

Book of LEGENDS



A Tribe  Sourcebook



Dream Pod 9

A Tribe 8 Sourcebook

Book of LEGENDS

"There are many stories which are lost to us. How many people's lives have been forgotten and left to vanish into the folds of time? How many heroes and icons of our people have been tarnished or dishonored by the fact that we never knew their names? There are countless struggles happening every day that we never hear of, or are quick to forget."

— Emulaan the Poet

The *Book of Legends* is a unique cycle supplement for Tribe 8, focusing on the Fallen's quest for a mythology to call their own. Half the book is a series of legends that alone show the struggles of the people of Vimary, and together warn of a grave danger coming their way.

The other half provides resources for using these and other legends in your own cycle and for turning them into a legendary saga. Resources include an overview of prominent storytellers, new characters, powerful artifacts and special locations. They also include dozens of story seeds.

The *Book of Legends* tells the tales of:

- The Ritual of Akasha: a Fallen's quest to recapture the past;
- The Ring of Mahakala: a cursed artifact releases a vile Z'vri;
- The Forgotten Fortress: a warped spiritual citadel left over from the darkest times of the Camps traps brave Fallen questers;
- The Forsaken: in the wilds of the Outlands, four Crusaders abandoned by their Fatima struggle against despair and a dark evil;
- And several more.

DP9-810

www.dp9.com



Dream Pod 9

ISBN: 1-896776-50-7



9 781896 776507

Printed in Canada



Children of Prophecy



Third Interlude

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proofing, as well as for playing the victims.

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Produced and Published by



Dream Pod 9
5000 d'Iberville, Suite 332
Montreal, QC
Canada
H2H 2S6

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Dream Pod 9 can be reached through the
Internet. Look for our page on the World Wide
Web at www.dp9.com. Also check out the
rec.games.frp.misc newsgroup for support and
information about Tribe 8.

Stock # DP9-810

Legal Deposit: May 1999
Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec
National Library of Canada

ISBN 1-896776-50-7

First Printing
Printed in Canada

Chapter one: Introduction

We are the Children of Joshua,
The bastards of the Seven Tribes,
The Fallen.
The Future is ours,
But what is our Past?
— The Fallen's Lament



Lessons and Omens

I remember when I first came to Hom. It was Veruka who took me in and taught me that I could stand tall without Agnes, or any other Fatima for that matter. She told me of Joshua, the Liberation, the Camps, Ra'Ham and all the other tales. She showed me how these stories I had once seen as confirmation that the Fatimas were my salvation, in fact told me that I was born to be free. She may have been aged and frail, but her inner strength was awe-inspiring.

Now, she seems lost and small. Her voice is nothing but a whisper and a pall of fatigue hangs over her. She spent almost a year in a coma during Lilith's time, her soul scattered to the four winds, and I wonder if it all ever came back.

Today, her characteristic confidence slipped. She was talking about the stories of the Fallen, and saying that we haven't learned anything. Even the tribes have only two generations of tales with which to guide their actions, and we have even less. Until we know our own past, she said, we'll never find our future.

I'm not so sure that we shouldn't be defining our own legends and lessons — that's what Deus and I have been doing, certainly — but even if I agree with Veruka, there are signs of hope that she may not be seeing. I've heard rumors of a Fallen Sheban named Tanya who's collected many tales of the past. She's supposedly hiding somewhere, though.

Even here on Hom, there are those working to uncover the past. Emulaan, one of Deus' fellow poets, told me he is organizing a ritual to recover lost stories. Delving deep into the River of Dreams like that could be a solution, but something tells me it could also be dangerous.

— Altara Ven, Member of the Eighth Tribe



Book of Legends

This supplement for Tribe 8 is essentially a series of resources for

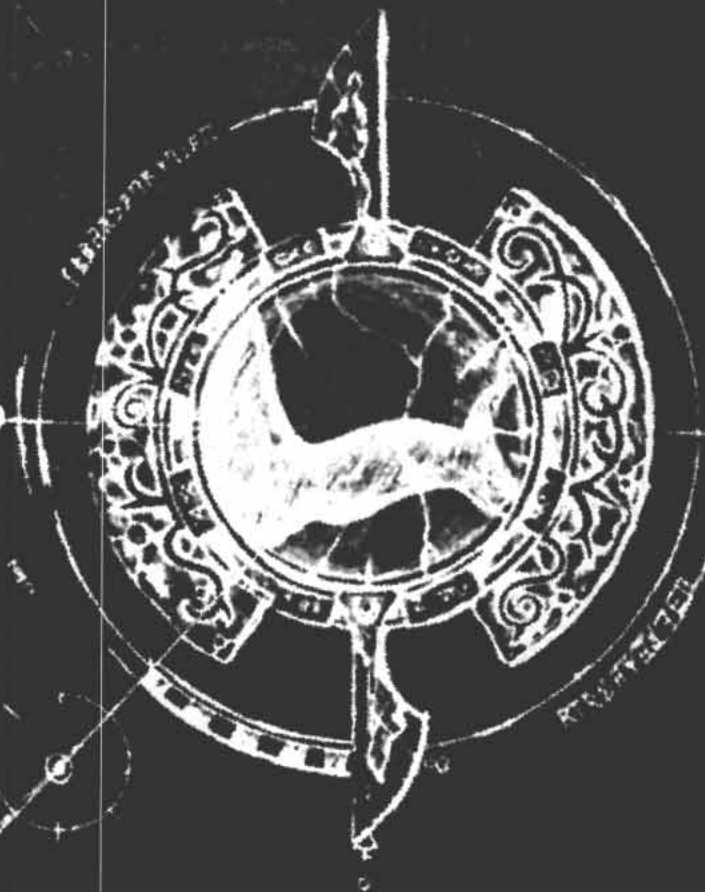
Weavers, including stories, characters, locations and evil plots galore. Instead of a random grab-bag of goodies, these resources are all tied into a cycle of legends. This allows them to be used separately or together, and gives Weavers a long tale in which they can involve their Players.

Chapter Two presents the legends themselves, in the form of a series of experiences during a mighty ritual. That chapter has no game statistics and can serve as a long hand-out for Players, or simply as inspiration for your own stories and cycles.

Chapter Three provides all the game mechanics and advice necessary to make use of the legends. It details characters, items and locations tied to each legend and provides many different story hooks for using these tales. You will find ways to both tie the various legends together and use them on their own.

Chapter two: Emulaan and the Ring

Listen to these stories,
For they are our sacred tales.
In the world of Legend
Past, Present and Future are one.
Learn well the lessons of the past,
For you may live them tomorrow.
— Baba Yaga the Crone



The Ritual of Akasha

From the writings of Emulaan the Poet:

I entered the Shelter, home of Mari-Anne Melina and her extended family of helpers and aides. The welcome aromas of fresh baked breads and hearty soups greeted me, and I passed a small group of youngsters as I scanned the premises for some familiar faces. There were many Fallen gathered within the multitude of rooms in the Shelter; everyone from Jackers recovering from their latest adventures to Lightbringers speaking softly of prophecies and times of a united Tribe. There were Herites gathering information and looking for signs of intrigue and deceit and, of course, the Doomsayers casting shadowed glances and speaking of dark nights to come. There were also mixed groups of cells and with them all, I saw the strength in the future of our Tribe.

As I continued to walk into the warm and comfortable surroundings of the Shelter, an aged and venerable face greeted me from the back of the room. She waved me over with a small gesture and I approached her with extended arms. "Veruka, I am so glad you have decided to come."

Veruka gave me a slight smile and took my arm for support as we descended the tight flight of stairs leading to the basement of the house. She rarely left the Sepulcher these days and her presence here was most welcome.

"Den-Hades is below," Veruka said. "She is preparing the items for the ritual at this very moment."

"Her role in this will be of the utmost importance... as will yours, Veruka. We are on the verge of a great and wonderful discovery tonight, my old friend. I am certain that the knowledge bestowed upon us will be nothing short of miraculous!"

My excitement was getting ahead of me and I quickly calmed myself. Veruka did not seem to notice. As we set foot at the base of the stairs and headed for our destination, I saw that the room Den-Hades was preparing was adorned with all of the necessary ritual artifacts.



2. Emulaan and the Ring



Candles were set out on every flat surface of the chamber and rods of incense burned in each corner, filling the air with a cloud of scent. A series of circles were painted upon the floor and a red and white cloth of a fine material hung from the ceiling. There were large, woven pillows strewn along the edges of the circles and I guided Veruka over to one of them. She seemed to enjoy the relaxing folds of it after her struggles down the steep stairs. I allowed Veruka time to make herself comfortable and placed her satchel beside her. As I did so, Den-Hades approached me, her face newly scarred from a recent Vision Quest into the River of Dream.

"I see you have located all of the necessary materials for our evening. Did you complete the bargain for the scrolls as well?" I asked.

"Of course." She nodded her head and spun on her heel, pointing to an array of scrolls lain out on a pedestal. "It wasn't an easy task, mind you. It proved quite arduous to convince the spirit that we were working towards a good cause. Spirits can be difficult, as you well know."

I walked over to the pedestal as she continued to set items in their required places. The scrolls were sheer perfection. They were thick parchments made of tanned skins and seemed to glow in the candle-light. To the eyes of a non-dreamer they would appear mundane, but to me, they were more precious than gold.

"Don't touch them." Den-Hades warned me. "The spirit will become annoyed at any disturbance outside of the ritual."

I gave her a nod and averted my attention to the circles and other geometric forms painted on the floor. They overlapped in several places and the colors were different from one shape to the next. Red bled into orange, which went to yellow then green and so on, creating all of the colors of the rainbow within its pattern. They formed a beautiful sequence and I quizzically looked at Veruka who was in the midst of placing some grim skeletal relics around her.

Without looking up at me, she said in her rasping voice "Each circle represents the next layer of existence. The inner circle symbolizes our physical realm and the outer ones, the Dream Orbs. The connections within each are the River of Dream itself and the spaces the Spirit World."

"Of course, the Spirit World affects all things and so it is represented as a part of each symbol, in turn becoming the whole!" said a soft voice from behind me.

I turned and saw the motherly figure of Mari-Anne Melina. She was wearing a set of flowing robes dyed a deep, earthy brown.

