment

This campaign assumes that magics can be bound to just about anything, from a spoon to a rusty sword to a toothpick. We also assume that the process of enchantment is easily learned by mages, even if only for a limited scope of magics. To represent this, the cost of enchantments are assumed to be *significantly* lower than the values used in most game worlds, for example the one used by GURPS. Whereas much fantasy literature would have us believe that it takes a single mage more than a year to bless a weapon with increased damage, this simply isn't the case. What takes a year or more of work in some campaigns should be doable in a week or two of work, perhaps a bit longer, in this campaign. There are no hard and fast rules for how long or how much mana it takes to enchant an object. In campaigns where enchanting is becoming an industry, it is suggested that enchantment times be much shorter than in conventional campaigns. One off-the-cuff example:

- Simple magics ("household" stuff), Terrible and Mediocre difficulty, take 1-2 days to enchant. For example, enchanting a spoon, bowl, clothing, etc., with some useful, but not too advanced, effect, like self-stirring, self-cleaning, etc.
- Spells of Fair difficulty take 3-10 days to enchant.
- Spells of Good difficulty take 5-20 days to enchant.
- Superb difficulty enchantments can take 10 days to a year or more to complete.

One-time-use items should take 1/3rd or less of the normal time to enchant, as the caster does not need to refine so many parts of the enchantment.

A mage working on an enchantment is assumed to be allocating his entire mana pool, or most of it, during the whole enchantment period. The GM may rule that minor enchantments do not absorb the whole pool, leaving the mage with some to burn in an emergency, if needed.

The caster may take a break in the middle of enchantment to attend to other business, but the GM may apply a skill roll penalty to "get back into the groove of things" when returning to the enchantment (programmers in the audience will know what this is like). Taking over unfinished enchantments of another mage is extremely difficult, and impossible without meticulous notes of the work done so far (and who writes documentation?). In any case, most mages would rather start over than attempt to try to understand and add on to an existing enchantment. (The concept of "object-oriented enchantment", with "reusable spell components" which can be "plugged in" to each other, has not yet been explored in the campaign, and is left open for future development in the magical fields of study.)

The exact skill rolls needed are up to the GM. Failure does not normally result in any damage, but costs time and mana. The following suggests one set of guidelines, but GMs are encouraged to use whatever they see fit:

- Terrible/Mediocre difficulty enchantments: make one skill roll at the end to see if it succeeds.
- Fair difficulty: roll twice, once at the half-way point and once at the end. The caster will know if the spell fails at either point.
- Good difficulty: as for Fair, but roll 3 times at 1/3rd time intervals.
- Superb difficulty: GM's call. Failure may even have significant, even dangerous, undesired side-effects, depending on the spell.

As each enchantment is a custom creation, the GM should feel free to add some unique personality to each one. Some of this is due to unforeseen magical interactions during enchantment (again, much like in software design), and some quirks might be intentionally programmed in by the enchanter. For example, one-time court magician Brill Nowaway once enchanted a light-stick for his companions, and thought it would

be funny if the light slowly rotated through the colors of the rainbow. He also once secretly enchanted a friend's sword so that when it was unsheathed (actually, when the light level changed too much at once) it would sound off an ominous minor chord, as if played through a church organ. The intention was to demean prospective opponents. In fact, however, the enchantment just got on Harg's nerves, so Brill removed it.

Enchantments, even relatively simple ones, require a good deal of concentration. Most mages strongly prefer to work behind closed doors when enchanting objects, or at least in familiar, comfortable surroundings free from too many distractions. A disruption at an inopportune moment can spoil a whole enchantment.

The GM will need to answer many questions about enchantments, such as:

- What are the creation-cost differences between an item which allows anyone to cast the spell and an item which casts the spell itself?
- What mana source is used when activating an item (the wielder or the item)?
- And so on.

There is no reason why only one answer need to apply to all enchanted items. One person might have a spoon which stores enough mana to stir for an hour per day, whereas one might have a spoon which needs to draw on its user's mana in order to operate.

The GM is encouraged to not get into too much detail about mana costs, time to create, etc., and to simply fudge it into a playable game. It is magic, after all. Fudging it can also keep players on their toes by providing interesting challenges: "As it turns out, that fireball enchantment you so routinely do has turned out to be far more difficult this time. That special wood you've imported for your Staff of Wonder appears to have a degree of magic resistance."

9.5 Mana

Mana is, in a very scientific sense, an energy form. One of several properties which set it apart from typical energies, as governed by the "laws of nature", mana is psychoreactive. That means it can be manipulated via acts of will. Mana can be physically manipulated to some degree, as well. What separates "mages" from "mundanes" is that mages have an inborn sense for how to mentally manipulate mana, whereas mundanes can only manipulate it via "brute force" techniques (figuratively speaking). For example, a tribal shaman who is not a mage might be able to fulfil her role to some degree by performing extensive rituals to shape basic magics to her will, whereas if she has the gift of Magery, she will find her job much easier. With Magery she will be able to manipulate magics more quickly and effectively.

Manipulation of mana is typically called "casting a spell", though this is a convention and abstraction only, and in many contexts is not technically correct. The manipulation of mana allows mages to indirectly manipulate their environment - they form the mana, and the mana's form is then imposed onto the various planes of existence it crosses.

GMs can freely interpret the level of psychoreactivity in the world's mana. If it is difficult to manipulate, there will be fewer, and less powerful, wizards, and the opposite is also likely. It may be that some "pockets" of mana (maybe mobile and unpredictable, maybe not) might be more or less psychoreactive. Maybe certain fantastical creatures only exist in certain mana zones, which might explain why Crystal Forest has some monsters you won't find elsewhere.

9.6 Ecological effects of widespread magic use

GMs who want to add this level of detail to their campaign are encouraged to give some thought to how the widespread use of magic affects the ecosystem. Many GMs will want to waive this off as unimportant for their campaign. Others might want such details to directly influence their world.

In many magic systems, "mana stones" (or other mana-storing "batteries") are used to provide power to magical items. To recharge, these stones recharge draw mana from their environment. In a campaign where household magic is in the early days of becoming mainstream, mages in large cities might begin to notice that mana is recovering at a slower overall rate. They will probably quickly conclude that the sheer number of mana batteries in the area is causing the problem. If the mages are an influential political power, this could lead to drastic social consequences. If they are not politically powerful, it could have other consequences as mages begin to move away to somewhere where they can get more mana.

Another possibility is that mana, being a psychoreactive energy, tends to flock around places with lots of living beings. In general, this would equate to larger populations having more overall mana, which might or might not balance out with the "battery effect" mentioned above.

10 Magi.net

Magi.net³¹ magic is significant enough that it warrants its own section, outside of the generic Magic section, so here it is...

[Real-life note: there is an internet domain named magi.net, which is owned by the folks from magiinc.com. This work has no association whatsoever with either domain.]

The magi.net is a quasi-network of objects enchanted to contain information. It is functionally similar to the internet of yesteryear, and only a relative handful of "geek"³² mages heavily practice magi.net magics. The ideals of information sharing have not yet caught on with the general populace of the world, and many leaders would actively oppress magi.net if they were aware of potential long-term social effect it could have. Magi.net magics are not as developed as the computer networking technologies of even the mid 1990's, and magi.net is actually not a network, per se³³. Thus practical application of data manipulation magics like data encryption, curses, protections and such have not yet been developed. Encryption of data using traditional means, like secret alphabets, is used, as are curses on nodes themselves, but not enchantments on each page or groups of pages. For that matter, the concepts of hierarchical arrangement of large amounts of data has not yet been extensively explored.

The development of magi.net magics could easily be the central focus of a campaign; perhaps the characters want to further its cause, or perhaps they disagree with its implementation and set up a rival College: magi.org! Or perhaps the characters believe that using the magi.net is to dabble with Things Man Was Not Meant to Know, and set out to destroy it (possibly by "cracking" it with viral destructive spells!). The development (pun not intended) possibilities are innumerable.

The concept of what we might know as "web applications" has not yet come to anyone in this world, and it is at least several years before such magics will be used, because neither the magics nor the culture have evolved to those points.

Magi.net magics have only come into use in the past decade or so, and very few mages indeed practice magi.net magics full time (it doesn't yet pay the bills). Most use it for communication with distant colleagues, and most magi.net mages strongly denounce the greedy hoarding of knowledge, preferring to share, at least with their immediate colleagues. Some mages have started offering information for sale using magi.net: "I've saved the map to the McGuffin in a node, and I'll give you the name of that node for that gem you've got in your right pocket."

10.1 Nodes

Node is the word used for objects enchanted to store data "on the magi.net". A node can be any object. The more mass it has, the more information it can store and the longer the information will "stick"³⁴. A small coin or leaf might hold one image and a fist-sized rock might hold 20 to 50. Stones and gems are commonly used because they are dense, allowing them to store lots of information in little space, and they are also difficult to physically destroy (which would dispel the magic).

People who know the name of a node can remotely "read" information which is on it. The information is "seen", as if reading, but there are no outwardly visible effects that others could see³⁵. Nodes hold "images" of information, much like photographs, which are magically impressed into the node. "Visitors" to the node may then see these "pages" by using relatively simple magics. The exact conditions under which a mage may read a remote node are entirely up to the GM. Perhaps the characters are deep in a mountain and a vein of metals is interfering with the connection. Or perhaps the magic lines are simply down for unplanned maintenance. (That's another technical term mages use when they have no clue why a connection cannot be established.)

Each node must have a unique name. A name, in this context, may be basically anything from the world "Fred" to a whole page of complex Kanji-like writing. Because a name must be unique, it is normally complex. Wizards often don't want just anyone being able to "read his stones" (as they say), so the name is often complex enough that it cannot be memorized. Any magi.net wizard with physical access to a node may read its name and copy that name into a written form. In the case of sufficiently complex names, it is only through the use of this written copy of a node's name that a node can be "reached." Such difficult names are

31 The word magi.net is not yet in common enough use in the campaign world to have gotten the abbreviation "net", thus it is always written in long form here.

32 Named after Gik, the city where these magics originated.

33 Though it could turn into one! That's an implementation detail we'll leave to the campaign developers.

34 That's the technical term. Even small objects (i.e., a leaf) will hold an image for several days. The heaviest objects, theoretically, do not completely "leak out" until many human lifetimes have passed.

35 The reader could use other magics, like illusion or communication spells, to relay read information, however.

often known as "keys", as they "unlock" a node. A wizard will often prepare a several copies of a node's name, to be given to other trusted individuals such as research colleagues. A node with a simple name, like a spoken word, may be accessed by anyone who knows its name and the right magics (Magi.net college skill will suffice). Touching a node, and using basic magi.net magics, will give a mage complete access to a node's contents without having to know its name.

Creating and reading nodes requires skill in the Magi.net college, and will be covered in more detail when it becomes important³⁶.

10.1.1 Node naming conventions

Unlike our modern internet, magi.net is extremely immature and rather chaotic, and does not have any well-established naming conventions. Most "public" nodes have names which are intended to be descriptive and unique, like "Home node of Philia Baom from Hoa."

Groups of mages who work closely together often establish some conventions of their own, but no single system has yet caught on amongst the majority of mages. GMs are free to simplify things and assume that conventions have cropped up much like in our own world: "node1.philia-baom.hoa". As this campaign was designed by a programmer, part of the magi.net's intention within the campaign is to explore what *might* happen with a fledgling internet-like technology, not what *did* happen. The cultures of this campaign of course mirror ours to some degree, but the mindsets of people are often radically different, and exploring what those differences might mean for the development of magi.net (or several nets, each using incompatible colleges of magic!). These types of decisions closely mimic those which happen in real-world technological battles, like the "format wars" often fought by vendors promoting competing recording media (VHS vs Betamax, the various DVD formats, etc.). This parallel can help guide GMs towards storylines or even campaign goals. One particularly geeky example might be a group of PCs who's goal is to establish a standard for the naming conventions of nodes, or even implementing some sort of system similar to modern-day DNS (Domain Name Service). Gamers who are also computer nerds can go into as much detail as they like, such as inventing the Ping³⁷ spell or establishing a mathematical system for assigning names to nodes (analog to our IP-number system). Or perhaps the PCs are the DNS Providers themselves, in which case they may come across challenges such as two wizards who desperately want to use the same node name. Who gets to use the name? How is it enforced? What happens if two nodes have the same name?

10.2 Origins of the word "magi.net"

Unlike most domains of magical study, magi.net has opened up more questions than it has answered. This is one of the things which attracts most mages to it - it's a new pioneer compared to the classical studies of agricultural, medicinal, and war-time magical skills.

In fact, magi.net research has opened up so many questions that one mage is inspired to maintain a public node named Frequently Unanswered Questions, in which he lists many of the questions which come up during magi.net research.

Many mages have asked, "where does the name magi.net come from?" There are several feasible answers, though nobody really seems to know which is the truth. The most popular story goes like this:

It started out as a pun on the word "magnet". Information "sticks" to Nodes and Nodes are intended to "draw in" readers. Magnet eventually became a slightly different pun, alternately spelled magenet or maginet, to subtly stress that magic was involved instead of magnetics. The mages thought it was funny, anyway.

The dot in the name supposedly was a misunderstanding: on the first scroll on which "magnet" was penned, a small drop of ink fell between the "i" and the "n". Several initial readers interpreted it as intentional, though unusually-placed, and so it unintentionally became the accepted spelling.

But, again, nobody really knows. The earliest-known nodes, on which presumably much history was stored, were destroyed during a "magical dispute", where a magi.net mage was accosted by a more conservative mage who strongly believed that knowledge was not to be freely given away.

10.3 Free and Open Sorcery and Scrolls (FOSS)

Historically, mages have typically been pretty picky about whom they share their magical knowledge with. Most mages have worked in isolation and reached their level of skill via much study and practice, and are loathe to simply give the knowledge away.

³⁶ Campaign future note: it is the wizard Alejandro Grambael who is credited with having created the de-facto spell for enchanting devices used for sending and receiving spoken messages. These devices have not yet been invented.

³⁷ Trivia: "ping" is a program for determining if one computer can find a connection to a second computer.

Early practitioners of magi.net slowly realized that they could learn much more from each other than they ever thought possible, and more easily than ever before because they didn't need to physically work with each other to share ideas. This gave them the best of both worlds: access to lots of ideas from experts in magical fields and their traditional work in isolation.

Several of these wizards formalized the convention of sharing information under the name Free and Open Sorcery and Scrolls, or FOSS. The general premise of the FOSS is that knowledge should be freely shared. Not just knowledge of magi.net magics, but knowledge in general. "Give a man bread and you feed him for a day," they say, "Teach him to farm and he will know how to feed himself." The adoption of the FOSS mindset has spread remarkably quickly, and is especially well-liked by mages who might not otherwise have a chance to study the magics they wish to learn. The FOSS Home Node is named "Free and Open Sorcery and Scrolls" (node aliases have not yet been developed, though they may be as the campaign progresses).

10.4 Partial spell list

Magi.net is a college of spells, learned as a Fair difficulty broad skill group. The college is currently made up of a small handful of rudimentary spells. As the campaign develops, this is sure to extend to cover metaphors like "email" and "instant messaging".

- **Name Node.** Costs 4 mana, Mediocre feat difficulty, takes 10 minutes to cast. Names an object for use as a magi.net note. Once an object is named it may be written to or read from. Writing currently requires physical contact, but reading can be done over great distances.
- **Read Node.** Cost is really the GMs call, but 1 or 2 or so is appropriate for this game world. Mediocre feat difficulty. One casting allows approximately 5 minutes of reading time - enough to read a few pages of information.
- **Write Node.** Time and difficulty are GM's call - most mages hand-write what they want and then "scan it in", which is very fast and easy to do, perhaps 1 or 2 mana points and Mediocre difficulty feat, taking a minute or so, per page.

11 Magical Items

This section lists *some* magically enhanced items that PCs may have heard about, seen, or even own. Some items have a "likely magics" listing, which gives the "probable" types of spells needed to enchant such an item.

There will always be the generic Wand/Staff/Rod/Sword/Armor/Shield of Some Powerful Ability. Many different enchantments are placed on a wide range of items. Combat magics, for example, are often placed into swords, bows, shields or staves. Most such enchantments allow the wielder to cast the enchanted spell at the skill level of the object's enchantment, but paying full mana cost himself. Some items can pay for some or all of their mana cost.

11.1 Hoyle [spoon, bowl, cup, etc.]

"Hoyle" is a generic term for items enchanted with household-type magic. They get their name from the famous work of the wizard Hoyle, who formalized many household magics and brought them to the masses.

Hoyle items come in many forms: spoons which stir, pots which heat up themselves or mix up and cook whatever is thrown in them, containers which keep foods fresh, urns which churn themselves, rags and brooms which clean and sweep on command, and many more.

Likely magics: various well-known Hoyle spells. Some require Fire magics (self-cooking items).

11.2 Ranger's Cloak

Popular with rangers and other woodland-going types, this cloak continually changes its colors to match the surrounding. While it does not provide complete invisibility, if the wearer stays still he can get a +2 bonus to any hiding roll (or a -2 penalty to spotting him). When not in contact with a mana source (e.g., a living being), the cloak maintains its natural colors (whatever those are).

Likely magics: Illusion

11.3 Lighter Gear

One quite common enchantment is one which makes heavy objects easier to carry by reducing their effective mass. By themselves, they have their normal mass, but in contact with a mana-carrying entity they can use ambient energy to power their effect. Some particularly large items, like wagons, need stronger mana sources than "ambient energy" provides.

Likely magics: ???

11.4 Obedient Container

Sometimes called Dog Boxes, these items are enchanted to follow their owner around at will. They are normally enchanted with a passphrase for two command words (stay and follow). When told to stay, they act as any other container unless other enchantments are placed on them (e.g., locks, alarms). When told to follow, they hover along within a short distance of the one who commands them. To get something from a following container, it must first be told to stay, otherwise it will attempt to remain behind its master as he turns to retrieve something from it. This is somewhat annoying, but enchanter's assure us that it is really a technical limitation regarding the limited implementation of two commands. Some more advanced models may know different commands, like "spit out my sword!"

These containers do not have much strength, and it does not take much effort to physically pull a container away from its master, or block the path such that the container cannot follow. If a container is separated from its master by more than 5 meters or so, it becomes inert and will go into "stay" mode until it is activated again. They come in a variety of sizes and shapes. Larger ones will have more strength than smaller ones, as they are designed for heavier loads. The exact weight any given dog box can carry is up to the GM.

Likely magics: Control

11.5 Screaming Bag

Many merchants pack their goods in what are sometimes known as "screaming mimis", which are simply containers which get verbally active if they are opened without a passphrase. Most of them are enchanted to scream madly, "Help! Thief! I'm being robbed!" or some such. They do not stop until their password is spoken or some amount of time, determined by their controller, has passed, or their mana supply runs out (GM's call). The "scream timer" can be changed at any time by someone speaking the passphrase.

In many major cities at least one merchant has various screaming containers for sale, ranging from wallets to backpacks to large chests. Similar enchantments are often found on doors. Some city ordinances have penalties for owners of screaming boxes which scream for more than a few minutes, as they "cause a lot of noise in otherwise peaceful neighborhoods."

Likely magics: Sound (Air) or Illusion with Control (to set the "trigger" and timeout)

11.6 Stringless Marionette

A favourite amongst bards and storytellers, these marionettes are each enchanted along with a pair of gloves (fitted to the race of the enchanter's choice). By wearing the gloves and moving the fingers and hands, the marionette can be controlled. It can never move more than about two meters from the gloves before it falls lifeless, and does not move unless actively controlled by the glove-wearer. Learning to manipulate the Marionette is an easy artistic skill. The marionettes are purely entertainment items, and have no appreciable strength or other capabilities. Some are enchanted with Illusion magics to enhance the performance, for example, to make them look more like living beings. Throw Voice is commonly used in conjunction with marionettes, to make it appear as if the speaker's voice comes from the marionette.

There are persistent rumors about a traveling entertainment troupe who's marionettes are enchanted to act independently, to sneak around and steal from the villagers at night.

Likely magics: Control/Animation, or (for sinister marionettes) Summon/Bind/Control Spirit

11.7 Loupe of Languages

A favorite amongst travelers, politicians, and merchants, these magnifying glasses allow the user to read other languages. Each loupe is enchanted with the knowledge of one or more languages, all of which must have been known by the caster. Reading text through the loop will translate a known written language into a language the user knows (his choice). By itself, the loupe does nothing - it must be willed to show a translation or it functions as a normal looking glass.

Likely magics: Knowledge, Mind, and Illusion

Similar items exist for spoken languages, but they don't function quite as nicely as those on some science fiction television programs. Instead, the speaker hears the native language, but understands it nonetheless. This is somewhat disconcerting the first few times one experiences it.

Likely magics: Knowledge and Mind

11.8 Lightsticks

Increasingly common, particularly amongst the city watches of large cities, these objects are typically small wooden rods, about an inch in diameter, with a cone-shaped piece of shiny metal at one end. When activated, by wrapping one's hand around it, they emit a bright light from inside the cone, projecting it forward. A lightstick approximates the light from a 1950's-era flashlight (not the modern "police flashlights" we have today). They draw one mana point for each ten minutes of light. Normally this mana comes from the holder, but some high-end sticks are enchanted to store some of their own mana, recharging when not in use.

11.9 Food

11.9.1 Green Thumb Pot

Plants grown in these enchanted pot grows at two to four times the normal rate, sometimes more. There are very powerful pots which can grow a full plant from a seed in under a day, but few mages have the patience to put so much time into this enchantment.

Likely magics: Healing and Plant

11.9.2 Cup of Something like Noodles

This rather advanced Hoyle item isn't found in every household, but is often found useful by those who make long trips or those too lazy to cook or too poor to buy food. Such a cup "grows" a dried noodle-like substance which can be boiled and eaten. Every half-day, it grows enough noodles to fill itself then stops producing noodles. The noodles are not really edible as-is, but if boiling water is poured into the cup, after a few minutes they don't taste all that bad. Cups provide, on the average, up to two meals a day, slowly growing new noodles once the cup is emptied.

Some users drop a bit of salt or other seasoning into the cup to give the noodles some flavor. Some of the more powerful cups can boil water put into them, but these often require extra mana from their user.

Likely magics: Create with Plant/Food, Boil Water

11.9.3 Hunter's Pouch

Any food, for example, freshly-killed game, placed in one of these pouches is kept fresh much longer than normal. Most bags will keep game fresh for up to a week, some much longer. Some variants, commonly called "jerky bags", work slightly differently: meats and vegetables placed in them are dried out very quickly (in an hour or less), making them suitable for long-term storage outside of the pouch.

Likely magics: Healing and Plant/Animal/Food

11.9.4 Bass-o-matic

This unusually-named item is popular with hard-core survivalists, who claim it is a useful tool when living off the land. The 'matic looks approximately like a thermos can, but with a wider opening. Anything put into the container will, when the device is activated, be brutally shredded. The longer the 'matic is active, the longer it will shred. It can turn a small fish into puree in about five seconds, and shredding a salad takes only a couple seconds. Cleaning the 'matic is easy: put some water in it and activate it, then rinse it out. Most Bass-o-matics only activate when a cap is in place and someone touches the activation spot on the cap. Some are activated by a spoken phrase.

Likely magics: Breaking and Control

[Trivia: the name Bass-o-matic comes from an old skit from *Saturday Night Live*, where Dan Ackroyd stuck a bass (fish) in a blender and turned it on, then drank the resulting goop.]

11.10 Weapons

11.10.1 Scale-piercing Weapons

Some weapons are enchanted to do extra damage to creatures much larger than the Scale the weapon is designed for. Most of these halve any positive difference in Scale and have no effect against smaller scales. This enchantment is most commonly found on piercing weapons, as those are naturally more prone to damaging larger opponents than other weapons, and thus lend themselves well to a simpler enchantment

process.

Likely magics: ???

11.10.2 Scale-modified Weapons

Weapons are often enchanted to deal damage at a Scale other than normal for their size. This is not only useful in combat, where a human sword can hurt an ogre more easily, but also in training, so soldiers don't slay each other during practice. Slapping a -3 Scale penalty on a weapon will considerably reduce the damage it does, and a +6 bonus allows even ellyllon bows to stand some chance against humans. These enchantments normally do not affect the effective mass of the objects, only the amount of energy which is transferred when they strike something.

The GM is free to rule creatively on uncertain situations. For example, if we have a Scale +6 bow, would firing a normal arrow with it shatter the arrow as soon as it was fired? Also, will an Ellyllon firing such a bow be thrown backwards by the thrust of the bow?

Likely magics: ???

11.10.3 Wizard Bow

Enchanted bows come in a variety of forms. What they have in common is that their enchantments draw some magical energy from the "ritual" of drawing, aiming, and releasing an arrow.

Some include:

- Each arrow fired is magically ignited as it is released. Costs the user no mana.
- This bow needs neither string nor arrows, but firing triggers a spell which releases a bolt of magic. Most of these cost 1 mana for each 2 points of damage and mundane defenses do not protect against them (+2 mana cost). Some bows have a fixed damage, where some adapt to the will of the user. Some can fire quickly, some cannot.
- Looks like a normal bow, but it summons a normal arrow as the string is released. Costs 1 mana per summoned arrow. Normally the summoned arrows have to come from a nearby source, like a quiver or backpack on the PC, but some bows may have the ability to create them from thin air for a significantly higher mana cost.

The Duin city guard is known for having a whole battalion of archers armed with enchanted bows.

Likely magics: Create/Summon, mixed with Colleges such as Fire/Energy, Water (Ice), etc., depending on the exact powers of the bow or arrows.

12 Personalities

Some of the more notable personalities in the game world are described below. Note that they are described in terms of *popular belief*, not an omnipotent point of view. Any footnotes describe likely campaign realities.

12.1 "Bane", Archwizard

A lidijn male known only as Bane, this powerful wizard has long been considered mad. Banished from his homeland almost two decades ago, Bane bides his time and plans his ultimate revenge on those who sentenced him to life in the wild. Not quite mentally stable, Bane has a deep psychological need to feel that he is under control. After only a short time in exile, Bane managed to impress a large village of ogres with his magic, and they decided not to kill him. Over time he impressed them so much that they named him leader, and to this day he is the undisputed ruler of the village. Bane indoctrinates the ogres to distrust lidijn and humans, to be wary of them or to kill them outright. It's all training for his long-term goals.

To his credit, Bane has brought order to the ogres' lives. They now live in crudely constructed huts, his own quite large. Over the years he has kidnapped blacksmiths and farmers and forced them to teach the ogres their skills, after which he had them killed.

His village numbers roughly 100 ogres. Of those, just under one half of them are adults and capable of fighting (gender plays little role - to Bane most ogres are equal). While this isn't a large-enough force to be a real threat to any kingdom, it is enough to keep away anyone who's not really serious about being there. The existence of Bane's rule over the ogres is not common knowledge, at least not amongst humans and lidijn (amongst ogres the word has spread), and he has a strict policy about keeping things this way.

Bane is an exceptionally gifted magician [Magery level 3]. He started learning magic when he was young, and favored Animal and Plant magics above others. Spoiled by his mother, Bane was always a little difficult to deal with, very egotistic, and a tad unusual. Her death, when he was a adolescent, drove him closer to

eventual insanity. He continued studying magics, as he knew it was his Gift and destiny, but took an interest in more destructive forces. Sometimes immature for his age and intellect, Bane would show off, demonstrating his spells by shattering fenceposts and causing small animals to convulse madly in pain for a moment before dying. He was first banned from studying destructive magics or using his skills in any harmful ways. A short time later he lost his temper in an incident with a merchant, and left the merchant severely wounded. Bane was immediately branded and carried to the outer borders of the land, left to his own with no more than he was graciously allowed to quickly collect from his home. If he returned, he was warned, he would be slain. "Certainly the ogres got him," they said. If only they knew.

Bane still studies new magics. He doesn't have the time, nor enough peace and quiet, to devote his life to it, but his natural knack for magic enables him to continue to pick up new magical skills despite the lack of ideal conditions. He takes his role as leader of the ogres extremely seriously, and enforces a strict pecking order. It is undeniable that the ogres prosper under his rule, compared to the older days. Indeed, most of the laws he imposes were adapted from his own culture.

He understands that he cannot hope to invade his homeland with the forces he has, and that it will take many years to raise enough ogres to accomplish his life's goal. He actively encourages breeding amongst the ogres, but does not explicitly let on that it's soldiers he's trying to generate. As the reputation of his village spreads amongst ogre populations, now and then ogres come along asking to join.