I walked over to Mari-Anne and placed my hand upon her shoulder. "I am glad you have all come." I said. "It means so much to me that you have supported me in this endeavor."

She warmly smiled at me and then turned her attention to the others. "My aides will be here shortly before we begin, but I must admit... I am slightly confused about the significance of this all. What exactly are we taking part in?"



We Are Legends

I leaned against a table and gestured for Den-Hades and Mari-Anne to find a pillow alongside Veruka. Once they found their places, I explained our gathering. "As you all know, there are many stories which are lost to us. We continue on our ever present course to the future, losing vital clues along the way, clues that could shape our destinies and help guide our choices and decisions. It is a sad but unavoidable aspect of what we are — finite creatures in an infinite world — and despite our attempts to inscribe and carry on these stories, a loss of our history and knowledge is bound to occur. How many people's lives are forgotten and left to vanish into the folds of time? How many heroes and icons of our people have been tarnished or dishonored by the fact that we never knew their names? There are countless struggles happening every day that we never hear of, or are quick to forget.

"I have worked all of my life as a poet to prevent such things from taking place; to try and make eternal the deeds of humanity. With your help, we shall delve into the folds of the Dream and enlighten ourselves with the Goddess's blessing. All things are stored in the consciousness of the Goddess and now we have found a way to communicate with her! She will show us in visions the events that have shaped our land and our people. The spirit within the scrolls will record what we witness and we will take that knowledge and use it to form a new nation. A nation that will include the Eighth Tribe and Joshua's Prophecy. The stories of our past will guide our destinies, and the Goddess will reveal to us all what we need to arm ourselves for the months and years to come. We will form, this night, the writings which from this day forward will be known as the 'Legends'!"

Into Dream

I could still hear the chanting voice of Veruka the Wraith and the sporadic screaming of Den-Hades each time she triggered a focus for the ritual. I lost all sight of Mari-Anne Melina who was supporting my body and was going to keep me alive throughout the lengthy Vision Quest by feeding me water and anchoring my spirit to my body.

I took a deep breath and the room spun in all directions. I could see a single point of light and it grew brighter and more radiant as I moved towards it. It soon blinded me, searing my eyes with its glow. Nausea sped through my body and I scarcely felt a wet sensation in my throat and mouth. I was in a void now and found myself grasping for some point of reference. Anything would have been more welcome than the emptiness that surrounded me.

As I gasped for breath, I felt a quick movement, something unseen, flit by me. I could still see only the white void before me, but rather than feeling secure in knowing that I was no longer alone, I was filled with fear. The sensation passed by me again and this time the cacophony of silence was shattered by a shrieking wail. It lingered upon itself and continued to multiply, creating an infinite number of shrieks that forced me to cover my ears. My head rattled with the sound and my concentration was quickly fading with the steady assault upon my senses. In the back of my mind I was wondering if something had gone wrong with the ritual.

Just as I was about to lapse into unconsciousness, I began to hear a pattern among the shrieks. Each one was slightly different in tone to the next and as they began to join together, I could soon make out what resembled words. Words I could understand. "I am the spirit of the Akasha. The sound of eternity and the formation of all things."

The voice was like a million voices combined and was both beautiful and disturbing. "Your quest will be recorded on the Akashic Scrolls and forever remain as legends among humanity. You will live these tales of the past, present, and future. You will laugh and cry, be born and die, all recorded in the texts of those dead and not yet born. Are you prepared?"

I heard another voice, external and harsh, enter and speak to me in my mind. It was difficult to hear and I fought to understand the words despite the shrieks of the Akashic spirit. "*Emulaan, find the Mother of memory and embrace Her, but beware...*" Den-Hades voice faded from me as I moved toward the whirlpool of spirit that was the spirit of the Akasha.

"I am ready," I whispered as She entered my soul.

The First Tale: The Ring of Mahakala

My nerves rang with fire and I screamed in agony. As my senses calmed, I saw below me a vast forest surrounding decrepit buildings and fallen towers. I could hear the sound of laughing children and saw the running forms of Agnites through dark woods and ravines. I descended among them and became a part of something far larger than I could have ever imagined. Moments before I lost all sense of who I was, I heard a whisper on the wind, "Emulaan, you will be mine..."

The Last Game

From the Tale of Dagmar the Agnite:

The tree casts shadows, which keep me hidden from searching eyes. Within the knots and folds of its trunk, the leaves and brambles of foliage at its base and the stillness of my body, there's no way anyone could know I'm here. I hold my breath, my nerves as tense as the branches above me, not wanting to do anything that would lead my would-be stalker to my position. I see her round the corner, scrubby hair, painted face like a rainbow, with colored rope hanging from her clothing. She peers around the tree across from me, moving slowly, methodically, eyes keen and ears open. That's when the mosquito lands on my nose.

Cross-eyed and focused on the blood-sucking insect, I wiggle the tip of my nose and scrunch my face, and even try to reach it with my tongue, but to no avail. It's about the size of my pinkie finger, from end to end, with wings that make an annoying whizzing sound. It rubs its two front legs against its needle-like sucker and then plunges it into my skin. "Oh no you don't", I think to myself. Slap! It smears in a disgusting mess, half on my hand, half on my face. Unfortunately, my action shatters any hope I had of not being seen.

"I see you Dagmar, by the tree! By the tree! I see you!" she screams out as she darts onto the path.

I've got to get to the Red Can before she does, so I leave my hiding spot and run as fast as lightning around the other side, the twigs snatching at my clothing, doing their best at keeping me from beating Rainbow Face to Home-Safe. I can see her moving along the path, running as fast as her feet will take her, but I know a short cut. There's a lot of little paths in these woods and I know them all, every corner, every tree, every rock and every slope, and right now I know the fastest way back to Home-Safe and maybe I could even Free the others!

Rainbow Face is screaming at the top of her lungs, "I found Dagmar! I found Dagmar!"

I don't care, let her waste her breath, because once I get to Home-Safe before she does, I'll be the hero and everyone will love me. I'll be the greatest Hide'n-Seeker in all of Playground!

The Red Can shines like a castle through the trees as I hear my stupid sister yelling victory over finding everyone; but she's behind me now. Yes! I knew I could get ahead of her. She probably still thinks I'm trying to catch up with her. Hah, little does she know. Sisters are always stupid. I guess it comes with the territory.



2. Emulaan and the Ring

I remember when she said she could beat me up and I said she couldn't because she was just a girl and then she tried to punch me and so I punched her back and then she got all her stupid friends to gang up on me and I couldn't sit down for days. Well, now is my payback, because between her and me, I'm going to get to Home-Safe first. Except, I think I saw something lying in the dirt by the stream I just passed. I stop for a second. I have enough time to get to Home-Safe even if I check this out first... it'll only take a minute. I creep back to where I think I saw it. Now where was it?

Aha! I spot it lying on a rock. It's an untarnished and perfectly round shiny metal ring with fine writing on it. I've never seen one so beautiful in all my ten summers.

I barely notice my sister, Rainbow Face, yelling, "I win! I'm Home-Safe! Daggy's it now! Daggy, you're it. Come and find us after you finish counting!"

Laughter filters through the trees as my fellow playmates of Agnes go about the task of once again hiding in the woods. I barely even notice.

Without taking my eyes off of the most wondrous of artifacts before me, I count, raising each of my fingers in turn, counting to ten for each one. I sit down cross-legged, about a foot away from the ring that lies so perfectly on a water smoothed stone. It reflects the stream into a glimmer of light and I dare not look away from it... in case it disappears. Only the natural forest sounds of the wind rustling the leaves, the stream meandering over the pebbles and the rocks, and my own labored breathing show themselves to me. By the time nine fingers are up, I can't hear anyone.

I finish my count in a whisper, "Seven, Eight, Nine...Ten!"

I grab the ring and put it on.

The Fiend Reborn

From the Evils of Mahakala:

I feel my energy course through a body vibrant and young. I lose my balance from the forgotten sensation of taking form, falling into a stream that runs with cold frigid water, even as the air is warm. I gather my senses and smell the forest air, feel the sweat on my skin, and hear the muted sounds of hidden forms among the trees around me. I raise the left hand of my newfound body and see the ring that imprisoned me for so long. Imagine one such as myself, a master of Chaining, a Duke of House Melanis, imprisoned by a treacherous Joh'an.

I will have my revenge now. I will seek out the traitor and dine on its entrails, sipping its blood like wine. The thought of it forces me to laugh out loud, but the sound that leaves my lips is not a powerful one, but rather a small, weak, high-pitched giggle! I am in the body of a child! Yet they - the forms in the wood - hide from me. Why do they fear such a pitiful creature like the one I possess now? Let me recall and force the body in which I reside to surrender unto me a memory.

"Daggy you're it. Come and find us..."

"Yesss, that's right Daggy... You are it... and we are going to find them."

I stalk the hidden child-humans with a satisfaction only the Flesh can give. They uselessly attempt to skulk in the shadows and folds of the forest, but they are as evident to me as fresh meat on the table. Their aroma reveals their positions, allowing me to sneak towards them unseen and unheard. This little body does have its advantages.

I use the weapons that the forest gives me to enact the gory ritual they call "murder." Rocks smash heads, branches pierce skin and flesh and bone, while dirt and mud and water block the passage of air to tiny little lungs. I throw in a good sound assault as well... after all, it has been a very long time since I have been able to relish the finer gifts that the flesh has to offer! They scream when they can - when I let them - but otherwise they do not let out a sound. I watch as their lives slip away, forever leaving this prison they cling to so tightly.



2. Emulaan and the Ring



There is one remaining, however, among the carnage that I have reaped in such an amazingly short amount of time. I see her hiding in a rusted, damaged metal vehicle from the time before the Arrival. She has a colorful face and bright eyes.

I love the flavor of bright eyes, and salivate with the promise of the delicacy to come. I approach and she sees me as I stand over her, blocking her escape. She looks at me with confusion and worry.

"Daggy, you're bleeding. Are you okay?"

I look down at the body I control and then back at her. Who is she? She seems different than the others. "Don't be concerned my sweet, the blood is not mine, but from the wounds of the dead." I say.

Fear crosses her face. She starts to scramble backwards, heading for the opposite side of the twisted metal contraption.

I reach in to grab her, my other hand dropping the stone I was going to use to bash her head in. This one is special, and she will feel the powerful grip of my hands around her throat as I squeeze the breath from her body.

She's also a fighter. A heavy boot stamps its mark against the side of my face, reeling my small frame about and down the slope behind me. The dirt softens my landing and I bolt after her as she escapes into the trees. I could have sworn I was stronger than she was.

Her panicked flight leads her into a knot of woods without an exit, completely blocked by thick brambles on one side and a steep ravine on the other. She spins about to face me, picking up a sharp stone and waving it about threateningly.

"You don't want to do that my dear, it only makes me stronger."

Defiantly she replies, "You were never stronger than me, Dagmar, never. I kicked your ass before and I'll do it again, now cut it out!"

I notice tears well up in her eyes... her bright succulent eyes. Mmm, they are especially good when they're salted.

"You're in a defenseless position, my sweet. The ravine lies behind you. Where will you run? Who will hear you scream? We are deep in the woods now, far from any rescue or aid. The game has changed and as before, it is only us two left, except this time I will win... sister!?"

The True Heart

From the Tale of Dagmar the Agnite:

I fight it. I feel my body whirl around, twisting and turning without rhythm or pattern. I won't let it kill my sister. I throw myself against the ground even as it attempts to attack her. I grab a rock and begin to smash my left hand but am stopped by my own muscles. I look like a puppet with broken strings in the hands of a madman. She looks on in horror as she sees me do the dance of the possessed, hands flailing and voice screaming over ownership. I find myself near the edge of the ravine, its steep drop disappearing into the mist below. My body topples over the side.

She grabs me, clinging tightly with both hands to my left wrist.

"Let go," I tell her. "You don't know what I've done."

Her hands slip because of the blood and sweat on my own. I am hanging by my fingers now, my feet flailing in the air, my body dangling over the void below. "Let go!"

"NO!" She's in tears now, watching me, her little brother, slide to his doom.

I wiggle my fingers, forcing her to let go. She does, her hand catching the ring as it leaves my finger. Tears rise from my face, hanging in the air like stars. I see her kneeling over the dirt ledge, eyes averted from my own, looking at the evil shiny form in her palm.

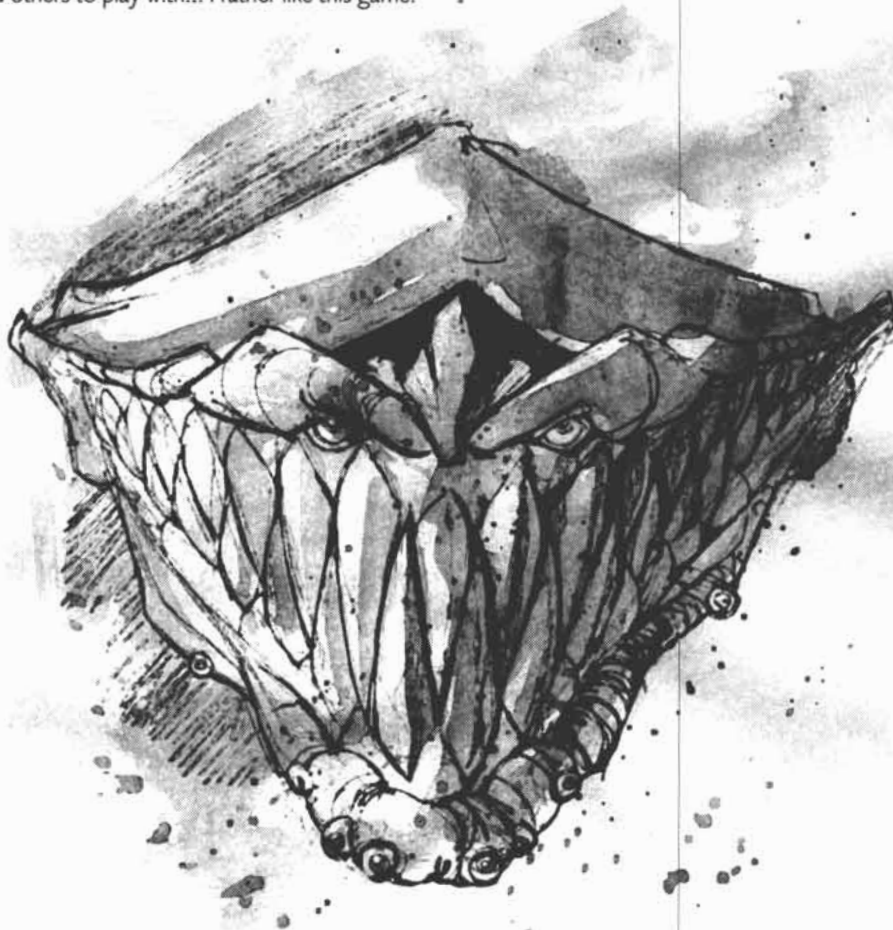
All goes black.

Dark Victory

From the Evils of Mahakala:

I feel the wind against my face, my cheeks lined with tears that go dry in the breeze. I gaze into the chasm before me and recall the look on the face of my last victim. I raise my left hand and see the ring placed delicately upon the middle finger, shining in the fading light of day. I must find my enemy now, that Joh'an who trapped me. It will suffer a fate worse than mine; worse than being trapped in a ring for decades, and now, among the bodies of the weak humans.

But first I must find others to play with... I rather like this game.





The Second Tale: A Dark Plan

I floated anew in the whirlpool. I was Emulaan again, but the blood of innocents still stained my heart. I came looking for tales of heroism and found slaughter. The winds of Dream carried me anew, and I drifted to a new time and place. I saw the halls of power where I once walked when in the Grace of Tera Sheba and wondered what tale I would live now. Intrigue, wisdom, perhaps even justice? Then I saw the ring of silver again and I began to scream...

Black Reflections

From the Evils of Mahakala:

So many bodies and so many faces have passed within me, but I have yet to find the one that calls to me. I have seen his face and he is the one that will allow me to have my revenge. There will come a day when we will meet and I will rejoice in it. I remember a time when I was greater than this. I was more powerful than a possessor and manipulator of lives. My days as a Duke among the Ziggurat were envied by all of my rivals and enemies. I was a force to be reckoned with and now I am forced to travel among the weak and fragile humans. Why me? Can't they understand who I really am and respect that? At the very least, I have finally ridden myself of the cursed Agnite child. Who is Agnes, anyway? She was not there when I was in my glory. A child that thinks she is a Goddess! What has the world come to when a child rules the people? It is pitiful, really. I now prefer the forms of the Terashebans over any of the others — they are privy to such fine and succulent lies — but I still await the day when I will meet my chosen.

Over the months, I have learned so much concerning the ways of the Tribes, and they never even knew I was among them. It was a beautiful thing in one respect, but a curse in another. As my influence grew among their many factions of Judges, so did my ability to murder dwindle. They watched me even more closely than before and I knew that the life of my latest host would soon be over, his usefulness drained. I had to make preparations to secure another host and I knew exactly who it would be...

A Fiend At Council

"The Grand Council of the Seven Tribes is now in session. We will hear the testaments from the passing week and hand down judgment on the crimes against the Nation. We will now hear from Judge Aramis on the state of the Fallen."

I rose from my seat and stepped towards the table of the Grand Council. How I envied their seats and influence among the Tribes. I would have my seat as a member of the Grand Council, but I needed to wean my chosen one first. I tossed my robes to the side as I felt the ring upon my finger. The loss of this ring could change all of my plans. It was a dread fear of mine, to become lost, and I feared that some day, someone would discover the habit I had of constantly turning and checking the ring. No, it was ridiculous. Who would be able to notice such a thing?

I laughed despite myself as I approached the podium of the Grand Council. The luminaries watched me strangely and I suppressed any further outbursts.



2. Emulaan and the Ring

"You know me well," I began. "I am Judge Aramis of Tera Sheba Guild and my heart is with the Nation. There is a blight upon the face of Vimary known as the huma... Fallen, but we must learn to use these soulless dredges rather than destroying them out of hatred and disgust and..." I stopped myself again, remembering that I was not in the court of Tibor. Extreme words would not be looked upon fairly. It was like playing a large game and I had to keep reminding myself that the cost of losing was greater than I could afford. I continued my speech.

"There is a powerful force that is lost in the Outlands, beyond the borders of Vimary. My sources have told me that there is a Z'bri artifact of unknown power and potential that can change the face of the land we call home."

There was a murmur as the council members rapidly conferred between themselves.

"Now, I hear your murmurs and sounds of fear when it comes to sending our Joanites on a foray into the Outlands, especially one that concerns the Z'bri, so that is why I offer the Fallen in their stead. We will trick the gullible, faceless slime into finding the artifact for us. They will never know that the very thing they seek will be their undoing! Sanction me in this action and I assure you, the lives of everyone on this liberated island will change."

I felt another burst of laughter coming forth and began to chuckle as I left the podium. Liberated island, indeed. I had already manipulated the supposed-leaders to vote in my favor, now all I needed was a martyr. A crusade for the Fallen in the name of Judge Aramis. How pleasant.

Last Report

"Cylix, you have made certain that the vote will go in my favor?"

"Of course. Whatever decisions you have made in the past have always been in my favor, Aramis. I have no reason to mistrust you now." He looked at me with a piercing gaze and I knew Cylix had seen through a portion of my guise.

"Well, to the death of the Fallen then," I said. I raised my cup.

"To the death of the Fallen."

Promotion

The blood ran into the floor as I pulled the dagger from Aramis's chest. I gathered several medallions from the table and took a moment to pluck the eyes from the quickly cooling body. I relished the flavor as I always did. I secured the ring upon the finger of my new host and wiped the dagger clean. I checked the sword at my side and turned for the door. As I disappeared into the night, my laughter echoed in the cool night air.

The Third Tale: The Forgotten Fortress

I rose anew and cursed the spirit of Akasha. What darkness she was showing me, what blackness of spirit and heart? This ring and the fiend within it had come to lay waste to the land. Could there be a greater evil than it? Akasha, of course, provided the answer as I fell into a winter's storm...