Bane is not a skilled combatant, and relies entirely on his magics and his ogres to defend himself. While he knows quite a number of spells, he doesn't have all that much practice at using them in combat. Most of his destruction is for shows of power. When in combat he scowls, growls, and yells often, and moves erratically, making him appear to be a bigger physical threat than he really is (it works on the ogres, anyway). In conversation his moods sway radically. Often he is calm thinker, but quite pompous, other times, especially when he feels he's losing control, he walks quickly back and forth and speaks very nervously while trying to decide what to do. If all else fails, he uses dreadful magics to shatter the bones of those who cause him too much anxiety. "Take that!" he's known to cry out as his victim falls to the ground, screaming bloody murder. He is not specifically a sadist, and does not torture for pleasure, but when he loses his temper he is known to go into a bloody rage. He also has no qualms about killing those who are of no use to his cause. He recognizes that his temper is not a good example for the ogres, so he makes an extra effort to preach to them that they should control their anger, at least when it comes to fellow villagers.

The village maintains an armory containing a number of large swords, shields, hammers, axes, and the like which they have collected over the years. They have no real suits of armor, but most of the ogres could get a few bits of patchwork metal or leather to protect them, should they need it.

To keep a low profile, they do not make a habit of raiding surrounding territories, but Bane finds that once in a while a raid is a good way to keep the ogres occupied and focused, which makes them easier to handle. When they raid, they normally don't take money, but items they can use, or especially weapons, food, and any magical items. Once in a long while a female human or lidijn is enslaved as Bane's pleasure toy, until he ultimately tires of her and feeds her to the ogres, normally after mercifully killing her with a spell. Bane once found out about the home of an old mage not far away, had him slaughtered, and now has most of the mage's library and laboratory equipment. He passionately collects such things, and the ogres have strict orders to take such items when they find them.

Typical conversation with the ogres:

"Klag, it looks like we need a new storage shed. Pick a few of the youngsters and get to work."

"Get to work? What work?"

"The storage shed."

"Which shed?"

"The NEW one! The one we don't HAVE yet! Go get Gorkk! He built the last one. I'll explain to him what I want and he will show you what to do."

Typical phrases:

"If only I had a thousand, maybe two, of the big ones like Ohlg. Maybe I should change the laws, let him take three... five wives."

"If only the females weren't so *big*..."

"We once tried using human slaves for labor. The problems with humans is, they get too many ideas. They talk too much. Don't like to do as they're told. So I let the ogres throw a festival, with the slaves as the main dish. Loved that, they did."

"Baaa!!! Gggrrrrr!!!! Heeeeieieieieie!!!!!!!" (typical cries in combat)

12.2 Dael Bij, Mayor of Ae'udua

Dael Bij (pronounced Dale Bay) rules the lidijn state of Ae'udua. While not a large state by human standards, it is the largest lidijn state. Dael Bij understands that he must fight if he wishes his people to have enough land to support them, and protects his borders rigorously against military intrusion and "undo" colonization of other races. Ae'udua is open to visitors and traders of all races and nationalities, however. In any conflict Dael Bij attempts diplomacy first whenever possible, but will resort to force if he feels diplomacy will not bring about a solution. He speaks the human language quite well (Good skill), in a voice remarkably similar to Cher's, such that the human ear is sometimes not quite sure if it's a low-pitched female or a high-pitched male. He speaks Ellyllon to some degree (Mediocre skill).

Typical phrases:

"Look, if you build a city here, I *will* burn it down. This is *our* land. We've been here a long time and there's plenty of unclaimed land over *that way* which you can go colonize all you like."

"I really hate to do this, but..."

"Please" and "thank you" - he is genuinely polite even to those he openly dislikes, and he highly appreciates that courtesy from others.

12.3 East of Clintwood, Bandit

This human outlaw is named after the locale where he was born, and not after the locale he operates in. Though he is a notorious bandit, he reputedly only targets those who the general public consider to be either outlaws or totally corrupt non-outlaws. If he is interfered with he will quite readily kill anyone who gets in his way, but does not kill, nor even pay attention to, those who are not a threat to him. He does his job with thought and care, but is not a pen-and-paper man, and any attempts to engage him in diplomacy have ended up leaving job openings for diplomats. East speaks in short, direct sentences, leaving out anything he considers frivolous.

Typical phrases:

"Ask yourself, 'do I feel lucky?'"

"Have you got anything bigger?"

"Any man who don't wanna get hacked up better run on out the back."

"Fabrice diem, pvnk."³⁸

12.4 Karl Hoor (a.k.a. Karl von Duin), Pioneering Communication Mage

Karl, an aging but spry human, is a modern pioneer in magics involving communication. He lives in Duin and is supported financially by the king himself. He is said to be able to work day and night for weeks without breaking for anything but food³⁹. He is also said by some to be so good with magic because he is half Lidijn⁴⁰. Though he knows mind-reading magics, he does not normally use them on people without their permission, and refuses to teach them to his students, "because of the tremendous potential for abuse. Been there, done that."

Karl is rumored by many to be the founder of what has come to be known as magi.net. Whether this is true or not, probably only Karl knows. In any case, he is quite well reputed amongst magi.net practitioners, as Karl makes much of his work available to others through magi.net. Many aspiring mages learn much from Karl's work.

Karl is, rather unknowingly, one of the world's first researchers of how best to arrange information, such that it can be accessed most readily. It is a part-time obsession of his, and it was he who established the convention of a Home Node for magi.net mages, such that a mage freely give out the name of his Home Node, and on the Home Node the mage would give the names of any other nodes. This leads to a new level of hierarchical, if often chaotic, structuring of information, which was not practical before magi.net, and the convention is followed by almost all magi.net mages.

Typical phrases:

"Just one more thing to try, *then* I'll get some sleep..."

"Damn, I'm good."

"This is *cool!*"

38 i must credit Terry Pratchett with that quote.

39 Karl's own reaction to that rumor is, "oh, come now!"

40 Karl laughed heartily when he heard this one.

12.5 Marcus Gora IV, Crown Prince of Gora

While Gora is officially run by King Marcus Gora III, he is an elderly an ill man, and his only surviving son will soon take over the position of king.

Gora's energetic young prince, Prince Marcus Gora IV, spends most of his time making plans for how to improve his state, rather than outright expanding it. He means well, but his enthusiasm and optimism don't provide him with a well-rounded view of the world. He often attempts to tackle complex problems in over-simplistic ways, and often fails doing so. He is a self-proclaimed part-time inventor, but his inventions are normally more things of fantasy than of practical science, and he rarely has the focus to actually build any of these things he draws (his lab is littered with half-built widgets of all types). Nonetheless, his charisma, optimism, and energy are appreciated by most of his subjects, and he is generally well-received by his people. Most more experienced diplomats find him difficult to work with, but often easy to manipulate to their ends, so they tolerate him. Rather unfortunately, Marcus is a virtual mentor to several younger diplomats-to-be. Marcus has a younger sister, Lady Arabella Westward, who is married and has two young children. The children, above all, love their Uncle Marcus, and he looks forward to founding a family of his own, and sees it has his royal duty to do so, "but I just don't have the time right now. There's so much to do, you know." Despite being quite liked by the younger ladies, he is not a womanizer. He likes to flirt, but quickly becomes shy around women who take him too seriously. His mother continually nags at him about finding a nice girl. If nothing else, she wants him to stop focusing on his "improvement programs", as she often feels that the state might be better off he he'd keep his hands out of it. She means this in a loving, motherly sort of way, of course, and does not actively encourage him to *not* pursue what he feels is best.

Marcus encourages colonization of unclaimed areas, but also demands fealty from such excursions. He and his forefathers have been known to take control by force if a colony does not accept central rulership under their father state. Colonies are ruled via a feudal system, with local lords having power but ultimately answering to, and financially supporting, Gora.

He does not yet appreciate the major social improvements which advanced learning can lead to, and unfortunately his state suffers when it comes to education of the commoners. The fact is, he simply hasn't given it much thought. Maybe he will mature to that point someday, if one of his ill-designed aqueducts or street light poles doesn't collapse and kill him first. (While the street light pole is an idea that has been often borrowed in other cities, his particular concept of it was quite naive.)

12.6 Roslof Rhys, Lord of Eagul

Roslof, a late-middle-aged human, is the founding lord of the state of Eagul, and rules alongside his first and only wife, Lady Lynn. He is an honest man and a veteran warrior, and in political matters he is very direct but not impolite. He has a strict diplomacy-before-violence policy, as he has grown tired of warfare, and sympathizes very closely with those who suffer directly during war. His country lives peacefully next to its neighboring state, Paarmädl. Even though he is the undisputed ruler of Eagul, he interacts relatively informally with his subjects and court, not caring for "sir, this, sir, that, milady this, blah blah blah."

Roslof has aged to the point where melee combat is not really his thing anymore, but he can still wield a sword when needed. His three sons appear to be as able in combat as he was in his youth. The eldest, Prince Rian Rhys, is in line to become the ruler should Lord Roslof... pass away or some such.

One of his daughters was married off to a local duke and the other is almost to the age when courting often begins, 16.

Typical phrases:

"Ah, bugger it!"

"I don't agree with it, but I can't argue against it."

"I hate to be so blunt, and I hope you don't take offense to this, but..."

12.7 Shh'k, King of Duin

The dragon Shh'k flew into Duin fifty-some-odd years ago and made the king an offer: a) you can leave the city and never return, b) you can stay here and work for me, or c) I can eat you right now and we'll be done with it. The king chose (a), and so it was that Shh'k became king, absolute ruler of the city-state of Duin. One brief rebellion rose up to challenge his rule, led by the former king, but once the new king showed what he was capable of in combat (and ate the old king), the rebellion quickly faded into murmurs of, "well then, perhaps a dragon as our lord and ruler wouldn't be such a bad idea after all." Duiners, as they are called, have lived almost two generations under his reign, and have no reason to think that rule under a dragon is anything but normal. Shh'k is a very fair ruler by general world standards. He allows his underlings to manage the day-to-day running of the city-state, but all significant decisions are approved by him, and nobody dares try to keep secrets from him. While he is very logical and shows little emotion he understands

the ideals of human emotion, and seems to have a great deal of empathy for his people as a whole. He appreciates some forms of human humor, especially puns. He has a special respect for scholars of all races, nearly regardless of their field.

Shh'k is fully aware of the underlying fear most humans feel when meeting him the first time or three, and is normally conscious of trying to ensure them that he will not eat them unless they force him to it. Of course, in negotiations with beings he might not have so much respect for, he will leave this detail out to keep the other wondering. The psychological effect can be fairly profound. That said, the king understands that if he indiscriminately eats sentients, his people will ultimately see him as a monster and turn against him. He gains no particular pleasure from eating sentients over, say, cows, and he never eats people without a good justification, and very rarely does it outside of public executions or battle (where it has tremendous negative psychological effects on the enemies). Some grandparents tell stories of once when the king had a severe toothache after a battle. As it turns out, it wasn't a toothache at all, but a spike from someone's armored shoulderpad he had bitten into.

One of the king's past-times is to fly out over his territory. He does this partly to psychologically remind his people that he is really there, and his passing always draws upward looks from those below. It also just feels good to get out and stretch the wings once in a while, and hunt some large animal (normally dinner is served to him). The king has been known to pick up a herd animal belonging to a peasant, but does not make a habit of it. Such a minor theft once in a while doesn't seem to bother the people too much. After all, who's going to go complain? Some see it as an omen, either positive or negative.

All in all, his people are happy with his rule, and there are no significant groups in Duin which have a specific grudge with him nor most of his policies.

The king himself makes up a significant unit in the Duin army, and has been known to leave for brief periods to take care of "minor problems of a military nature" on his own. The penalty for some of the more heinous crimes in Duin is public execution by becoming the king's lunch. The surrounding area is very safe, as the king has been known to hunt down and eat raiders and robbers. Those few who escape him, or who he mercifully allows to escape, never repeat their acts anywhere near Duin. While the king's army effectively never loses when he personally takes part in battles, he is not an expansionist and does not take part in every battle. Duin's neighboring states are very thankful for this. Even so, the castles of neighboring lands all have fairly good anti-dragon siege weaponry in place, just in case Shh'k ever does decide he wants to expand Duin's borders. The state does not see much military activity, as no fools have tried to invade in nearly two decades. There have been a couple assassination attempts against the king, but none have come close to succeeding.

He normally communicates via a form of telepathy and he knows a variety of magics. Nobody knows exactly what magics, however, and the king doesn't feel compelled to publish his spell book. He can only mentally communicate with a handful of people at a time, so most of his messages and all of his public announcements come through advisors or "translators" specially chosen by him for their skills in making precise interpretations (you wouldn't believe how many politicians are subtly, sometimes significantly, misquoted during translation, even in our modern world). He can of course listen as well as anyone else. He can actually speak, and does at times, but holding a long conversation this way is difficult and tedious for both he and the listener.

Shh'k is rumored to have wizards who tutor him when affairs of the state are not calling for his attention. He is a very progressive thinker and actively funds several research wizards. In return for funding, the king places the rather unusual condition on the researchers that their research be shared with others at no cost. A side-effect of this is that the various projects freely share amongst themselves, and magical studies are significantly more advanced in Duin than nearly anywhere else. While Ae'udua has more mages, Duin uses more modern facilities and techniques, and has more of a scientific culture, as opposed to Ae'udua, where less focus is made on advances and more on teaching people the basics of magic. Also, the king must of course approve of those he funds, whereas in Ae'udua, anyone who can find a teacher can learn.

Philosophy is a favourite past-time of the king, and he often consults with his council of advisors on many topics not directly related to political matters.

Shh'k has been known to cooperate with other dragons at times, and appears to have several companions which he calls upon now and again, when some great threat befalls the territory or a close ally. Few human armies have the tools to fell a single dragon, much less five or six of them.

It was shortly after Shh'k's takeover of Duin that ballista emplacements suddenly became such a popular accessory in modern castle architecture and city planning. In one small city run by a rather paranoid man, many peasants were forced to build, train with, and maintain weaponry for defending against a dragon assault. Local mages were "encouraged" to learn magics to ward off or defeat dragons (few people are foolish enough to try to "force" a mage to do anything). In a couple areas humans amassed and actively hunted down dragons, to make sure it didn't happen to them. In a hindsight, and all pride and ego aside, Duin has not suffered at all for lack of human leadership, and many people in other cities wish a dragon would come and eat up *their* leaders.