Cold and Alone

From the confessions of Jarick the Lost:

We found ourselves lost and without direction. The roads and paths we had been following were gone, covered under a thick, white blanket of snow. The air was frigid, and icy particles stung our faces as we continued towards the rock precipice. It lay like a dead corpse in a desolate, barren land. Our feet and fingers were frozen, and our lungs burned with each breath. I glanced back at my fellow travelers and knew that not all of us would survive this foolish journey.

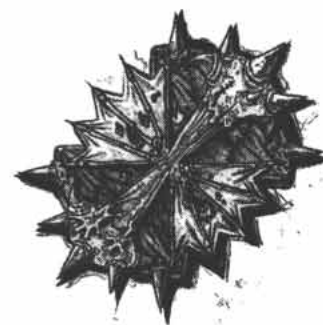
It had all started with the hopes of finding a new land and an artifact that would change the face of Vimary. We had seen it, in visions within our dreams, for several months before we set out. Our discussions focused on the importance of what we had seen and its meaning. The day that we decided to depart from Vimary held hope and promise. We were certain that our dreams would guide us and show us a true path.

Now, I had no idea where we were. The land stretched for miles all around us and no signs of civilization or life showed themselves. Even the howling of a wolf would have seemed welcome, for it would signify that at least something could survive in this forsaken land. We continued in silence towards the shadow of the large rock in the distance. It grew, becoming more defined and detailed as we approached. We had come within a hundred paces of it when we noticed it was not a rock at all. We stood before an enormous and imposing fortress. The towers rose up for hundreds of man-heights, disappearing into the mist above. All around the base, snowdrifts had piled up and created crystal stalagmites and ice shards, mimicking a warrior's phalanx. No windows could be seen and the place looked impenetrable.

One of my companions came up beside me. His name was Waylorn, a small-framed and gaunt Herite. He was an albino. His cold face looked into mine and he asked, "Jarick, what is it? I have never before seen such a thing."

I nodded my head and glanced back at the two other survivors of our cell. Shayla, a Doomsayer, was shivering and I knew that unless she warmed up, she would die. It was a tragic mistake crossing the frozen lake several clicks back. It broke under our pressure and two of our number had drowned in the unforgiving water. We managed to pull Shayla to safety, but her skin was freezing and she had become delirious.

The other surviving member was an older warrior named Ulan. He had started acting strangely of late and often spoke of our impending deaths. I believed the climate had gotten the better of him. He didn't know how to fight it. It simply controlled him and he felt defenseless against it. It didn't help matters that one of the boys who drowned in the lake had been his only son.



2. Emulan and the Ring

If the rapidly dropping temperature didn't kill us, then we would do it ourselves. We had all become irritable and edgy. We needed to get inside. I once again turned my attention to the massive edifice that lay before us. "We'll circle it slowly. Perhaps there is a way in on the other side."

I began walking, forcing my tired and sore muscles to trudge through the knee-deep snow. Our progress was slow, but at least we knew we had a chance. I pulled the cowl tighter around my face as the wind whipped around the fortress, striking us with fury and hatred. Waylorn was helping Shayla, and Ulan was eyeing the outer walls as though they would swallow him whole. As we carried on around the edges of the structure, the grandness of it struck me. It was perhaps two or more clicks in circumference by loose estimation. How could something like this have survived intact for so many generations? We were far west from Tribal lands and even the Squat and barbarian communities seemed to fade as the weeks passed. It seemed unlikely that such a thing would go unnoticed or left abandoned for so long. Who or what lay within? Was there more to this than just a safe shelter for us weary travelers?

We came to a massive archway that was decorated with crystal stalactites hanging like jagged teeth. It was completely dark within, except for the natural glow of the white snow. We carefully navigated our way into the tunnel and soon found ourselves before an icy steel door. It stood about five men tall and twice as wide. No markings or signs of entrance were upon it and it didn't seem like it had been opened for many years.

Before I could discuss our next course of action with the others, the floor opened up below us, sucking us into a short chute that dropped us onto a stone floor. As I quickly regained my composure and stood up, I noticed that we were in a long hallway with low ceilings. I looked to the others and aided Shayla to her feet. She looked at me, her eyes heavy with fatigue, her lips blue and cracked. She wanted to say something but didn't have the energy to carry it through.

"We're trapped! We're going to meet our fate in here. Our lives are over. Look Jarick... it is too far up to get out of here. Shayla is almost..."



"Speak not another word Ulan!" I ordered. "Would you rather we froze to death in the winter above?! Here, at least, we have a chance. I'll hear not another word from you."

Ulan hushed himself and stared longingly toward the hole in the ceiling we had fallen through. Waylorn was unwrapping the torches from his pack. "Are they still dry?" I asked.

"Yes, but we only have two left. We should save one for a fire... just in case." His eyes darted towards Shayla.

"Come on. We're wasting precious time. We might be able to find a safe place to rest and warm up." I heard Ulan mutter something under his breath, but I ignored it. My patience was wearing thin.



Into the Fortress



We wandered the twisting halls and stairways for what seemed like an eternity. They seemed to make no sense and many of them changed from stone or rusted metal to unknown and macabre substances. Ulan had his sword drawn and was jumping at the slightest of shadows. He refused to stay close to the rest of us. Waylorn lit the way, wandering in a random fashion, none of us having a clue what lay ahead. Any direction was as good as the next.

Shayla's shivering became uncontrollable, wracking her body with waves of seizures that forced us to stop on a few occasions. On one such rest, she started to mumble something. Waylorn brought the torch closer in an attempt to provide some heat for her. It was futile, but it was the only thing we could do. As I raised her to her feet, she clung tightly to my arm, her eyes wide with fear.

"No!" she screamed. "Stay away from me. I escaped from you... help me, Jarick!"

Shayla pulled herself from my grasp, bursting down the hall with a newfound energy. I felt dream essence escape from her, giving strength to her flight. "Shayla! Wait!" I screamed after her.

Waylorn darted down the hallway after her. Ulan and I followed suit, not wanting to split from each others' company. What had Shayla seen? What could have struck her with so much dread that she would leave our relative safety like that? As I ran, I felt a presence behind me. I hesitated as Ulan passed me. I stopped and turned around, staring into the darkness. The air was still, my breath the only thing breaking the silence.

"Nooooo!" Shayla's scream echoed in the empty passages. I quickly snapped my head in its direction and ran down the hall. I rounded a corner and saw Shayla lying in Waylorn's arms, sobbing like a child and muttering the same words over and over again, her eyes fixed on the ceiling. "Hum-to Bag'wan se nay sukta maro'oh... hum-to Bag'wan se nay sukta maro'oh..."

Waylorn was calling her name, hoping for some response from his wife. "Shayla, come back to me. Shayla."

Ulan was looking down at her, his eyes filled with pity. "We should leave her. She's useless to us now. I can make it painless." He motioned to his sword.

Waylorn glared at him as he gently set Shayla on the cold floor. "You murderous bastard! She's one of us. She's my wife. I'll kill you if you touch her!"

"I'd dare you to try, albino!"

Before the two of them collided with each other, I stepped between them. My cold stare silenced them. "See to your wife. She may not have much longer."

Waylorn went back to his beloved, pushing the hair from her face and kissing her softly on the forehead. Ulan and I moved away, allowing the couple to privately share their last moment together.

A burst of flame illuminated the hallway. I saw Waylorn's silhouette against his wife's burning body. Ulan was twitching his knees and moving his head rapidly from side to side. Now we were three.

All Against All

"Ulan is going to kill us before we get out of here, Jarick. You can see it in his eyes."

I scanned our surroundings. We were in a large domed room. The ceiling was lined with pure white supports, the pieces in between a sickly-pale pink. What was this place and what was it doing to us? We had no other option. We either survived within the confinements of this forgotten fortress or sealed our fate in the storms outside. Ulan was spinning in circles on the black marble floor.

"Look at him, Jarick. He's lost his mind. We must do something... before he does. Together we can survive. As long as he's with us, however, we're as good as dead." Waylorn was speaking the truth. Ulan was heady with insanity. He was laughing out loud and singing words that didn't make sense. He turned to us, his voice echoing in the chamber.

"My Fallen brethren. Why are you so glum? We are masters of an entire domain here. No one can control us. We are gods!" He broke into a mad laughter, flinging his sword through the air in a crazed fashion.

I caught Waylorn's attention. "When he sleeps tonight," I whispered.

Waylorn nodded towards me as we watched a madman's last day alive.

First Blood

"What are you doing?" Ulan was struggling with all of his might as Waylorn and I fought to bind his feet. "Jarick, what are you doing? Murderers!"

"Let me go. You are my brothers. Help me, please. Help—"

My dagger's hilt struck Ulan's temple, temporarily dizzying him, allowing us to finish tying his feet. His head lolled back and forth as he tried to regain consciousness. Waylorn and I managed to bind him, and we exerted ourselves to pick him up. We carried him from the chamber, towards a smaller, hexagonal room. We dropped him in the center of it, neither myself nor my accomplice speaking a word. I pulled my dagger from its belt and looked into Ulan's eyes. "My friend. I don't want you to see this." I proceeded to blind him, the blood running down the side of his face. He was screaming, but my dagger soon stopped that as well. Air whistled through his shredded vocal cords as I tossed his warm tongue to the side of the room.

We turned him over onto his stomach and I ran the length of my blade down either side of his spine. My years among my lost tribe of Death had taught me much in the ways of sacrifice. Waylorn held Ulan steady, although his energy was quickly fading. I continued to cut away the skin at his joints and creases, until finally I could pull his shell from his flesh in a single piece. Ulan's blood seeped into the floor, as though a thirst of centuries was being quenched. I felt the presence again, as though someone was standing behind me. I turned my head, but only the heavy breathing of my companion kept me company.

Ulan's body was still. We — his killers — covered in our victim's blood. Waylorn sank onto his knees, his feet wrapped underneath him.

We stayed like that for a long time.

Madness Dawns

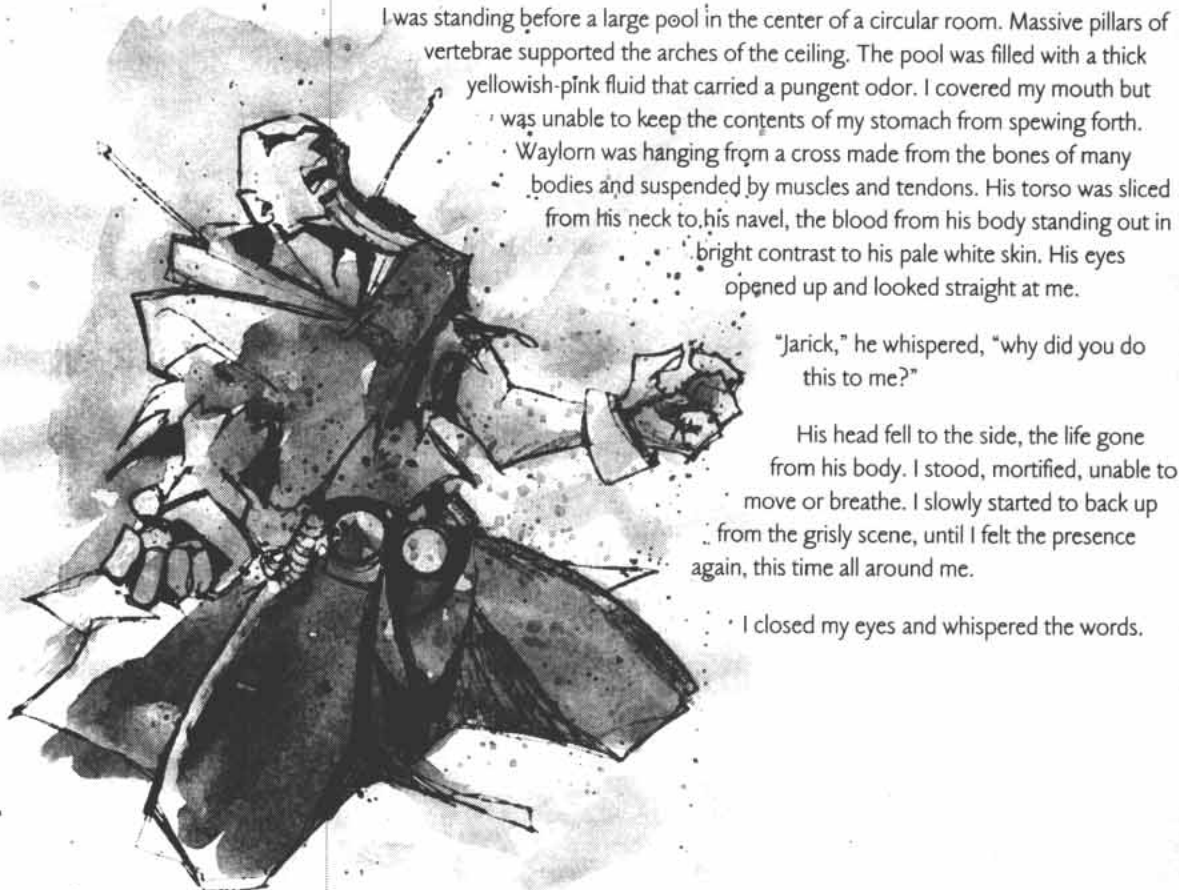
I was shaking as I awoke. The dream that came to me was still fresh in my mind: Ulan was standing before me. He was skinless and without eyes, blood pouring freely from his mouth. He whispered to me. "Hum-to Bag'wan se nay sukta maro'oh." The thought of it made me shiver.

I felt for my dagger, feeling security in its cold steel. The last torch had gone out long ago, but an ambient glow pervaded the domed chamber. Waylorn was nowhere to be seen. I stood up and searched the room. There was no sign of him. I called out his name, but was met with my own voice as it echoed back to me — as clear as the moment it left my lips.

I entered the hallway, which also had a dull glow. I wandered the halls, my weapon drawn and ready. I found myself being pulled in one direction, without any reason as to why. As I continued to ascend to the higher levels of the fortress, I heard a whisper and felt that same familiar presence. I listened closely for it, following its source. "... sukta maro'oh..."

It led me through a network of passages and rooms, each one different than the one before. If I had sought to trace my way back, it would have been impossible; however, the thought never crossed my mind. I needed to know what was calling me.

The Lost



I was standing before a large pool in the center of a circular room. Massive pillars of vertebrae supported the arches of the ceiling. The pool was filled with a thick yellowish-pink fluid that carried a pungent odor. I covered my mouth but was unable to keep the contents of my stomach from spewing forth. Waylorn was hanging from a cross made from the bones of many bodies and suspended by muscles and tendons. His torso was sliced from his neck to his navel, the blood from his body standing out in bright contrast to his pale white skin. His eyes opened up and looked straight at me.

"Jarick," he whispered, "why did you do this to me?"

His head fell to the side, the life gone from his body. I stood, mortified, unable to move or breathe. I slowly started to back up from the grisly scene, until I felt the presence again, this time all around me.

I closed my eyes and whispered the words.

The Fourth Tale: The Forsaken

I choked on bile and blood while I rose from that land of darkness. I had killed my companions and I was damned! I... was Emulaan. Separation from the lives I was living was becoming more difficult with each tale. I struggled for hope and purpose in order to steel myself against the evil plaguing the land. Surely there were those who fought against these artifacts culled from the blackest depths of the imagination. Akasha heard my hopes and I descended anew. I saw mighty warriors bearing the brands of Joan and it seemed there were those who fought the evil of the Fortress, who might resist the Ring...

The Lost Warriors

From the tales of Mira Kil'on, the Lost Templar:

"We saw it over the horizon. It was there, Mira, we almost had it!"

I glanced over to Ivan as he waved frantically towards the snow-capped hills in the distance. I raised myself onto my haunches and drew a line into the ground. It was getting late, maybe another hour before sundown, based on the length of my shadow in the dirt. Not enough time to investigate one of the goals along our quest. A quest that seemingly had no end.

"Should we ride after it, Mira? It can't have gone far, it never does."

I shook my head and gathered my pack and sword. "No, Ivan. Another day. For now, we make camp and prepare for an attack tomorrow. We need supplies and food for the coming weeks. Gather the others and make sure all signs of our passing are covered."

"On my way!" Ivan mounted his horse and rode down the slope of the hill. I watched him as he rode away and for a moment thought back to better days. Days when I had a family and loved ones. When the choices I made actually meant something. The memories never lasted long, however. I didn't know if it was because I didn't want to remember... or because I couldn't.

By the time the camp was set up, Ivan, Braline and I had made plans for the following day's raid. It would take place in the early parts of the morning and be quick and efficient. We set about making sure that our attack clothing was frayed and ragged and that any scars or tattoos were hidden from view. It held a sense of shame, covering up my rightful scars and markings. It denied to myself who I was. I grabbed the tin that held the red paint and dug two fingers into it. As I smeared the color onto my face I wondered why I carried on. Why I didn't just give up in despair? I wasn't needed anymore. Who would remember my name? Suddenly, I felt very lonely.

I stepped out of my tent after my preparations were complete and entered the Band Chief's abode. His tent had many riches and trinkets from the world before. For the most part, they were completely impractical designs that had some sort of shiny quality to them. I never had a liking for useless relics of the days gone by. My interests held a deeper importance.



2. Emulaan and the Ring



The Band Chief sat amidst several women who were seeing to his desires. He was a wide and grotesque man, who smelt worse than he looked. He dismissed the concubines upon my entrance, and I gratefully sat down on one of the vacant pillows. There was a time when I would have been disgusted with such barbaric shows of lust and sin, but I had learned to temper my emotions and instincts. He glared at me for disturbing his evening, but I had no respect for his wishes. He was simply necessary.

"So Mira, have you found the goal of your life's quest yet?" he said in his own rough Squat dialect.

I answered him in his own tongue. "Have you found your soul, Segal?"

The Band Chief was used my condescending and contemptuous remarks. It was almost expected for a warrior of my status to act so, at least among his people.

"Our attack will bring us many supplies tomorrow, but I need your warriors to understand one thing. No one with the markings of the Sisterhood are to be harmed. Your men can do what they like with the others. Is that understood, Segal?"

"Of course, Mira. It is always as you wish. If you were male, you yourself could have been Band Chief! You are our greatest warrior." He let out a repugnant snort.

It was true, what he said. If it didn't go against this particular Band's traditions, I would have commanded them a long time ago as Band Chief. I would never let that happen, though. The cost on my soul would be too great. To go against the wishes of the Holy Warrior herself would be an act I would not allow.

"Not 'your' warrior. Watch your tongue lest it be taken from you. I have killed two chiefs before you who challenged my position, Segal. Don't push your luck." I said.

"Mira, why are you so stern and cold? You killed my brother and my father. That is why I have this place among my people. Before, I fulfilled everyone else's requests. Now, I have all of the riches and women I care to have. I don't hate you, Mira, I thank you." He gave another snorting chuckle.

"Remember, she who has brought you those riches can just as easily take them away." I stood up and grabbed the bowl of fruit from his side along with an intoxicating herbal mix. "I haven't eaten today."

I left the tent.

A Bloody Raid

"Squats! Squats are attacking! Everyone, call for the Watch!" The Evan's cry for help was silenced by a fluid swipe from my sword. I chased down several others as well, their farming tools useless against us. I looked out over the skirmish and saw Evan farmers running for their lives. We rode onwards into the village itself and set up a wall of horses, each of the riders beside me armed with a long spear. We waited for the Joanite guardians to arrive from their posts.

They ran at us with at least double our strength in numbers, but were no match for a cavalry charge — especially a cavalry charge led by a commander who knew all of their tactics. I mustered my Warrior Blades in the Squat tongue and we focused our attentions on the Watch leaders, while we let the Squats have their way with the rest. The Joanites had become slack in the years since my absence and we made short work of them. What had they become? Even their Blades held little challenge for my warriors and I. Were there none left who could properly wield a sword or engage an enemy with courage and conviction? I pulled my sword from the body of a Blade and wiped it clean on his cloak.

While the attack raged on, I summoned Braline and told her to set fire to the settlement. I signaled Ivan to secure any members of the Sisterhood and then dismounted my horse. I ran into the village and scoured the place for any Fatimal Artifacts. I entered the temples and the Joanite homes, looking for any signs of holy and blessed items. I turned over tables and flipped up beds, cleaving anyone in my path with a quick and furious strike from my sword.