Shh'k has often been asked, "why did you take over Duin?" His answer is normally just a grin. In his more verbose moments, he explains that he was curious about "the little people" for many years, but was always unable to get too close to them without scaring them off or having to fight them off. At one point he came up with the idea of simply taking over an existing kingdom. "It was worth a try, anyway." Some philosophers have pointed out the disparities in other answers he has given, some answers suggesting that he did it for control reasons and some suggesting that he was simply curious about other races. Few have had the chance to hold a long conversation with the king on the topic.

Shh'k actually *does* have a crown, but he only wears it at certain ceremonial occasions. The rest of the time it sits on the throne (he can't use the throne), a subtle reminder to his court that he is always there.

Probable Fudge statistics:

Adult dragon (see Scale chart in section [7.3](#))

Attributes as for a standard dragon, with +1 to Intellect and Wisdom.

Gift of Very Charismatic, affecting most humanoids. He has a truly awesome presence. Aura-seekers might be blinded for a moment, until their senses adjust to the intensity.

He does not publish his list of spells - the GM should feel free to make it up when needed, as appropriate given his background and role.

Keep in mind, too, that he is likely older than all living humans, so while he does not commit his life to studying any particular skill area, he does have a rather large set of skills (some of which he might not have used in two human lifetimes).

Typical phrases:

"This is what happens to criminals in our city! Watch and learn, so that you will not be tempted to commit the crimes this man has!"

"I am the only judge here. I am the one you must convince."

"Do it."

"Don't bother trying to lie to me. The rumors are true, I can see your thoughts."

"Duin. Love it or leave it."

"Who will take over when I am gone? Your grandfather asked me that once, and your grandson will likely ask me the same thing someday."

13 Places

Below is a partial list of places to see in this world. As with the Personalities, above, they are described in terms of popular belief or stereotype, which might or might not coincide with actuality.

13.1 Ae'udua

Ae'udua (pronounced Ay-OO-doo-wa, with a long A at the beginning, meaning "My City/People") is the largest lidijn state, the name of its capital city, and the lidijn state most involved with inter-species politics. By human standards Ae'udua could be considered the only lidijn state, as the vast majority of others groups are small villages. The city proper is home to approximately 40,000 lidijn and a small minority of humans, and even an ogre or two working as miners or in the military. Ellyllon also live in the area and actively trade magical services and serve as woodland spies for food, silk, and small bits of metal, but they do not live in the city. The city has an abnormally high ratio of practicing mages, about thrice the world average, one of the reasons an invasion has never been attempted against the city. The government (a democracy of sorts) helps fund many research projects, but the funding does not keep the researchers in a lush lifestyle, nor do "cutting edge" projects necessarily get priority. Literacy is an important topic for city leaders and over 90% of city residents are literate, dropping to about 60% in rural areas (which is still well above the world average). All citizens speak both High and Common Lidijn, and many speak some dialect of a human tongue (normally Duinish, since Ae'udua is an important trade partner with Duin).

While they have few massive warships, Ae'udua has an active fishing industry and exports fish and other bounty to places further way than Duin. They export large amounts of silk and import small amounts of iron and precious metals. Silk is especially popular for clothing, but also has industrial and military uses, and the magically-enhanced agricultural community ensures a steady flow of it.

The area around the city itself is in a valley, farmland for many kilometers, eventually rising to forested mountains in all directions but the east, which eventually gently slopes into runs into what we might recognize as the empty, lazily-rolling hills of Oklahoma, which meet the sea after a day's travel. Their sea-

side border is home to several villages, mostly fishing villages. For some reason or other, they have not developed a major port city, though the potential is there to support one.

The outer borders of the state are patrolled rigorously, though few are ever denied entrance. Magic is a key component in the state's security, and those trying to enter by sneaking through the woods have often been surprised to find guards waiting for them as they reach the open farmlands.

The government's core is made up of a council of elected elders. Early traditions called for 5 elders, but as the city grew the council grew to 7, then 9, 11, and now 17 members. Different members of the council are made responsible for heading up specific areas, such as the military and law enforcement, finance, general well-being of the citizens, etc. To help avoid power-grabs and military coups, each area of responsibility is split amongst two or three council members who are encouraged to work together. The council is supported by many secretaries, under-advisors, librarians and the like, and the government in total, not counting the military, employs just over about 5% of the citizens. The size of the military changes often, depending on the current political environment. Most male lidijn, and no small number of females, volunteer for military service, and thus a large percentage of the population can be called to form an effective army rather quickly. "Volunteers" in the military do get a small fee, but it is not a sum one can retire on. Career military personnel, on the other hand, can truly make a career of it.

Minor crimes are normally punished with short-term imprisonment or forced labor in the mines, and serious offenders are normally branded and banished. Murderers are normally executed, if not first lynched by families wanting revenge. Trials are not nearly as formal as human affairs: citizens who have anything to say about the incident may present it to a group of other such citizens, and all involved eventually vote on guilt or innocence, requiring a simple majority. The police system is effective, but neither abusive nor over-strict. For example, they often encourage complainants and presumed offenders to work out a solution amongst themselves, and only turn to the legal system when no mutually-agreeable solution is found. They have no qualms against stepping in to keep the peace, however.

Ae'udua has a minted currency, rather uncreatively known as the Crown, which comes in several denominations of small coins (none larger than a modern-day 5 Euro-cent coin), minted from rather invaluable metals such as bronze and copper. The currency is primarily used for paying taxes, and the locals, particularly those living outside the city, often barter amongst themselves rather than deal in any currency. As the city grows, however, a common currency is playing a more central role.

Ae'udua culture is of course spotted with cultures from many places, but some generalizations can certainly be made about the population as a whole. For example, the people are generally rather conservative when it comes to using up natural resources. This is exemplified in their currency, where the government took great care to make the coins "small, but not unusuably so", to conserve on metals. They also argued, incorrectly it turns out, that the smaller size would lead to being able to carry more money in less space. As the original founders of the monetary system didn't understand the concept of inflation, they didn't realize until much later how wrong they had been on that point. There are ongoing debates about revamping the currency, but it is still viewed by many as logistically too difficult to be worth the effort and perceived benefits. That said, individual lidijn do not have enough money for this to ever be a problem - it is mainly seen as a hindrance for large-scale traders, tax collectors, the treasury, etc.

Aside from small money, lidijn culture in general promotes conservation of resources, down to burning their dead to avoid wasting good ground on a cemetery.

13.1.1 The farms and mines of Ae'udua

Most of the area immediately around what is formally the city of Ae'udua is farmland. What makes Ae'udua stand out, from an agricultural point of view, is that the Gift of Magery which all lidijn inherit inherently gives them a tremendous advantage over most species when it comes to farming. The Ae'uduans produce all of their own food, export some, and can grow some types of crops year-round. Many skilled Plant, Earth, and Weather mages work the fields of Ae'udua. Large-scale Weather magic is quite controlled: it must be approved by the rulers and is performed by a group of Weather mages who do that sort of thing for the government.

The city has several mines within short distance of the city, and actually has one under the city. Mages skilled in Earth magics do much of the hard work, making the mines far more productive, on a per-man basis, than the mines of most other species. That said, none of the mines are prosperous enough for exporting significant amount, with the exception of the single silver mine. If the Ae'uduans cared at all for mining, they certainly could be more productive, and it is mainly cultural habit which keeps them from it.

13.2 Do'udua

Do'udua (meaning "Many Cities/Peoples") is not so much a city as it is a sprawling network of villages. It makes up approximately 1000 square kilometers in the subtropical forests north of the equator, and is

inhabited almost entirely by lidijn, the remainder being primarily Ellyllon. Do'udua does not really resemble a modern society, each village run by a chieftan, the title passed on through inheritance, on the male side (or the husband of a female, if no males survive that long). A total of 8 or 10 different tribes make up Do'udua, and all are on relatively peaceful terms with the others. The number of villages in the nation used to be more than 30, but a couple were wiped out in the last civil war or by ogres or trolls, and many of the others consolidated their leadership and resources. They have not suffered a civil war in over 50 years, and there is no reason to believe that one will happen anytime soon. Ogres and trolls are a common threat, however.

The village rulers meet to make decisions which affect all tribes, including establishing rules for which villages may trade what goods. All import and export is centralized in one "neutral" village, and then transported to the individual villages, most of which are deep on the woods and have no direct roads leading to them. Merchant or transporter is a respectable job for a Do'udian, and is quite popular amongst young adults who are looking to make a name for themselves. Do'udua citizens are free to move from village to village only with consent of one of the village lords, but are free to leave Do'udua whenever they like. Newcomers... well, that just doesn't happen. Serious criminals are often branded or tattooed and banished, but some are executed or lynched.

The governmental system in Do'udua is normally very slow to move, due to the unavoidable minor disagreements which prevail during council meetings. The few actions which get quick attention include war and marriages between members of ruling families. The council members all realize they must cooperate in order to survive, but that does not stop a you-scratch-my-back-I'll-scratch-yours atmosphere when it comes to internal politics.

While relatively primitive, the nation actively engages in trade with other nations and passers-by. They primarily export tropical spices and game and import metals, of which there are few useful deposits in their territory. Do'udians do not have a currency. They exclusively get by with barter. They do not have a tax system, per se, but everyone is expected to contribute to their village. For example, when someone builds a house, there are normally no shortage of locals willing to lend a hand. Individuals may not normally purchase land, but exceptions are sometimes made, and land is sometimes a reward for service to the state. Land is sometimes traded for other land, or for goods or services. Land is never sold to non-Do'udians, and this is one point on which the whole village council has always been united.

Though the nation has a rather small army, made up of soldiers from each village, the geography of Do'udua makes it infeasible to invade. Aside from that, the nation is not seen as rich enough, nor strategically important enough, to be worth invading. Local soldiers are constantly on patrol, especially in the south near the swamplands, as ogres appear from time to time and bring plenty of grief with them. Do'udian childhood stories are full of tales of evil ogres slaughtering lidijn, and the people automatically have a negative reaction to any ogre they come across. Some of the few Do'udians who have roamed extensively in other nations may come to tolerate ogres in others' employ, e.g. as soldiers, but a deep-seated prejudice is always likely to be there. Any ogre wandering through Do'udua territory is likely to be attacked on sight, or the ones spotting him will at least call for reinforcements and sound an alarm. It is a little-known fact that border patrols of the village of Jolinia have a non-violent relationship with their neighboring ogres, as both have agreed to a policy of "neither of our peoples may cross this river. You stay on that side, we stay on this side." Few villages are lucky enough to have such clear geographic borders, however, so ogres and trolls can easily wander into lidijn lands without realizing it.

The culture as a whole worships various abstract nature deities, the subtle differences in deities and doctrine often being the only notable difference between two villages. Religion is often important to each individual, but deities are not worshiped in elaborate ceremonies or cathedrals, but by individuals or small groups in peaceful, natural places. The land is dotted with small shrines dedicated to various deities.

The nation does not have a problem with religious intolerance amongst the villages, and individuals are free to worship as they choose. Openly evangelizing foreign religions is not tolerated. Offenders are often first warned by local authorities, and thrown out of the territory if they persist. Those who resist are beat into submission, stripped of possessions, and jailed for an indeterminate amount of time.

Twice per year, thousands of people from many villages gather in large, week-long festivals. The main intention is pairing up young couples, but it is also a good chance to improve relations with other villages, trade goods such as local artwork, and to find potential workers or employers. It's kind of a catch-all convention, the location changing each time, rotating through the various villages.

Do'udua has a below-average number of trained mages, due primarily to the relatively primitive lifestyles. Most mages in Do'udua focus on magics which help their villages, like Plant and Earth magics, to grow and build things, and most of the remaining mages focus on healing magics, with the remaining mages learning combat spells and joining the patrol.

Only about 20% of Do'udians are literate: all of the ruling class and only a handful of average citizens. An interest in literacy has recently started to surface within the culture, and it is expected that number is expected to rise quickly over the next decade. Do'udians have their own dialect of lidijn, distinct in sound from Ae'udians, but more or less the same language.

One of the interesting things about Do'udian politics is that aside from gaining power through ownership of resources like farming or hunting areas, villages also gain prestige by having particularly skilled individuals. It is not unknown for an especially talented individual to be sold off, or hired out, to another village, or loaned out as a political favor. This goes for mages, blacksmiths, and other professional careers, and sometimes even soldiers (though military prowess is normally kept within the village). Most villages lack the resources to actively expand their territory, but occasionally do so in order to control some important resource, like metal deposits or especially good hunting grounds. Metals other than copper are relatively rare in Do'udian territory, and the nation has no full-scale mining operations other than a few small copper mines. Metals such as iron and steel are very valuable in Do'udian, and much is imported to support the military.

13.3 Dogwood

Dogwood is the common name for what is formally known as Dokwod (both O's are pronounced long), a large goblin settlement on the outskirts of Duin's borders. It sits in the mountains, not far from the plains below which grant them access to one of Duin's major trade routes.

Dogwood is unusual amongst goblin settlements in how much it interacts with non-goblins. The plains which run alongside the mountain chain are dotted with human villages, and the Dogwooders (often called dogs) have a fairly good reputation as being civil neighbors and trade partners.

Dogwood's population numbers nearly two thousand, spread over an entire mountain. Their homes are built into the mountain, often in the remains of an old mine. A primary occupation is hunting or food gathering, but many work in the mines, digging out iron and copper ore which are ultimately traded to the humans. They would like to farm, but so far humans haven't warmed up to the idea of the goblins moving down to the plains.

The Dogwooders take their relatively good standing amongst the humans quite seriously. Their entire population is indoctrinated under one more or less stable mindset, which basically promotes well-being through good relations with the bigger, smarter folk. They do not have a strict, formal government, as humans might know it. They are ruled by their king, though his exact duties are somewhat obscure. When the king dies, another is chosen by vote. Unlike most goblin settlements, which have much less daily stability, the assassination rates of their kings is much lower. Any king who is perceived as anti-human is discreetly poisoned, or falls down a mineshaft under mysterious circumstances. The indoctrination really is that strong.

A bit over-inflated by their perceived status amongst the Duiners (the small handful of villages they visit, anyway), the Dogwooders take it upon themselves to preach the benefits of cooperation to other goblins. "You be *nice* to the humans! Don't steal from them! Be nice to them, they be nice to you! Well, mostly."

Dogwood is nearly unique amongst goblin towns in that it actually has teachers. Reading is taught to youngsters, and writing to some degree. The main language used in Dogwood is in fact a mixture of the native goblin tongue and the Duin dialect (a bit bastardized and roughened up). While the goblins grow up speaking their native language, speaking Duinish is very fashionable. Few get a chance to learn it well, but they speak it amongst themselves a lot. The fact that practically none of them are fluent in it leads to a unique dialect, much different from common Duinish.