I rounded one corner, and as the arc of my blade was inches from cleaving a head from its torso, I stopped. She stood before me, a gaping wound in her side and a Joanite sword hanging limply from her left hand. She had the markings of a Watch Captain on her arms and the face of an angel. My own eyes stared back at me as if I was looking in a mirror through time. I backed up in my stance, allowing myself to reset a defense after being caught off guard. She collapsed into my arms and against everything I had ever taught myself to do, I took her and dragged her to safety.

"Mira, who is that? Is she one of ours? Let me help you!"

"Don't worry about me." I screamed. "Get the Circle... and secure the supplies. I want no one left alive in this village... not even the Sisterhood!"

Ivan gave me a puzzled look, but knew better than to question my orders. I carried the Watch Captain's limp body away from the carnage and supported her onto the horse. I pulled myself up as well then snapped the bridles and rode off, the village left burning behind us.

Decisions and Consequences

"You cannot make a snap decision like that, Mira." Braline was hysterical. "There is more at stake here than your life alone. You may have cost us everything!"

I silently stared back at her and allowed her to vent her anger. She was right. The price we had just paid for slaying the members of the Sisterhood in a Tribal settlement may have cost us our souls. But there was no other choice. There was no way I was going to let anyone know that the Watch Captain had survived the attack. This was my chance to make all of my past mistakes right. It was a blessing from Joan that I accepted, no matter what the sacrifice. If that sacrifice were the souls of all of us involved, then I would gladly pay it.

Braline left the tent in anger. Ivan kept his gaze towards the ground. I dismissed him with a flick of my hand. He left without a word. I grabbed a wet cloth and scrubbed the red paint from my face.

Reunited

"Monika, are you all right?" I whispered.

"How did you know my name? How can you speak Gaelish?" Monika struggled to get up, but faltered halfway because of her wound.

"You're hurt. You shouldn't move." I supported her back onto the cot. "Here, drink this. It will make you feel better." I offered her a hot herbal drink, placing it at her lips. She smacked it away with the back of her hand and spat at my cowed face. I flinched at her insult, for it hurt me more than I would have ever thought. I had often hoped to see her face. I used to lay awake wondering if she was still alive; if she was a brave warrior, and if she looked more like Tulka, my late husband, or me. I had played it out in my head a thousand times... what I would say and do, if only I could see her face and touch her again. Most of the time, I imagined myself hugging and kissing her and never letting go. Now, she lay before me and I had no idea what to say or how to act. No words seemed adequate for the situation.

I removed the clasp from the scarf that covered my face and pulled it to the side. I waited awhile before I spoke again, allowing her to collect her senses.

"Monika, look at me. Look and see who I am."

She averted her eyes and clenched her teeth. "You are a soulless Squat who has murdered a Tribal village. You have kidnapped me and you will feel the wrath of our people for what you have done..." she noticed the markings on my face. "You sick, twisted wretch... those are Tribal markings! You can't wear those — you are not a Templar Crusader or a Favored of Joan!" She wailed at the sight of it. It shook the foundations of everything she believed in, and her whole world was falling apart around her. A familiar sensation.

"Look at my eyes, Monika. It's me... your mother, Mirabella. I *am* a Templar. I *am* a Favored of Joan. My dear, I have found you at last."

"No! My mother is dead! She died when I was little! You're a sick creature. You're a Squat!"

"Monika. Look at me." I grabbed her face and forced her to look into my eyes. "Look!"

She stared at me with tears running down her face. She couldn't look away, no matter how hard she tried. Finally, she broke down and grabbed me and held me like she did when she was a child. I hadn't cried since the day I last saw her, seventeen summers ago.

The Fears of the Fallen

"When is it going to happen?"

"It hasn't... and it may never happen. I don't know why our Crusaders Circle was never banished. We see it as a sign that Joan still supports our wishes. That She still sees what we do as honorable and good. At least that's we believe. It would be sad to think that the only reason we can still dream is because we are forsaken!"

Monika nodded her head in understanding. "So you carry on your quest. You, Braline and Ivan are still on the Crusades!"

I smiled at her as I placed my sword upon her shoulder. "Yes, we still believe in the old ways. In the times when the people believed in us and the armies of Joan were strong and bold. We fought for something back then. I can't give that up. And now you are with us, here. You can join us now. You can take your rightful place as a Templar, rather than being a Watch Captain. This is your birthright, Monika. Something that was taken from you long before you had a choice."

"But, why ally yourselves with the Squats? Why pretend to be one of them?"

"We don't pretend to be one of them, Monika. We are still Joanites! We still have our souls and we can Dream. That shows us that we are still Joanites. I can still feel the power of Synthesis flow through me and I can still wield the gifts of the Fatima. But the reality is that there are more Squats out here than we can imagine. There are Gek'roh wandering the desolate plains and creatures of unspeakable evil. The Outlands are a dangerous place and we need to survive. We have found a way to do that, allied with the Squats. There are other Joanites with us, warriors who have become disillusioned with the state of Vimary. Some come and go, but all of them are banished at some time or another. It happens in the night. They wake up screaming, suffering from the separation from Joan, only to discover that their connection to the River is gone... or changed. Then we have to let them find their own paths. Only my original Crusaders Circle remains untouched. Those of us still alive, that is."

Monika took on a very serious face, one washed with fatigue and guilt. "I have done some very horrible things, mother. While you have carried on a noble quest, I have grown up to do the opposite. I listened to the Judges and their laws. The Terashebans... they made us act out their words because they were too cowardly to do it themselves. I was chosen to be a part of an inner circle. They call themselves the Crucible and they do evil things. We persecuted the Fallen for crimes they didn't commit, and punished them for nothing more than what they were. I used to think that being banished was punishment enough, but now I know. The Watch has become a twisted image of its former self and I am as much a part of it as anyone else. Perhaps, now I too will become like the people I hated. I don't want to lose my soul, but maybe I should... maybe for all of the crimes I committed at the Institute, where we mutilated the Fallen and for those we sent to the Circle of the Chosen... and yet, I still followed them!" She pushed the sword from her shoulder. "I don't deserve this. I am not a Templar!"

A long silence passed between us and I sat and watched my daughter fight her inner demons. I was thinking of words to ease her pain. Anything that would justify in her mind that she was not the vile person she thought she was. To me, she was my hopes and dreams. I knew that only time would tell what would happen to Monika. Whatever her destiny, I was going to make sure that I would never leave her alone again. Never.

Mother's Curse

The biting cold weather surrounded us in its savage cloak. Already the Squat Band members had fled in the hopes of escaping the torrents of ice and snow while we plodded forth into the eye of the storm. There were secrets that would lead to our victory against the Z'bri in that damned fortress and we were the key to uncovering it. If we could reach it alive. The temperature was dropping rapidly and I felt a shiver take hold. I pulled the cowl tighter around my face.

"It's colder this time, Mira. We must be close!" Ivan's voice was drowned out in the storm.

"Keep your eyes open, my friends. We don't know what awaits us within."

"Whatever it is, we haven't come this far to fail now!" said Braline.

"No, we certainly haven't, have we!" said Monika with a slight smirk. "But before we go any further, I want to ask of you a favor. If anything should happen to me, there's something I want you to have." She pulled her left arm from within the folds of her cloak and presented a silver ring placed gently upon her middle finger. "Take this from me if I am injured... just in case. Something to remember me by."

"Of course, my dear... anything for you." I put my cloak over my daughter's shoulders and we carried on towards the shadow in the distance.

The Fifth Tale: An Act of Treason



No! I would not take the ring from her! She wasn't Monika! She wasn't my daughter!

But it was far too late and I knew I would take the ring and surrender myself to the fiend. I had been alone in the wilds too long, craving the embrace of my daughter and my Fatima. She had asked me to take the ring and I would, even at the cost of my soul. I was a warrior of Joan and...

No! I was Emulaan, Fallen and Free. I struggled to recover my own identity as Akasha, cruel in her visions, sent me careening down into the darkest of tides. Innocents screamed about me and I resigned myself to another life of utter damnation...

An Enemy Exposed

From the confessions of Eshlazi Yrthranivak, Joh'an:

I looked out over the rail before me, its bony structure supporting my weight. Far below, the figures of human serfs slaved away, digging up the graves of the dead in order to complete my palace. I kissed the wall of my private chamber and it quivered with delight. "You are almost complete, my love" I whispered to it.

I let my hand run along the wall, feeling its supple texture and alluring folds of flesh. This 'eve, in these days of eternal darkness, I was to meet with my Lord Prince. I was sanctioned to impose my rule upon several lesser Iv'chet of the House Sangis and was expecting my status as Count to be promoted to Duke. Oh, how naive I was.

I stood before my Prince, his perverse form pleasuring itself with a multitude of appendages that formed and disappeared in a chaotic rhythm. His voice was like honey, coated with sweetness, yet the words themselves stung me like thorns.

"Eshlazi Yrthranivak, Count of the House Sangis. You have been accused by the Melanis spies of consorting with an enemy. Is this true?"

"Only for my own benefit and that of your domain, my Lord," I replied.

"Who are they?" The question was a test. If it had come to this, then the Prince already knew who it was. I had to answer truthfully.

"It is a Joanite who acts against his people, my Lord. A Templar."

"Acts against his people! In the same way that you act against us?"

"No, my Prince. I wouldn't dare work against you. You are divine."

"...and all knowing. Speak to me of the Hunters, Joh'an!"

It was too late! My enemies within the H'I Kar had sealed my fate. Someone had acted against me and my own spies were useless in providing me any information that this was going to happen. Any arguments I proposed were going to be futile. I quickly scanned the room for any Z'bri that may have had reason to hate me. There were many, but one of them stood out against the others... Mahakala.





Punishment and Trickery

The Koleris guards kept me bound, and the iron brand marked with runes kept me from using my Sundering to escape. With flowing cloaks that blew as though in a slow, constant wind, the Melanis Chainer approached me. I fought against my bindings, but had neither the strength nor the will to resist their power.

"You should have never sided with the losing faction, Eshlazi. The Hunters are a fading and fleeting mar in the face of our kind. Why do you hate us with such deep passion? We are not your enemy. If only Sk'ksul had known that you were responsible. That you told the Crusaders where his scouts were located. He would have killed you himself, I am certain. But, I know how to save certain pleasures for myself." He let out a chuckle.

"You are misinformed, Mahakala. You have no idea what this all means. It is larger than you and your dark dealings. It is larger than the Baron himself and even the Fatimas and their Tribes. The Hunters will prevail in spite of my Chaining, I assure you that." I began to slowly draw upon the essence of the Sundering despite the torture of my bindings.

"You are in no position to speak of prevalence and victories. You are a fool, Eshlazi. You were a fool to follow the Baron and you are a fool now." Mahakala slithered to a fiery red hearth. He reached into the flames and pulled forth a white-hot ring cast in silver. His chanting filled the air, the ancient tongue of our kind forming words and incantations of evil. Once I used to find those words appealing and pure, but now they rang like poison in my ears.

The hearth burst forth with fingers of flames, each time inscribing upon the ring a new set of runes. They were fluid strokes that glowed with a green light, etches that spelled out my doom. The Koleris guards were turned away from the ritual, but I looked on, never averting my eyes for a single breath. My timing had to be perfect...

A tearing noise cleaved the air as the reality of this realm tore at its foundations. The Seed was making itself known through our Sundering and its aura was immense. The flames from the burning human fat turned a brilliant blue hue within the braziers around the chamber. The skulking shadows of other Melanis ritualists lent Mahakala their dark essence as he continued the chant. He approached me, the ring held before him, clasped within his claw-like hands.

"Mahakala," I said, allowing my Atmosphere to sink into him. "Will you allow me to leave this place without one last pleasure? I owe you so much for showing me the true path. I cannot leave this body without one last touch. Come to me Mahakala. You are my salvation!" He came closer and as he did so, I released all of my energy into a single, desperate attempt.

My will surged forward, sundering all before it. I was a mighty Sangis, Soul Thief of repute, and I would not be denied. I grasped hold of Mahakala's body for a single instant, just enough time for me to complete the possession. I uttered the chant, but this time the words were backwards, the inflections opposite to his own. "Maro'oh sukta nay se Bag'wan hum-to". Mahakala fought to regain control of his body and I let him. It was the last place I wanted to be. I exploded back into my own shell and a thunderclap ripped the air.

His cloaked form twisted where it stood, his skin and bones wrapping into a vortex that spun through the air. He screamed in agony, the sight of it causing me to hesitate in my escape. It was so beautiful! Mahakala's energy flew out of him in all directions, striking one of the Koleris guards with a force that destroyed her instantly, her flesh melting from her bones. I covered my eyes with a thin membrane and turned the joints of my knees in the reverse direction. I crouched and sprung, gliding on my wings down the thin hall. An explosion of pure energy followed behind me and I toppled into the ground.

A funnel rose up from the catacombs of the Melanis stronghold ahead of me. I extended a series of ridges along my forearms and began the ascent, realizing that from this day forward, my life had changed... forever.

Return of the Enemy

The sky-realms had been my home for many years. I was a Joh'an, not by my own design, although the decisions I made did much to assist me. I had my own domain, but it would never live up to the palace I once controlled in the H'l Kar. The only thing I thanked for the day of my exile was that now I could see what we had become. We were shadows of our former selves, trapped in the cage of flesh that I once worshipped. Oh, how I sought to escape this prison and return to the glory of the Spirit Realm. There *had* to be a way to re-open the Fold. It was my eternal quest to understand what happened when the Nomads forever closed us off in an attempt to reset the balance of creation.

I acted against my kind now, not out of necessity, but out of choice. The Hunters were hunted, yet we always stayed ahead of the game. Except now, that game was coming to a close. The signs were beginning to show themselves: the Prophecies spoken among the outcasts of the Tribes, the fluxes in the Dream, and the ever present question as to what may come. I found myself lost in thought as I rung the last drops of life from the child before me. I stared at his silent body, a thankful whisper lingering on his lips for allowing him to die.

I wondered why the things we did as demons were so different than the actions of the humans. I had never come to understand the difference. The acts of sex and love were thought of as pure, yet when I mimicked their movements and words, they cringed from me. Why could I not comprehend what it was to be human? To know what love is? Did the dead child in my arms love me for giving him the gift of death? Perhaps it would take me an eternity to learn these things. An eternity I didn't have.

"My Lord, there is news of the festival. The signs have shown the coming. The date is near." The serf spoke with a heavy lisp and her voice was hushed and coarse.

"So the time has come at last. Is it returning to us then?" I asked.

"Yes, my Lord. The spies have told us that the Fallen await its arrival even as the Tribes are ignorant to its meaning. So it is said."

"Have there been more bodies? Any word of the dead absent of their eyes?"

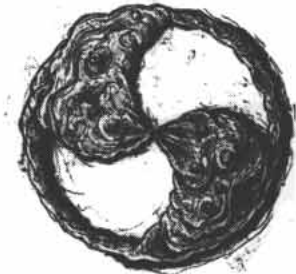
"Yes, my Lord. He is coming, also."

"Good. I am ready." I gazed longingly at the smooth skin of the serf, her breasts full and rich. "Now come here, my kitten. I must reward you for your good service."

"My Lord, please..."

I swept the serf into my arms and carried her off to my private chamber. I had many preparations to attend to, but first I needed to partake in the simple pleasures of lust.

2. Emulaan and the Ring





The Last Tale: The Festival of Closing

My confidence surged as my identity returned, and with it the prospect of hope. The fiend Mahakala was not without enemies. It could be defeated and there was one, although vile in its own right, who worked against the Ring and Fortress.

Akasha swept me along again and I fell anew. I swam through the waves of the past and the currents of the present, and the future opened up ahead of me. In legend, all time is one and I knew I was to live events yet to come. None could prepare me, however, for living my own future...

Celebrations and Damnations

From the writings of Emulaan the Poet:

The Dahlian Caravan of the Beautiful Severance was entertaining the crowd with an amusing play. Their dancers and actors flipped and floated across the stage, much to the merriment of all who watched. Jugglers balanced on poles and passed flaming swords to each other, toying with the audience. They pretended to falter, only to recover seconds before a disastrous folly. The Watch patrolled the massive grounds as well and I was careful to avoid their scrutinizing eyes. I was as unimposing as a Fallen could be, but the attention of a Watcher with a flair for cruelty could ruin any attempt I had of discovering what was going to occur.

My task was simple but far from easy. I needed to wait for the evening to arrive and the Festival of Closing to get underway. We had studied the scrolls and the words upon them to help us prevent what we knew to be inevitable. I pulled my cloak tighter around myself and passed between a couple of Terasheban Advocates. They were as dangerous as any Judge as far as the Fallen were concerned. Maybe more so, as they each had something to prove. I didn't look up at them and the spectacle around us held their attention, enabling me to pass by without harm.

There were several gazebos set up by the Magdalites, offering everything from pleasure drugs to finer, more personal services. I walked by the ornate constructs without a second glance, resisting the alluring smells of perfumes and the sight of soft bare skin.

A group of Agnites ran by me and I stopped for a moment, recalling the horror the children underwent as victims of the Melanis Possessor. The children were so innocent and full of life. The thought of it lent me determination, the strength to accomplish my duty. I reached into my pouch and felt for the weapon I had brought along. The touch of it calmed my nerves.

I climbed a series of stairs that would provide me an advantage in the crowded festival grounds. I scanned the land below me and saw the vastness of the festivities. They must have spread for at least a click or more through the streets of Bazaar. There were hundreds of merchants, guards and entertainers milling among the wares and stalls. The sun was bright in the sky and the light illuminated banners with brilliant colors and symbols, each representing a family, clan or tribe.

All of the Tribes of the Nation were present at the Festival of the Closing and I knew that amidst the chaos of the crowds below, there were Fallen partaking in the amusements. The risk was high, but it is difficult to resist laughter and fun. At all the festivals throughout the year, the Fallen would join in. Unfortunately, some ended up chased off or imprisoned by the Terashebans and the Watch. I myself was at risk, but again... history was going to be made and my life was given over to the telling of such things. Except this time, I was involved.

Final Confrontation

I waited till the ceremonies for the Closing began before leaving my safe perch atop the building. I lit the lantern and slowly descended the stairs into the crowds below. I navigated through the masses and managed to secure myself a clear view of the main stage. The Dahlian Caravan chosen for this year's festival was presenting a play that showed the importance of the Fatimas as our saviors and guides. I wasn't watching the play, however. I was inspecting the crowd for my target.

It wasn't long before I saw her. She had the face of an angel. I started moving towards her, pushing my way through the crowds. I was within a few feet when she saw me.

"Emulaan, I knew you would come." She escaped from my grasp seconds before I could reach her. I gave chase.

She ran into the darkness of an alley and I hesitated before I entered. I placed the lantern on the ground and pulled the needle from my pouch. The vial held a clear fluid that could kill a person within seconds. Veruka never told me whether it would work for certain on a Z'bri, but I knew Mahakala was trapped in the shell of this human. It would leave him vulnerable and allow us to prevent the plans he had for Vimary.

I slowly entered the alley, staying close to the wall. My breath was caught in my throat and my heart raced with fear. I heard her voice, "Emulaan, you will be mine!"

I spun around, my arm coming down in a stabbing motion, the deadly poison dripping from the tip of the needle. She caught my arm and flung me against the wall, her other hand wrapped around my throat. I gasped for air.

"You shouldn't play with sharp pointy objects, my sweet. You could get hurt." She squeezed my arm and the needle fell harmlessly to the ground.

I choked to get some words out. "Mira,... fight it... you're... stronger than... it."

"Oh no, Emulaan. You see, she promised her daughter that she would take the ring as a reminder. So she will never forget her dear Monika again. Mira doesn't *want* to take it off, Emulaan. She likes it." Mahakala continued. "Besides, the hour is near... the Fortress will be here soon and all of Vimary will suffer under my control."

I fought to scream for help. There were so many people only feet away on the busy street and none of them turned to look in the alley where I was trapped.

"Now take the ring, Emulaan. You are my chosen one. Through you I will have the influence I need over all of the Eighth Tribe. They will follow me under the words of Joshua's Prophecy and then, my plan will be complete. You see, my sweet, I have been waiting for you for a very long time."