While there are not believed to be any humans who have genuinely friendly relationships with the goblins, as in "let's go have a barbeque in Bok's and Bika's cave!", most villagers welcome the goblin traders who stop by a couple times a month, even if only for comic relief. Most children either laugh at them or run away, however. There is a vocal minority of humans who feel nervous knowing the goblins live just over the next mountain, so there is enough racial tension to keep the goblins from moving their homes any closer (as much as they would like to move into the more fertile plains).

Dogwood does not have an official political relationship with Duin, and the king does not call upon them to pay taxes. It is unknown if the royal court maintains any sort of political relationship with them at all, informal or otherwise.

It often goes unobserved that Dogwood could probably only exist near Duin, of all places in the known kingdoms. Duiners, living under the rule of a dragon king, are generally much more tolerant of mixed-race negotiations than other human-centric kingdoms are.

13.4 Dragon Peaks

Dragon Peaks the name of a particular stretch of mountains in a much larger chain. The Peaks are home to what some might describe as "an absolutely absurd" number of dragons. It is only known by those who have seen it from afar. Those who get too close normally don't get to tell their tale. The King of Duin, appalled at the stories people told about the Peaks at one dinner event, wrote the following on the topic:

My mother told me about them when I was young. They are home to many, many dragons.

The first question most ask is, "how do that many dragons keep themselves fed?" That has a very interesting answer.

In the valleys between the mountains live a native species of cow-like animal. The dragons are said to herd the cows, as it were, and keep them as food.

Why this idea has not spread to other dragon populations, I cannot speculate.

13.5 Duin

Duin (pronounced "Dween") is also known as Dragon City because of it's ruler, Shh'k (section [12.7](#)). The city itself has been around as long as any sage can find a record of, and has been the home of several dynasties in that time.

Duin lives in peace with its neighboring states, and is relatively prosperous. Household magics are particularly common in Duin, with about one third of households using at least some form of minor magic. The king funds several wizards to research various types of enchantment magics to help improve the lives of his people and create goods for trade. Though Duin was often the target of raids before the current king took over, there have been only two raids into the city itself in the time since he took over, and those two ended *very* quickly. Due largely to its unorthodox public execution policy (the king eats the condemned) it has the lowest crime rate of all of the major human cities.

Under the king sits his advisors, a council of a handful of respected scholars. Membership to the council is via recommendation amongst council members, with final approval being left to the king. When the king is away, the council is technically in charge. They internally make decisions via logical debate and, if necessary, voting, though they consult him before deciding on any major decisions (via magical means if he is away).

The king sometimes calls in random citizens from the city, "to get their ideas on how things are going in our city." To a peasant this is a terribly humbling moment, and also source of both much respect and some envy amongst his peers upon his return. The arm-chair politicians of Duin are careful about what they say, knowing that at any moment the king might *personally* ask them their opinions. The common belief that the king knows when people are lying to him, and fear of his wrath, means that people who do get summoned are compelled to be honest. Though the king respects honesty, and has never been known to punish such a summoned commoner, the fear of being eaten still gnaws at people deep down inside.

The area in Duin's massive city walls is home to approximately 60,000 Duiners, and another 50-80 thousand live in the surrounding area, mostly in farming villages.

Duin is open to all travelers, but the king is unusually peculiar about the selection of who may make a permanent home there. Any non-Duiner buying land, a house, or such in Duin must get personal approval from the king. Normally the appointment can take a week to a month to be granted. The king interviews the person (or family), but does not make his decision based on his opinion of the person's personality, but based on what he feels the city as a whole needs. He is a very systematic thinker, especially when it comes to his territory, and he wants to be sure that, for example, there are not too many soldiers or glassblowers, nor too few. That said, he does not control this with an iron fist, and allows evolution to do its thing most of the time. Duiners themselves are free to purchase land in Duin or change professions without any sort of decision from their lord. The son of a farmer is not going to be interviewed if he decides to pursue another career, for example. The king considers most of the city to run just fine without any sort of direct tweaking, and when he feels particularly optimistic or apathetic his interview with a potential newcomer might consist of a simple yes or no.

At times, political refugees come to Duin because of its traditional neutrality. The king carefully considers each request for refuge before accepting, because he does not want politicians to get the impression that they can all just simply move to Duin when they they become very unpopular in their homelands. To protect against this eventuality, political refugees are refused a long-term stay more often than not. In political discussions the king has been known to say, "Duin will remain neutral as long as I am king, but I personally have no such reservation against taking sides." He never uses outright threats of violence, but is extremely skilled at poking the human psyche to good effect via subtle hints and knowing which words to leave out of a statement.

Duin has one of the few large universities in the campaign, including a very active Department of Thaumaturgical Studies. Anyone who can afford the tuition may attend the school, which normally means that only the children of the wealthy study there. Duin has the largest library in the known world, containing tens of thousands of scrolls and books on a wide number of topics. Anyone may submit works to the library, which the librarians will carefully catalog and file away. Materials may be freely read within the library, but removal of any materials requires permissions from the head librarian himself (and is rarely granted). Theft from the library is a major offense, the penalty being several years of forced labor. While individual tomes are not normally enchanted (it might affect their content or magical nature), the library does have fairly effective

magics against casual thieves, and even professionals might have a hard time getting a book out (and they'd better make sure it doesn't have a spell on it which makes it easy to locate).

Several professional guilds exist in the city. A large part of their duty is to propose rules and regulations to the king's council, who must then approve or disapprove them. Approved rules become either a standard law or "guild law", meaning that the guild has the authority to enforce it. The guilds all ultimately answer to the king, so there is remarkably little corruption. The guilds include:

- Merchant's Guild: regulates the number of traders, prices, etc. They have authority to control travelers for contraband, but the most they are allowed to do to offenders is hold them until law enforcement comes. People looking for work in merchandising or trade should visit this guild. This guild has a lot of control over the local economy.
- Mage's Guild: unlike conventional, secretive mages guilds, that in Duin acts almost like a community center where mages can meet, share information, look for work, etc. While theoretically extremely powerful, this guild involves itself quite little in political affairs except when laws are deemed necessary to govern the use of certain magics (like necromancy, which is strictly outlawed, and "deception" magic, which is a minor offense except when used in entertainment, where it is tolerated for obvious reasons). This guild acts as a mediator between individual mages and other guilds, for example to help an employers find an enchanter with certain skills. It also has close ties to the University, with most of the leaders being University staff members.
- Agricultural Guild (more commonly called the Farmer's Guild): attempts to regulate which crops or livestock are grown, to suit local markets and national requirements. Farmers which are forced to grow less-profitable (but ultimately required) crops are partially compensated via guild money. Farmers all pay a small percentage of their incomes to the guild, and all but the absolutely smallest farms in the area are members of the guild. This guild covers livestock farming as well as crop farming. It works closely with the Merchant's Guild to regulate the import and exports of foods, and often works with mages to help increase crop productivity, aid sick livestock, etc.

13.5.1 Duin University

Duin's premier university is the largest on the continent, with more than 100 instructors, a few hundred other assistants and staff, and well over a thousand students studying a wide range of topics.

The Department of Thaumaturgical Studies, "the magic department", sports more than 25 instructors and a vast library of scrolls. Non-students can get access to the library, but must either have connections with the staff or pay a small entrance fee on each day that they use the library. Some regular patrons pay a monthly or yearly fee, rather than on a per-visit basis, and many professional mages use the library on a regular basis. Copying of library materials is permitted, provided one bring one's own writing material. Spellcasting in the library is strictly prohibited, out of concern for their priceless collections.

Works are never allowed to be taken from the library except by university staff, or students with direct permission from a staff member. Students who lose library works are normally expelled, and thus they tend to take good care of anything they do take from the library. Theft from a library is a criminal offense in the city, punishable by fines and prison time or forced labor. Steal the wrong book, and the librarians just might convince the king to eat you.

Tuition at the university costs money. Not a huge sum, but normally only better-off families can afford to send their young there. It is not unknown for the university to take on a student on other terms. One example is the student Rayford Miller, who pays his tuition by working as a copier of scrolls in the library several hours each day. Those who donate rare or otherwise valuable works to the university libraries often find tuition charges reduced or waived. The minimum age of entry is 16. There is no maximum age, but students older than their late 20's are uncommon, except for the few "professional students" who've been around as long as anyone in the graduating class can remember.

Foreigners are welcomed at the University, but are normally required to pay for their tuition, as opposed to being able to work out a trade. Local students get priority for spots in the school except in cases involving political favors, large donations, and the like.

The University is a hotbed of magical research, and the GM can use this to introduce new spells, or even whole Colleges of magic, into the campaign.

13.6 Eagul

Along its northern border, Eagul borders ogre territory. Its southern border meets the state of Paarmädls. Eagul politically claims the wooded mountains to its west, though they are in no way under its political control. Eagul is about 200 km across at its widest point, though with the mountains to its west it would appear much larger to anyone who takes Eagul's claim of control seriously. The area around Eagul is relatively sparsely populated, with only a handful of notable villages, and Eagul is not a "world power". Eagul

does not often have political contact with states other than Paarmädls, as it is a small state on the outskirts of human-run territory. Geographically, it has a relatively cool climate and it snows for several months of the year (they use the same calendar as Paarmädls, so those are Paarmädls moths). They get by on farming whatever will grow and hunting the numerous game animals, importing some grain and other goods from Paarmädls. They have active mining and blacksmithy industries, keeping their soldiers well-equipped and exporting the rest.

Eagul consists of several sub-territories, bound by feudal law. While there are occasional disputes, there is rarely outright conflict between any of the territories. Lord Roslof, normally a rather reasonable man, does not at all tolerate in-fighting amongst his vassals, and once forcibly stripped a difficult-to-deal-with vassal of his position. He insists that the territories act unitedly. Were Lord Roslof not so strict in this regard, the nation probably would be suffering through civil war.

13.7 Gora

Gora is a small nation founded only 3 generations ago by Marcus Gora. It lies on the outer edges of human civilization, and is not terribly important politically nor geographically. See section [12.5](#) for more information on Gora's king-to-be.

13.8 Kitts

Kitts, named after its founder from several generations ago, lies on the relative fringes of major kingdoms, a bustling sea-port city several days travel by sea from the outermost Ae'udian port. The city of Kitts itself sits on a mid-sized island about a kilometer from the main coast, but the island is big enough to have a small handful of villages. The population around Kitts is mostly human, but a fair number of lidijn have migrated in from the primitive tribes who still live in the sub-tropical forests. The vast majority of the citizens live on the isle, which is much safer from lidijn raiders than the mainland. The ellyllon who lived in the area long ago have all relocated, not caring to be around the bigger folks.

Small ships travelling between the isle and the mainland are very common - during busy seasons, one can sometimes see 50 or more at a time making the trip. The government has a number of patrol ships which they use to keep the peace. They have only a few warships, and reserve those for when needed. Fishing boats are numerous, the waters around the island always spotted with them.

Kitts' success lies primarily in its access to exportable goods. The land around Kitts is unusually fertile, and boasts several useful plants and animals found nowhere else. They also have a small number of jewel mines, and many of the jewels are exported to kingdoms further away (such voyages normally include at least one warship from the buying country, to ensure safe passage). The military constantly patrols for poachers and thieves (anyone taking goods from Kitts land or waters without a permit), both on land and by sea.

The city is ruled by a king, and kings of Kitts are always known to be savvy merchants. The current king is Collard II. He maintains political contacts with nearly every nation which trades with Kitts, and is personable and a gracious host when he has visitors. He understands, though it depresses him, that sometimes compromises must be made which do not maximize profit. Since the exports of Kitts bring in so much wealth, he often doesn't mind losing a few coins in politically-oriented deals here and there.

The nation, if we want to call it that, uses a minted currency, with coins in copper, silver and gold. Taxes are moderately high, and an active black market has grown up to help avoid some of the taxes. The king's "Court of Merchants", a group of high-profile merchants from the city, control prices quite tightly. The king is sure to put merchants with differing interests on the council, to help curb corruption (corruption is bad for PR, and if there's anything the king hates it's bad PR).

Kitts has been raided a number of times over the years by a large group of lidijn who have some long-standing grudge against the humans. The city center was originally on the mainland, but was moved to the island many years ago when raiding became a particular problem. In the mean time the city has improved its defenses measurably. Curiously, no human army has yet tried to invade city, not counting the pirates who often hunt near Kitts.

Kitts has an ongoing feud - not *quite* an outright war - with a primitive, belligerent mini-nation of lidijn based some days' travel by foot, who are affectionately called the "little meanies" or "little bastards" by Kittsfolk. While the lidijn don't have the numbers to directly assault Kitts, they do often attempt raids or the equivalent of drive-by shootings. The violence is not one-way, though. Kittsmen have been known to exterminate or drive away native lidijn to get at valuable resources. The land for some kilometers around Kitts is strictly delimited by the government, and permits are given out to gather, hunt, or farm any of it. Those who do pay a notable percentage to the king's tax collector, of course. Poaching is illegal, the penalty depending on the items poached. Most fruits and vegetables call for a public whipping or forced work on a merchant ship or the like, whereas poaching some rare animals carries the death penalty. Repeated offenders of even minor

poaching crimes might eventually be executed. The local judiciary system is largely a farce, the fates of the accused lying completely in the hands of the judge. While the government focuses much on keeping the borders safe, it doesn't put quite as much effort into domestic law enforcement, and citizens often turn to vigilantism to avenge wrongdoings.

The people of Kitts are generally hard-working, many of them fishermen, huntsmen, or gatherers of the many exotic fruits and vegetables which grow near Kitts. Dock-side work is also common for Kittsfolk, and the city has a number of small shipbuilding operations, aside from the one large facility. There are no formal universities in Kitts, the learning system normally being master-apprentice. Magic is practiced by relatively few individuals in Kitts, and those are normally in the service of the royal court or merchants (preservation of food for shipping is commonly achieved with magic). Even most of the lidijn citizens, who mostly migrated from primitive tribes, are undereducated, magically speaking, compared to the more civilized lidijn of Ae'udua or even Do'udua. Many know the equivalent of some Hoyle magic, and a few age-old charms taught down through the generations, but few know much more than that. Many of their ancient magics have gone unused for a generation or more in the ever-advancing lifestyle of the human-centric city and villages.

With its economy based on exports, Kitts gets a lot of visits from foreigners. How newcomers to the city are treated varies widely - some are given the red carpet and some are backstabbed and robbed before they can visit the first pub. The townsmen, even the roughest ones, know not to mess with visitors of the king, which is why royals and powerful merchants who visit have only nice things to say about it. Visiting commoners don't always get such nice treatment. It's not a downright rough place, but it can be rough at times.

13.9 Lualilua

Pronounced Loo-a-lee-loo-a, this ellyllon village sits safely in the woods, well hidden by both the trees and magics. It lies near a common trade route between Ae'udua and Duin, and exchanges of news, goods, and services with travelers is common. They are ruled by the benevolent Queen Aylayidiya. Though she is the absolute ruler, her people are normally left to do what they like. Her court is rather formal, but as long as things are going well (they usually are) the queen does not impose too much upon them. When she does impose, however, she expects complete subordination. Insubordination can lead to banishing, or execution in the case of treasonous insubordination (as judged by the Queen).

While she does not mind the trading which goes on with the human and lidijn travelers, the Queen refuses to allow a formal trade agreement to be signed, for fear it would eventually bring the larger folk to settle permanently in the area. Bringing any travelers to the village without the Queen's permission is a capital crime, punishable by death for both the ellyl and the visitors he brings. While she does not completely rule out the idea of foreign visitors, it is rare that she approves any. Even then, the traveler must be blindfolded, magically blinded, or otherwise made unable to find their way to the village. There are a small handful of humans and lidijn who are welcomed in the village because they have helped in the past, but they are also strictly forbidden from bringing visitors with them.

The Lualiluan have a fairly simple, care-free life, with the forest providing well more than enough of everything the ellyllon need to survive. They have many celebrations throughout the year. All grow up learning to dance and sing, and many learn to play a musical instrument.

They have a small scouting force which patrols the wood around the village. Rather than immediately engage intruders, they normally report back to the village so the Queen can decide what to do (she's very particular about that). She is often forgiving of innocents who wander into their domain, but any who come with violent intentions had better come prepared to deal with a large swarm of ellyllon, no small number of which are mages. Despite their protective nature when it comes to their home, they are not otherwise a violent people. For example, they never go looting along the trade route. That said, it is common for ellyllon to sneak into the overnight camps of traders to try to steal some pretty items. This is a game to the ellyllon, and is not done out of malice. Most traders have learned not to camp too close to the woods, or to secure any small, valuable items under a heavy lid. Many traders leave small offerings near the woods when they pass, in the belief that it brings good luck.

Home to approximately 500 ellyllon, Lualilua is not big by human standards, but it does carry a lot of political influence with the neighboring ellyllon villages. Their neighbors don't strictly fall under the Queen's rule, but may be requested to aid the Queen should the need arise. For example, it has occasionally been necessary for several villages to join forces in deterring ogres from migrating into the area. In theory, ogres and ellyllon could live in the same territory without conflict, but the ellyllon have a deep-seated fear of the "big, stupid, ugly folk."

The ellyllon mostly live in the hollowed-out trunks of trees and sometimes in small houses they construct amongst the branches. The Queen's home is a network of rooms built amongst and in neighboring trees in the village center. The people are very decorative in nature, and the insides of their homes are always neat and tidy. They do not have doors as we know them, preferring to have at least two large holes out of which they can quickly exit if needed. They use magic to protect their nests from high winds, heavy rains, and the like.

While largely vegetarian, the ellyllon hunt for meat, eating lizards, snakes, and some sorts of birds.

Though all of the villagers know at least a few magics, only about 1/5th of them are practicing mages. Several specialize in "artistic" magics, like shaping metals, coloring cloths (silk is a favorite of theirs), etc.

13.10 Tweed Hill

Tweed Hill is a small village - very few have every heard of it - with an unusual history. Just over 20 years ago, a group of about 70 humans set out from their home to found another one beyond the fringes of current society. Quite coincidentally, a small tribe of lidijn was doing the same. As fate would have it, both groups were attacked multiple times by trolls, and lost several of their number. While looking for a safe place to encamp themselves, both groups happened to come upon the same hilltop. It was perfect for defense - not too high, and surrounded by steep rocky cliffs on all sides but one. A river flowed at the base of the southern side, directly down from the slope, which promised easy access to water. The only problem was that two different groups wanted it. They eventually realized not only that they wanted it for the exact same purpose, but that they met under uncannily coincidental circumstances. With a little hesitation on both sides, they decided to share the hilltop, both knowing that they could certainly use the other's help. Over the months and years, the two became quite comfortable with each other, and so the first-ever village to be founded by humans and another race was formed. The village elected a governor from each race, and the two shared equal responsibility for the village's well-being. Each race learned from the other, and goodwill eventually became friendship.

The Tweed hilltop is approximately 300 meters in diameter, roughly circular, and quite flat (though not perfectly so). It rises only about 70 meters from the valley floor, but very steeply, making reaching the top both difficult and dangerous. Curiously, the south slope is very gentle, and easy to climb. Some have suggested that a powerful wizard, or even a god, created the slope long ago for his own use. Some even suggest that the hill itself was created by the gods to as a safe haven for the weary colonists.

Their buildings are made up of a mix of logs and stone from the hill, architecturally comparable to those of the ancient desert-dwelling Native North Americans. Not having much space, most buildings have two floors, with one large room per floor being the norm. Some have an underground floor as well. The winters do not bring heavy snows, so the rooftops are not steeply slanted, and are sometimes used as workspaces for tasks like drying meats and leather. The village has a central grain grinder, used by all villagers. One of the village chores, rotated amongst the various young males, is to turn the grinder (walking in a circle, pushing on a big stick which juts out from a large stone wheel) for whoever comes to grind their grain.

Most members of both races still practice the primary religions of their forefathers, and tolerance for each other's religious beliefs is never in question. Both practice polytheism, with the lidijn worshiping abstract nature-related gods and the humans worshiping more anthropomorphic deities, roughly similar to those of ancient real-world Roman and Greek religions.

The 120-or-so villagers survive mainly off of woodland game and plants, and the "wood hens" they breed for food (not chickens, but similar and flightless). To keep hunting parties from having to go out every day, one of the first things a young magician-to-be is taught is to magically preserve food. The lidijn young learn it as a matter of course.

The village is very far away from the next large city of any race, and the citizens have very little contact with other intelligent species. The woodlands around the village are relatively troll-free, thanks to a few brave villagers and a vast array of traps, but every now and then one tries to sneak into the village to grab a morsel (preferably a small lidijn), and sometimes one manages to get into the village before being spotted. The villagers have very little metal, and do not mine, so their weapons are mostly bows or spears adorned with sharp stone tips. Likewise, their tools are mostly wood and stone. When strangers pass through the Tweeds will always offer to trade goods or services for metal goods, even simple ones like pots and pans. They have a special interest in axes, hammers, and other tools which are useful in their day-to-day life. The village is neither large enough nor rich enough to warrant establishing regular trade routes, however, considering its distance from civilization. The Tweeds are just as content to live away from larger kingdoms, in any case, but they know it is only a matter of time before some politician comes with a message saying that they must accept rule under the new king in the neighborhood. Every now and then a stranger is accepted into the village, as is the case with the current human governor, a middle-aged mage who was adopted in just over 10 years ago, and has dedicated much of his time to teaching the few human youngsters who have the Gift of Magery.

Though the village has two governors, it has no conventional governmental structures in place. The culture is quite socialistic, and they very much acts as if they are all members of an extended, yet tightly-knit, family. The village has no standing military, though all able males are expected to fight if necessary, and are trained how to do so. It does not happen often, but occasionally a warrior falls to a troll or other wild beast while hunting. All dead are burned on pyres atop the hill. While burning has long been the lidijn custom, the humans readily adopted it when they first found that trolls had dug up their recently-buried dead.

Though most of the human elders grew up in societies where roles were strictly defined on a male-female basis, their numbers require that they be less selective about who does what. Potentially dangerous tasks, like hunting, are still carried out almost exclusively by the males. Likewise, few males do any of the weaving (except for children, whose small fingers are quite good at it). Most village activities have no specific prejudice based on either sex or race. The only really "exclusive" group in the village is the small handful of practicing mages, whose abilities have earned them the utmost respect from all of the villagers. The village has two practicing human mages and one human child who is gifted with Magery. All of the lidijn inherit this Gift, but only a couple practice magic on more than a hobby level. Their collective breadth of magical abilities is not so great, however, and they have relatively few established spells. Most magical effort is put into improving the life of the villagers. One mage, for example, has learned to shape stone, and is called upon to help build or repair buildings. Most learn some degree of agricultural magic, and a pair of lidijn sisters is somewhat skilled in healing magics ("the little priestesses", they are commonly called). Village magicians are expected to share their knowledge with other mages who might be able to use it, to help avoid that the loss of one person does not "spell" disaster (no pun intended) for the village.

The young are schooled by volunteer parents or elders, and also take an active part in day-to-day village life, like preparing food and caring for the few stock animals. Children are not normally allowed to wander off the hill-top, as they are easy picking for any passing troll. The youngsters grow up speaking both languages, and the younger generations have a markedly different spoken dialects than the founding generation, as they have grown up their whole lives accommodating the notably different vocal ranges and intonations of both languages. No member of either race can comfortably speak in the same vocal range as the other, and not all lidijn intonations can be properly pronounced by all humans, but despite that they can learn to be effectively fluent in each other's language. Foreign lidijn who are not used to human voices might have a little difficulty understanding a human who is fluent in the language, however. This is not unlike the difficulty Americans initially have in understanding native Scotsmen - it's disconcerting at first, but both the speaker and the listener eventually adapt to it.

The lidijn mages know several communication magics, and were able to bridge any language barriers the two groups initially had, but most of the older generation has still learned at least a bit of the other's language. Written forms of both languages are taught to all children, with an emphasis on the native language of their parents. For example, while it is unusual that a human will ever learn to read lidijn fluently, most learn to read it quite adequately. Lidijn children, and any human children with the Gift, are taught the basics of wielding magic starting when they turn 7 or 8 or so (it depends on their maturity level), though they often get much exposure to it long before then.

Curiously, though most folk are at least somewhat literate, the village makes rather little use of writing. They keep a small number of records as formalities, and families keep records of their lineages, but there are no book publishers or similar. A small number of the villagers quite enjoy writing, however, and often write for the entertainment of the village, such as poetry, songs, epic stories of heroes, and the history of the village Tweed itself. They manufacture no paper, but write on tree bark, large leaves, wooden tablets, or sometimes cloth (though cloth is reserved for the finest works, as it is not cheaply available).

While there appears to be no Ellyllon in the wooded valley surrounding Tweed Hill, some of the founding settlers tell a tale that they once got a visit from one, and some fool tried to capture it. It flew away and they never saw another one. Once in a blue moon the villagers spot a dragon flying high overhead, on its way across the large valley. They have never been threatened, nor even approached, by one, however. Trolls infest the outlying woods, as do a couple other, more unusual threats. The area immediately around the hill is normally free of monsters, but this is only because they've learned to stay away, not because the villagers actively patrol the outlying areas. The villagers maintain a number of traps around the hill, mainly large nets intended to trap trolls, so the villagers can capture and burn them (cutting them up doesn't always work - they heal back together over time!).

13.11 Uadomo

Uadomo ("People of Domo") is the name of a small nation of primitive lidijn tribes not far from Kitts (section [13.8](#)). We could almost compare them to the Aztecs or Mayans, but they're not as successful as either of those. Their city is a sprawling stretch of stone buildings spread out along the side of a steep mountain. Buried amongst the trees, it would be hard to spot while wandering around on the ground.

Uadomo is ruled by an absolute and merciless ruler, who is the society's link to the chief of their gods, Domo. Domo is personified by a powerful, intelligent lidijn with the senses, speed, and stealth of a panther. In paintings he is often painted with part of his body in panther form, to strengthen the symbolic relationship with the animal's powers. Consequently, the panther is a holy animal for the Uadomans.

Unfortunately for the citizens of Kitts, Domo apparently often wants the Uadomans to do rather nasty things to them. Normally this takes the forms of violent raids, but occasionally fanatic "suicide squads" are sent to directly assault more fortified areas of Kitts. This is futile, always resulting in the slaughter of the lidijn, but the gesture is largely symbolic, and used to fuel the anti-human sentiment. (It is also a way for the ruler to get rid

of any Uadomans he feels need getting rid of.) In combat, the lidijn warriors typically fight with stone-tipped spears, bows, or blowguns with poisoned darts. They are excellent at navigating and surviving the woods, and have "home court advantage" when it comes to woodland skirmishes. It is no coincidence that the people of Kitts have burned down many large swathes of woods on the mainland of Kitts.

Their legends and stories - some of them true - often center around the conquests of Domo over the humans. Though Domo is not known to be a god who has ever physically manifest himself, in stories the Uadomans are normally referred to collectively as Domo, meaning "Domo, as embodied by our people."

Curiously, though lidijn inherently posses the Gift of Magery, Uadoman culture has very few rituals intended to produce a magic effect. While minor "household" magics are learned growing up, only the small caste of select shamans are allowed to make heavy use of magic. Even then, their spells are mostly rather primitive when compared to those of more advanced human or lidijn cultures. They don't have any notable combat magics, for example, though the shamans do perform several formal rituals intended to increase the effectiveness of warriors before they go off to fight. The control of magic within the society is a major, if often unrecognized, tool in the ruler's absolute control.

Life for the average Uadoman is fairly bleak. Either you're a hunter/warrior, a shaman, the ruler, or a nobody. Most males are hunters/warriors at some point, if not as long as they are physically able. Elder, "retired" warriors are normally treated with much respect, but some also scoff at "their unwillingness to die in combat for Domo!" Females are not allowed to be hunters or warriors, and spend their whole lives gathering and preparing food, doing all household chores, raising the children, etc. Couples ceremonially marry, but it is not unknown for a man to leave a woman for another woman, or a man to take in a widow as a second wife. Women are not allowed to leave their husbands, and are often punished harshly if they act or speak or against the will of their husbands. They haven't got it all that well, but don't know anything different, so they don't complain about it.

The shamans are followed by a selected group of underlings who do all of the grudge work and are otherwise expected to do little more than listen and pray at the right times. Followers who show any sign of wisdom (in the Uadoman sense of the word) are sometimes selected to become shamans when the time comes.

The ruler has a constant escort of bodyguards and a large number of children from his concubine. His rule is absolute, and he is just as likely to put someone to death for petty thievery as he is for treason. Only the style of execution would be different: minor crimes are often punished as soon as the king makes his judgment, whereas punishments for higher crimes are often turned into public ceremonies, to make examples of the wrongdoers.

Uadomans have no currency, normally trading amongst themselves in hand-made goods or grain, which they grow on the mountainsides and in the valley. They don't trade with any other cultures - they take what they want and kill or leave the rest. The ruler gets well more than his fair share of everything produced (or pillaged) within his realm.

Though they do not value it as a currency, the Uadomans do make heavy use of gold in their artwork and jewelry. While it would seem that they are virtually overflowing with gold, that is largely due to the contrast with their otherwise primitive, poverty-stricken lifestyles. While the Uadomans do have plenty to eat, only the ruler, and to some degree the shamans, have any significant personal wealth (and the ruler's is significant indeed, exceeding that of the rest of the population combined). Some particularly successful warriors accumulate quite a few gifts and favors, but most don't live long enough to take advantage of them. Most others get by on a day-to-day basis but don't live richly, by any means.

14 Story Snippets

This section contains what some might call "adventure seeds." They are essentially story points, some suitable for use as an entry into an adventure, others useful for adding "color" to a campaign or situation.

14.1 Return of the Mayor

Mad Bubba Aelkin, from Wattack, gets his nickname from all of the tall tales he's told over the years. Faeries, dragons, and lycanthropes have all, in Bubba's mind, been out there at some point, plotting a way to take over the small town. Bubba is a scruffy middle-aged man who, aware of the dislike most townsfolk have of him, lives in the woods outside of town. He survives off of what he can hunt, and goes into town once in a while to trade away extra game. When he's in town, he always spends a coin or two at the pub, and it is there that he tells his imaginative stories.

This time it's a bit different, though. Bubba's been telling the same story for over a month, and it's starting to unnerve people. He claims that old Mayor Mayborne, who died two years ago under mysterious circumstances, is coming back to claim the city. He's building an army of undead - Wattack's dead - to take it over with, he says.

Potential plot elements:

- Bubba has witnessed Mayborne, now a liche or zombie, summoning undead from a local graveyard.
- Bubba is in the employ of the undead Mayborne, lured by an offer of a position of power within the village once the mayor has summoned enough undead to retake it.
- Bubba did see a graverobber, but it wasn't a liche or zombie at all. Perhaps it was a troll or some large, hungry, nocturnal beast.

14.2 The Goblin of the Valley

Local goblin legend tells of an exceptionally bright goblin named Ogg Ry (that's "rye", with a long "l" sound). At a young age, Ogg told his family and friends, "I'm going to find a master who will teach me how to let us lead a better life." He left his home and wandered fearlessly into the valley below, where the humans lived. Ogg approached many humans, asking where he could find a wizard. He eventually met Gary Graylock, a local mage of some repute, who operated a small apprenticeship school for Gifted children from the area. Intrigued by Ogg's request, Graylock agreed to take in the goblin as an apprentice. The young goblin was an eager learner, and eventually gained the trust of the locals by assisting them with the magics he learned. To Graylock he was like a son, and the two eventually became close friends.

Some years later, Ogg decided it was time to return to his people. He knew he still had much to learn, but in his stay he had already learned more than he could individually teach his people. Before he left, Ogg vowed to Graylock and the villagers that one day he would return as the ruler of the goblin tribes, and would formally declare peace and an alliance between the people. Taking nearly a wagonload full of scrolls and such that he had written or collected over the years, he headed back off into the mountains.

It has been some years since Ogg left the village. Most have forgotten him, but some remember him fondly, and hope he at least made it home safely.

Graylock is now an old man, with at most a few years left in him. Most of his former apprentices are now taught by two of his once-apprentices, both now proven mages. Graylock, more than anyone else, sometimes tells the tale of Ogg, the Goblin of the Valley, and tells them of Ogg's vow.

Potential plot elements:

- Local scouts report a large unit of goblin troops heading into the village. Are they raiders? Are they returning to fulfill Ogg's wishes?
- Ogg never returns to the valley. Several goblin-generations later, however, his direct descendants returns. Ogg ended up taking over his village and getting top breeding rights. His Gift of Magery was passed on to quite a large number of offspring. Maybe all of them have come to the valley for lessons. Maybe they've come to make a pact. Maybe they wandered in by accident, and knows nothing of Ogg's oath until some villager asks the lead goblin about his name, Ogg III.
- Ogg or his descendants return to ask for military help in uniting a few remaining goblin tribes who are resistant to the idea of Ogg's unified rule. This might put the village in a sticky situation. On one hand, Ogg is a friend. On the other hand, having a unified nation of goblins next door isn't an idea most humans are keen on. Maybe instead of asking for military help, the PCs are asked to come along as negotiators, mediators, or maybe bodyguards.
- The PCs happen to come across an unusually large and well-organized goblin city while traveling through the mountains. If they behave themselves, they will be welcomed. If they do not behave, they will be overwhelmed by a large number of goblin warriors and they will have helped diminish goblinhood's trust in other races. Ogg's oath or not, these goblins can only be pushed so far before retaliating. Well-behaved PCs may find opportunities to establish political or trade contacts with the goblins.

14.3 Mama Dragon

While scouting the wilderness on the edge of the kingdom, the PCs become entangled in some else's family affairs...

One of the PCs hears a loud "plop" sound, and feels a splash of liquid on his shoulder. Quickly rubbing at it, "blood!" he cries. Looking up, he sees a dragon flying limply, but quickly overhead. In a moment it is out of sight, but the PCs hear it roar loudly several times as it goes, a roar of pain and suffering more than of anger.

If the PCs wish to track the dragon, they can follow the trail of blood droplets without too much effort. The search could be made simpler by an occasional roar of pain.

The trail eventually leads to the rocky top of a small hill. A serene and beautiful place. Then an ear-splitting roar. A large wounded dragon lies in the clearing, with one ballista bolt sticking from her side and one nearby, which she just pulled out before wailing. Next to the dragon is what can only be described as a nest, and there appear to be eggs in it!

The PCs need to make a choice, of course. If they decide to engage the dragon, they could probably defeat her (she is badly wounded). They could then destroy the eggs, or sell them to a wizard or king.

If they approach in a friendly manner, however, it of course becomes more interesting.

The dragon, when first seeing the PCs, will immediately prepare for combat, leaping between the PCs and the nest and crouching down while she considers her options. It will be obvious to the PCs that she is badly wounded, as her movements pain her badly.

She assumes the PCs are part of the force which wounded her, sent to finish her off. She will insist that they will not get her eggs, and that she will destroy them herself before the PCs are allowed near them.

If approached slowly by unarmed PCs, and the PCs explain that they are offering help, she will eventually give in to her pride and listen to what they have to say.

If the GM wants a short adventure, the PCs can assist the dragon (her Mass Scale will make healing magics expensive, however), gain her gratitude, and be on their way. For a longer adventure, here are a few options:

- Despite the PCs best efforts, the mother dragon dies (maybe the bolts were poisoned). Before she dies, she begs the PCs to take the eggs to her sister, who lives a dragon's-day away (2-3 days by foot). She describes some landmarks for how to get there, and explains that the sister will know the eggs are from her own blood. A mage with Communication magic, especially when combined with Mind magics, can get a fairly accurate description of the route before the dragon passes away. The eggs are a bit more cumbersome than a balled-up adult human, and may pose transportation problems. Maybe the eggs, disrupted by all the movement, hatch before the PCs can get them to their aunt. Maybe the PCs inadvertently damage them through carelessness, and the aunt retaliates when she realizes the would-be hatchlings are dead.
- As above, the mother dragon dies, but has no dying request other than that they ensure the eggs' safety.
- It takes some days until the dragon is strong enough to care for herself. In that time the PCs need to fight of scavengers who smell all the blood and the eggs. Maybe a rival dragon decides this is the opportune time to strike, unaware that the PCs are there. Once the dragon is back to full health, the PCs will have earned a favor or two from the dragon.
- There is another egg! The mother was relocating her nest further away from humanity when, ironically, she got too close to some well-armed humans on her way back from moving the first egg. She requests that the PCs recover the egg, or find it and guard it until she is healed enough to move the other eggs. This could be days or weeks, depending on the severity of her wounds and the ability (if any) of the PCs to aid the healing process.

In any case, she has babies to raise and *will not* join the PCs' party!

14.4 The Mage Worm

Feona held her son's hand as she spoke to the doctor. He was the only practicing mage for many miles, and she was hopeful he would take him on as an apprentice. Doctor Tudor could see, without even focusing his mind, the strong halo of mana around the boy. He knelt down and looked intently at Tobias before speaking, "do not be afraid. I'm just going to look you over more closely."

The wizard closed his eyes and put his hand up to the boy's face, an inch way, and slowly moved it down to Tobias' chest. After a second or two he cocked his head sideways, as if listening to a faraway sound. A brief moment later, he opened his eyes, trying not to show his shock. He thought for a moment, choosing his words carefully, and stood up to speak to Feona. "An apprenticeship is not only difficult on the apprentice, but on the teacher. I will need to think it over. I will come to you when I have made my decision, " he smiled reassuringly.

Slightly disappointed, the farmer's wife left with her son. Tudor quietly went to his living room and sat on his cushioned chair. He closed his eyes and concentrated, his hands resting motionless on the arms of the chair, his head tilted back slightly. After a moment, he whispered, "Call me, Marcus. I have a severe problem and need your help."

He then made a tea and waited on a call.

Tobias is infected with a Mana Worm. They are small, insubstantial, quasi-intelligent creatures made of pure mana which spontaneously develop under unknown circumstances. They enter a host body in order to take advantage of its intelligence. Its primary motivator is to learn how to actually wield magic - they do not inherently know how to do this, nor do they learn it from one another. Over some years it grows more intelligent by integrating more and more closely with the host. It does not control the host outright, but even without learning magic they eventually do learn to induce basic emotions by manipulating the body's internal systems. They use this to influence the host to focus only on studying magic. A strong worm can turn this

into an obsession for the host, whereas a weaker one will only be able to induce more subtle changes in behaviour.

At some point, a worm gains enough skill in wielding magic to take over or its host. When it does this, its consciousness eventually surfaces, becoming the dominant personality. Some such "hatchings" happen instantly and some take days or weeks to complete, during which the host would appear to be schizophrenic.

The "incubation period" for a worm is completely unpredictable. At a minimum, they wait until their host knows at least a couple different magics proficiently. In some cases they wait until the host is quite powerful before taking over. Whether this is a conscious decision or simply unpredictable behaviour is unknown. The vast majority of worms go undetected, as very few mages have ever heard of them, much less had an opportunity to examine one. Several mages who have been thought to have gone mad have actually been the long-time victims of Mana Worms.

Mana Worms are impossible to remove from a host using physical techniques, and removing them from the host magically is tricky - sometimes they self-destruct in a powerful blast of violent energies. As these worms are very rare, it is unlikely that a given mage is familiar with any magics to help get rid of them.

Worms almost invariably target children or pre-adolescents who have no inherent Magery. They do not seem to be able to infect adults of any race, nor those who have Magery, though there are several theories on why this is so.

A host infected with a Mana Worm gains up to three levels of the Gift of Magery, with more powerful worms bringing higher levels of Magery. It does not directly alter the Mana attribute of the host.

When a worm is exercised from the host without killing the host, the host may or may not have mana-related side-effects. Sometimes the former host's Mana attribute is increased or decreased. When strong worms (levels 2 and 3) are exercised, the host sometimes retains one level of the Magery Gift as a side-effect of being bound to the worm. When this happens, roll 1dF. If the host had a level 2 worm, he retains one level of Magery on a roll of 1. If he had a level 3 worm, the host retains one level of Magery on a roll of 0 or 1. If Mana Worms could be captured or cultivated, some would attempt to use them to "grow mages," but their rarity and intangible nature make finding one, much less containing it, a feeble exercise.

It is not known if a Mana Worm dies when its host dies, or if it is set free to infest another host. It is commonly believed that, due to the intimate nature of their relationship with the host, requiring years of integration, that they may not survive the death of their host. In theory.

14.5 Our Little Niadaelle

The PCs are travelling the route between Duin and Ae'udua, a commonly-used trade route. As they come to a part of the path which runs particularly close to the woods, a small group of ellyllon fly out to them. The PCs can tell by the frantic flight patterns that something is amiss, and as the ellyllon come with speaking range the PCs can hear them shouting:

"Squeek! Squeeksqueek! Squeeeeeek!"

Most larger races can't understand ellyllon, who speak in a much higher range than most larger ears can comfortably deal with. If the party has no magic to translate for them, the ellyllon have mage who can do so. During the process of establishing a line of communication, the ellyllon will be obviously impatient, bickering amongst themselves. They seem to be saying, "hurry up! Hurry up!"

Eventually, the ellyllon frantically greet the PCs and ask for their help in tracking down a human who left towards Duin earlier in the day. Several youngsters from Lualilua, a nearby ellyllon village, were "playing" near a resting merchant (seeing what small shiny objects they could pilfer, a favorite past-time of Lualiluan ellyllon) when one of them was captured by the human. Before the ellyllon troops could arrive to free her, the traveller had already left. They found no body, and assume he has taken her.

The land along the route to Duin is mostly plains, which ellyllon avoid because there is no place to hide (mainly from large birds of prey), and the ellyllon beg the PCs to rescue "our little Niadaelle." If the PCs wish to speak to the young ones (who are not with the group), the ellyllon will insist that they speak with them in the shelter of the woods, but in no case will the PCs be led to the ellyllon village.

Unfortunately, the youngsters who got away didn't pay enough attention to get any details about the man, except that he had a "dark, hairy face" and a red tarp covering his two-horse wagon.

If the PCs don't speak to the children they will only learn that the man has a dark beard.

The merchant has approximately a half-day's lead on the PCs, more if the GM needs it or if the PCs take the time to speak to the other children.

If the PCs don't accept the task, human-ellyllon relations in the area will suffer severely. At a minimum, the ellyllon will become more reclusive. In a worst case they may start to violently harass passersby. As this is a

popular trade route, that can only lead to bad mojo for everyone, physically as well as politically.

Potential story elements:

- The presumption is that the kidnapper is headed to Duin, but after capturing such a beautiful prize he may make a detour to "a wizard he knows" and see if he can make a small profit. Duin, being a rather modern and (necessarily) racially tolerant city, does not allow the sale of any intelligent species, and he is likely to know this (if indeed he is a merchant). The PCs may or may not know this, depending on how familiar they are with Duin (PCs from Duin will know this, as will most merchants who trade there).
- Perhaps he is no merchant at all, but is a "collector" who lured the ellyllon into a trap (Lualiluans have a reputation for pilfering small items from traveling merchants who stop to rest in the area, and the man could easily have set up a trap).
- Maybe the traveler is more demanding, and places a ransom on Niadaelle. He delivers the message through magical means, sending a large falcon to their village to drop off a scroll.
- Perhaps he captured her for someone who paid him to. Maybe a wizard who needs some exotic spell component. For more intrigue, maybe Niadaelle was specifically chosen as the target for some reason, rather than a random victim.
- Maybe the man is just a dumb old fool who hasn't ever seen a live ellyl, and didn't know any better. When confronted with the PCs, he might cooperate or he might take a "this is mine!" attitude. He is probably not in any shape to fight the PCs, however, and would rather give up his new pet than his life. Maybe he is very apologetic, offering several gifts to return to the parents of the little one. (That might be their ticket into the ellyllon village, as he certainly offers something the ellyllon cannot carry.) If the PCs take her, maybe he calls the guard after they leave. The guard might catch up with them on their way back to the ellyllon. Maybe the man is counting on this, and sends a tracker to find the ellyllon city itself. In that case, the kidnapping is just a cover-story and the man will readily give up the captured child. Some of the PCs might then think, "that was a little *too* easy."
- The merchant is obviously more powerful than the PCs, so maybe an alternate plan is needed: approach the merchant as a potential buyer for the ellyllon, and purchase her freedom. The ellyllon villagers, if consulted, will not have much money to offer the PCs. They will also complain that the PCs are wasting time.
- For a more cinematic campaign, perhaps the PCs help a group of ellyllon raiders travel safely across the plains (e.g., in a covered wagon) and partake in a direct assault on the kidnapper. This is an opportunity for the GM to show how dangerous a swarm of 6 to 10 ellyllon can be. For a longer adventure, do this after the PCs track down the man and realize they can't handle him by themselves.

If the PCs recover Niadaelle, they may have a hard time convincing her that they are there to help. She can't put up a fight, but she can certainly be difficult to catch (she's learned better than to get too close to big people). If they mistreat her, her family will certainly hear about it, and the PCs will then get only a gruff, "thanks, but don't show your face around here anymore." If they get her home alive and well, the ellyllon are unlikely to have hoards of treasure to give away, but here are some options:

- They know the location of a merchant wagon wrecked in the woods - some poor soul who tried to take a shortcut off the trail - or perhaps an old merchant's cache. It might contain items the PCs could use or sell.
- They give the PCs several ellyllon tapestries - intricately detailed, extremely light, silkish scarves about the size of a bandana. While of little practical use, their workmanship and beauty are unsurpassed, and they go for a good price in upper-class circles. Perhaps they carry enchantments, such as providing the ability to communicate freely with ellyllon.
- The PCs receive a collection of small trinkets the little folk have pilfered from caravans over the years. Perhaps one of the items is cursed, or otherwise magical, and leads to the next adventure. Maybe one of the items is recognized by another merchant the PCs later meet on the trail, who claims it once belonged to him. ("Hey, you're wearing my family's necklace! Are you a [Smith/Jones/Nguyen]?")
- A magical item which allows the PCs to understand ellyllon speech. An earring or small pendant would be appropriate, as ellyllon can comfortably create such items at lidijn and human scales. Other ellyllon who see the item may recognize it, and have a better reaction to the PCs.

14.6 Charred reputation

A deep, ground-shaking groan froze the party in their tracks. They drew their weapons and looked around for the source, and were disappointed to not see one. After a few long seconds it spoke, "you, wizard! You are not welcomed here! You will perish here today! The rest of you may go on your way."

A wizard in the group has been through this part of the woods before. After a moment of recollection, he

realizes the problem: the last time he was here, he fought off two trolls... with fireballs. Fire balls. Dumb idea, in hindsight. He remembers leaving the troll corpses to burn as he made haste to get away. That might explain the small clearing the PCs are now in - he remembers this part of the path having trees the last time he was here!

Whether their tormentor is a woodland spirit, a dryad, a tree-folk, or an ellyl is up to the GM. Thus the threat level can be as little or as big as appropriate for the current story.

14.7 The Far-off Continent

The "far-off continent" represents someplace which the campaign world's cultures (at least the ones the PCs know of) don't yet know about. This could be a continent across the sea, across the mountains and vast desert, or simply someplace nobody's gone before.

This concept easily provides the GM with an outlet (or inlet) for introducing new races or cultures into the campaign. For example...

14.7.1 Orcs

Orcs. If your campaign can't do without orcs, having them invade like Genghis Khan might be a dramatic way to introduce them. Villages start disappearing and a few escapees spread rumors of foul, merciless humanoids.

14.7.2 Dragons

Did you ever wonder how come there are relatively few dragons, but that they're so intelligent and even have a common language? The dragons on the campaign's continent are descendants of some who came over, intentionally or otherwise, from the far-away land. Maybe dragons know this, maybe they don't. Back home, dragons are the single dominant species, complete with society and culture. One way to approach this is to visualize how the more social dinosaurs might have lived, and then imagine how a dragon's intelligence might have improved on that. Dragons may very well have evolved from herds of dinosaur-ish creatures.

14.7.3 Wasteland

The continent was devastated by Something Really Big. Quite possibly the same thing that wiped out the rumored Dragon Dynasty, and forced the remaining few dragons to flee to the lands of the mammals. Or maybe the major devastation is the reason the orcs are finally forced to leave home and invade new lands.

14.7.4 Devolution

The land is a virtual timecapsule, untouched by any intelligent species as we know them. Instead, dinosaurs, and maybe some proto-human/lidijn, roam the vast expanses. Maybe the PCs will even find some less-evolved ellyllon.

14.7.5 Mana, o Mana, wherefore art thou, Mana?

The whole continent/land mass has mana levels lower than the world norm. Such a land would probably be aggressively colonized by the less magical races, like humans, where it would remain untouched by the lidijn and ellyllon.

On the flip-side, maybe the whole land is a virtual pool of magical energy, or maybe has widely-varying levels which change rapidly through the coming and going of "mana storms." Such a land would be aggressively contested by magic-strong species.

14.8 Where no Wild Things Roam

Some speak of a desert so desolate that not even insects live there.

The PCs will of course want to pay a visit, as desolate wastelands are practically famous for hiding the lost cities and untold riches of ancient civilizations.

After a few hours of wandering, the PCs start to feel ill. If they continue, after a day or two they are very weak. In another day they fall over, too weak to even stand up. They have no way knowing that they received fatal doses of radiation within the first few hours of their visit. With no chance of being rescued, they die there. There are no vultures to pick at them, nor grubs to eat out their eyes. They simply erode into dust over the eons.

The moral of the story is: some places were meant to remain a mystery.

14.9 Events in Duin

[This section is as much about adventure seeds as it is about *potential* storylines for underlying campaign history.]

Duin is a powerful state, and without a doubt one of the most important reasons for that is the Dragon-King himself. Being the only human city with a non-human ruler (and an unusual ruler from any perspective), Duin is the center of lots of stories in the campaign. People far and wide tell tales of "the city ruled by a *real dragon!*" Many of the stories are exaggerated, of course, but what stories aren't exaggerated in some way or another?

14.9.1 Heir to the Throne of Duin

The announcement from the Dragon-King of Duin surprised everyone:

The time has come to choose the next in line to be king. Custom dictates that the eldest prince be trained from birth to one day take his father's place as king. In the coming weeks, Duin will get a new visitor - my first-born son, Dhhaloh. His mother - not technically the queen - has chosen to remain away to raise Dhhaloh's siblings.

Do not take this as a sign that I will die any time soon. Raising the next king will take many years. I wish to raise him here in Duin, rather than introduce him to you when he is older. He needs this, to learn to overcome his instincts, and learn not to be an animal, but a fair and honorable king. ...

Few can ignore the temptation to gossip about this. The room for speculation is huge.

To political enemies of Duin this is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, the king will be extremely distracted while raising his son (human nannies won't be able to help much here). On the other hand, if the new prince is allowed to reach adulthood, having *two* dragons fighting for Duin means even more bad news for its enemies.

To political friends of Duin, it is a mixed blessing for the opposite reasons: they don't want the king being too distracted, but the prospect of having two dragons on their side is encouraging.

Potential story elements:

- The young prince turns out to be a problem child. The king has a difficult time handling him. He's already eaten a couple members of the court, and a political meltdown is not far away.
- The prince appears to be as bright and charismatic as his father, and it's happily ever after. Or maybe he's envious or power-hungry, and plots to overthrow his father. In either case, this would be many years down the line from "campaign mainstream", unless the GM wants to modify the timeline and assume that Duin has had a prince since many years.
- The young prince is abducted or assassinated shortly after he arrives. The king's reaction could vary from cool logic, finding the culprits through normal investigative process, to barbaric rage, ripping the city apart until he finds the prince or the ones who killed him are turned over. If the GM wants to get rid of the well-mannered king and install a more "draconian" one (pun intended), the loss of the prince would be a good dramatic point to justify a sharp change in the king's personality. If the king become a tyrant, perhaps Duin's nickname will eventually change from Dragon City to Draconian City!
- Rather than a newborn, Duin introduces his young-adult heir, who has lived away in the mountains, and who the king "hasn't mentioned" all these years ("nobody asked!"). In this case, the prince won't be used to being around small folk. He might need strict, direct oversight from the king to avoid some "instinctual slips", such as the prince eating Duiners or running amok in the city. The king's task, of course, will be to whip the prince into shape. This could go any number of directions, depending on the prince's personality.

14.9.2 Hair on the Throne

As above, but the heir the king presents is a human or a lijdijn!

14.9.3 Overdue Book

One of the PCs is planning out a complex enchantment and needs more information to complete some of the trickier spells. While discussing the problem with a mage friend of his, the friend tell him that what he wants is in the University library. No problem...

The PC visits the library. To get access to the library he must apply for a permission slip, a formality largely intended to discourage casual thievery. While processing the permission slip, the librarian tells the PC:

I'm sorry, sir, but we have a highly unusual situation here. It seems that your father - he was Henry Baylor, wasn't he? Anyway, he once took a book from here - with permission, it would seem - and *never brought it back*. The library has a very strict, in fact *utterly inflexible*, policy when it comes to loaned-out books. I cannot allow you into the library until you return the book. More specifically, neither Henry Baylor, nor any of his direct family, *nor* any of their descendants, may enter until the book is returned. And the *late-fee* paid, of course.

Maybe the PC has some memory of a book his father sometimes read, matching the description the librarian gives him. His father is probably dead, or may live far away. In any case, the adventure then becomes getting the book and getting it to the library, so that the PC can continue work on his enchantment. Perhaps the book is within easy reach, but the decades-long late-fee isn't! The solutions could range from taking on another adventure to quickly raise some cash, or simply delaying the originally-planned enchantment until the PC can finally get access to the library. Asking a friend to check out a book is not a viable option. First, getting permission to actually remove a book from the library is a difficult feat in itself. Secondly, anything removed from the library has magics put on it to make it easier to find (this wasn't their policy many years ago, the missing book was inadvertently not enchanted, or the magics were forcibly dispelled). If the library discovers that a loaned-out book is given to a third party, all library rights are revoked. Thus no mage is willing to help a PC in such a venture. The library has a very strict, in fact utterly inflexible, policy when it comes to loaned-out books.

To add some intrigue to the story...

The PC meets with his father, who explains that the book was stolen from him a couple days after he got it. Maybe he reported the theft to the library (library property theft is a crime in Duin), or maybe he was too ashamed or scared. In any case, he regrets the situation, but can't do anything to help except to give the PC clues about who stole it. (The father was never arrested as a criminal over the missing book because a loophole in the older laws made his permission to keep the book permanent, but still subject to normal late fees.)

Ideally, the PC should bring back not only the book and pay the massive late-fees, but also make some good impression on the library. Perhaps he donates a number of rare books he uncovers while searching for the missing book, which is good for a years-long library pass (but still no specific permission to remove materials from the library halls). As having access to Duin's premiere library can always be helpful when it comes to studying magics, this might even be the primary reward in the adventure. Having access to it may provide benefits when studying new magics or improving existing magical skills.

14.9.4 Dogwood Rush

Dogwood is a goblin town on the outskirts of the Duin kingdom, described in section [13.3](#).

The goblins of Dogwood often seem to have the worst luck of anyone. This time they've proven it. While mining in the very mountain they live on, the Dogwooders struck gold. Even as stupid as they are, the Dogwooders do know that humans *love* gold. And there are few things a Dogwooder values more than a good standing amongst the humans. Sadly, however, the goblins also do not truly understand how humans behave when they are driven by a strong desire to have something.

This adventure seed could start out in any number of ways, including:

- A PC is trading with a Dogwooder, who shows him a stone and asks what it is. The PC recognizes it as gold ore. In this scenario, the discovery, or not, of gold is up to the PC.
- While trading with Dogwooders, the goblins brag of their discovery, obviously proud of the fact that they too have gold.
- Many locals are talking about it. If the PC is a merchant, perhaps his sales suddenly sky-rocket as people buy a certain widget before packing off to Dogwood (mining gear, for example). Or perhaps Dogwooders themselves come to trade some of their new-found gold.

Likewise, there are a number of directions the main story can go, including:

- The PCs ignore it, and Dogwood eventually becomes a speck in the history books.
- The PCs move in as gold prospectors, and thereby personally help ensure the eventual destruction, enslavement, or running-off of the goblins.
- The PCs "do an A-Team", and help drive away the miners. If they succeed, they will be gods in the eyes of the Dogwooders. They may even be invited to lead the city (the PCs might only later realize how difficult it is to live up to being a god). They will likely, however, gain some enemies, or possibly a reputation as bandits or traitors.
- The king of Duin himself takes an interest. Perhaps he agrees to take on Dogwood as a suburb of Duin, which would of course mean they would pay taxes to Duin. In the case of recognizing the

goblins as Duiners, the goblins gain the political right to defend their land and the right to the protection of the king's army. Potential gold miners won't like the idea of having to ask the goblins for *anything*. Rather than grant them membership, perhaps the king ignores the incident, seeing it as too unprofitable or undesirable for other reasons. Perhaps the king simply flies in and eats the king of Dogwood, as he did in Duin so many years ago (to his credit, he is much more civil than he was back then).

Realistically, if word gets out that the goblins have struck gold, they're doomed. This is about storytelling, however, not realism, so feel free to save the goblins. Somehow.

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