I closed my eyes to keep from seeing the ring on Mira's finger. I knew of its evil and what it represented. Worse, I knew what I would become if I succumbed to its bewitching qualities.

"Take the ring! Take the ring! You are the chosen." Mahakala screamed at me.

"He doesn't want the ring!" said a seductive voice from the street. I managed to turn my head just enough to see a tall, gaunt figure with straight white hair that flowed to his waist. He looked so pristine, so alluring.

2. Emulaan and the Ring

Mahakala, in the body of Mira, turned to look at his enemy. "So, you have found me at last, Eshlazi! You are too late, mind you. I have ensured that the Fortress will manifest this night, here in the heart of Vimary. Then, you will serve me in the manner you always should have... in your death!"

"Let the human go. This is our battle."

"Ahh, so we have a soft spot for humans now, do we? No, I will save this one till I finish with you."

I felt a tingling sensation run from Mahakala's arm and into my spine. I collapsed to the ground in a fit of pain, the strength gone from my muscles. I watched as the two fallen Z'bri nobles faced each other in mortal combat. Mahakala unsheathed the Templar Crusader's sword and held it menacingly before him. Eshlazi summoned claws from the flesh of his human vessel and awaited the assault. A flurry of strikes and blows were administered by each of the beasts, each enough to strike down the strongest human. Blood and flesh was torn from their bodies, and the power of the Sundering could be felt all around. Mahakala's sword arced through the air and tossed Eshlazi into the wall with tremendous force. He shouted some words of an evil tongue at Mahakala, as hot blood exploded from his mouth and eyes.

Eshlazi gathered himself and whipped his arms outwards. Razors the color of ivory hurtled at Mahakala and struck him along the length of his torso. The razors began to spin, tearing through the opposite side of his body. I turned my attention to saving my own life and painfully tried to reach for the needle that lay inches from my face. I didn't have an ounce of strength left with which to grab it. I felt blood splatter my face as Mira's body fell to the ground.

"By the Fury of Joan, I will slay you!" yelled a third voice. I saw an armed figure rush by me and run headlong into Eshlazi. It was Ivan, Mira's most trusted warrior.

"No..." I couldn't raise my voice above a slight whisper. Eshlazi was trying to stop Mahakala, but all Ivan could see was that his Captain was injured and bleeding. I had no way to warn him that the person he was trying to save was all but gone. I heard a cheer from the crowd in the street, oblivious of the battle at hand and the danger that hung over their lives. We had to stop the Fortress from coming. If Mahakala had wrought control of it as he had said, all would be lost.

My finger twitched as I fought against the Sundering that still lingered inside of me. I gained control of my hand and it sloppily dug into the dirt and pulled my body forward, jumping and jerking in its movement. I felt the cold vial underneath the palm of my hand and clenched my fist around it. Mira's body lay still, just feet away from me. I saw the ring placed on her middle finger. To my horror, the wounds upon her body were healing. I hastened my struggle.

I reached her body and lay on top of her. I placed the needle against her neck and whispered a prayer to the Goddess to keep her soul from harm. Tears ran down my face and just as I was about to pierce her skin with the needle that would surely kill her, a deafening roar shot across the sky.

I rolled onto my back and looked up. The night sky was radiant with a red glow and the clouds moved at an unnatural pace. As I lay there, a snowflake fell on my cheek. Tears flowed freely from my eyes and I wept. I saw the injured form of Ivan fall to the ground, his eyes still and vacant.

I glanced back at Mira's body, which was quickly being covered with snow. In my hand, the ring shone just as brightly as I slipped it onto my finger...



Awakening

My screams echoed through the River of Dream and I felt Akasha leave me. The River began to drain from my mind and the Spirit of the Akasha returned itself to the scrolls upon the pedestal in the basement of the Shelter. I could feel Mari-Anne speaking to me in a soothing voice, calming me from the ordeals I had just witnessed. I strained to get up but succumbed to the fatigue that racked my body.

I looked into Mari-Anne's eyes before I fell into unconsciousness and whispered to her, "It was a warning. He's coming..."



Chapter Three: Weaver Resources

These are the stories of the past

Hear them, tell them, know them.

Learn their lessons and fear their monsters,

For your lives will be your children's legends.

— Lesson of Baba Yaga



LEGENDS OF TRIBE 8

Legends can be a very useful tool in any **Tribe 8** game and they certainly serve an important purpose in its fictional society. Indeed, using the device of tales around a campfire or in a Dive can help enhance the tribal atmosphere of the game and reinforce the sense of community that is critical to a successful **T8** cycle.

One excellent way of doing this is to use legends and stories to foreshadow upcoming story arcs. If you want to have the cell journey into the H'l Kar later in the cycle, a prominent storyteller could recount part of the Legend of Ra'Ham (**Tribe 8 Rulebook**, pp. 68-73) in an early scenario. This would set the stage for the events to come. Similar stories can be told about the Keepers, the River of Dream, the Outlands or many other scenes of adventure. Players get notoriously antsy when asked to sit back and listen to a story, though, so make sure to keep the tales relatively short. Another good option is to prepare a handout, to be read between sessions. That way the Players can "listen" to the legend on their own time and keep playing time for action and intrigue. This has the added advantage of keeping the Players' minds on the game between sessions. The entirety of Chapter Two of this book can be used in just such a manner.

Another option is to actually play out a legend or two. This is best used in a longer cycle, since it will necessarily entail a divergence from the main plot, but it can be very rewarding. Each Player assumes the role of a character in the legend and they play out the story almost like a regular game session. You should make the legendary character ahead of time and you can impose certain limitations on the plot so that the legend comes to pass. Telling one Player that her character should sacrifice herself at one point is perfectly acceptable, for example, as long as the whole Player Circle knows this is a legend they are reliving and that it will have repercussions in the future. This technique is especially good if you want to create parallels between the Players' cell and a group of legendary figures — the Players will identify with their new roles and remember what happened to them.

Regardless of how you do it, using a sense of the legendary in your cycle will be very rewarding. It will add an epic atmosphere and help reinforce a sense of destiny. The rest of this chapter is dedicated to helping you do just that, providing you with clues as to who might be telling stories in Vimary and Hom, and resources to go with the legends in the previous chapter.

STORIES ARE TOLD

Storytellers are among the most important people in the societies of **Tribe 8**. They may not be the warriors who man the battlements, the Fatimas who freed the camps, or the explorers who venture into the Outlands, but they keep their society together. By telling others of the heroic feats of the bold few, they keep their tribes and nation strong. They teach the young many lessons and prepare them for the dangerous world outside their families and homes. Without these storytellers, no tribe could survive, no traditions could be established and no future would be possible.

Vimary is a young and dangerous place, and even storytellers may be active players in its destiny. Some of those who convey legends are also warriors, ritualists or explorers themselves, although they may be approaching retirement.

STORYTELLERS IN VIMARY

Tribal storytellers usually tell of the glory days of Liberation, the horrors of the Camps, or occasionally, of the madness of the World Before. Their stories often glorify the Fatimas and underline the Sisters' importance in every Tribal's life. Like many older folk, they often feel that the new generation of tribals are somewhat lazy and need to be reminded of what their elders sacrificed for them. Prominent storytellers include:



ANASTASIA AARON

More of a mouthpiece for Dahlia Herself than an actual storyteller, Anastasia nevertheless conveys many lessons to her own tribe and to others who come to see her perform. She is the lead actress in many Passion Plays and these are her main venue for telling tales. She usually tells stories of illusion and trickery, encouraging the audience to be wily and mistrust what they see. (See **Tribe 8 Rulebook**, p. 48.)



BENJAMIN ARIA'ON

Once an Evan leader, Benjamin is now under house arrest in Griffentowne because of his sympathy for the Fallen. Unable to leave, he often receives guests who listen to his many stories. Benjamin talks about the creation of the Tribes and the atmosphere of understanding that allowed Eva to accept refugees from the camps into Her flock. His stories are often warnings against intolerance and critiques of the current Grand Council. (See **Tribe 8 Rulebook**, p. 53.)



THE FISHER KING

Once a prominent High Judge of Tera Sheba, Hamrak Slade'on (a.k.a. The Fisher King) has retired to a lone tower in the Sunken City where he welcomes visitors. Many young Advocates and Judges come to see him when the tension of their callings becomes too much and they need to regain perspective. His tales draw heavily on the years that immediately followed the Liberation, when Shebans were more active in the struggle against the Z'bri. His use of Tradition allows listeners to almost relive these tales — tales that often lead them to reflect on their own blind loyalty. (See **Vimary Sourcebook**, p. 44.)



AWARNAK KIL'ON

A mountain of a man, this Joanite Teacher rules one of the Seven Fingers, where he trains young warriors. His lessons are often harsh, but he embodies the legendary Joanite sense of duty and sacrifice. His tales are of the first generation of warriors and often feature Joan Herself on Crusade. He has little tolerance for politicking and often criticizes the Terasheban. (See **Vimary Sourcebook**, p. 94.)



GRANDMÈRE DÉCEMBRE

The eldest of all Yagans, Grandmère Décembre is surely the most beloved storyteller on Vimary. She tells of the days when the Fatimas arrived, and the hope they brought with them. She speaks with a light voice and humorous tones that belie the fearsome aspect of the Tribe of Death. She welcomes visitors from other tribes and has been known to share tales with the Fallen. (See **Vimary Sourcebook**, p. 100.)



CANA NAN'ON

One of the leaders of the secret tribe of Mary the Forgiver, Cana moves through the Seven Tribes largely unseen. She occasionally tells tales in Bazaar and Playground, speaking of Mary's life and Her death. Her tales usually serve to gauge reactions among listeners, looking for signs of another Marian awakening to her heritage. Her stories are all tinged with sadness, because she still feels the loss of her Fatima very strongly. (See *Tribe 8 Companion*, p. 20).

STORYTELLERS ON HOM

Fallen attitudes toward legends and stories of the past vary greatly. Each of the five Outlooks see legends differently, reflections of their differing priorities. **Doomsayers** are the most concerned with legends and always look to the past for indications of the future. They are most concerned with stories of Joshua and His prophecy, but all tales that may provide omens of the future interest them. **Lightbringers** are more concerned with the future and usually tell stories of the nascent Eighth Tribe in an effort to create a cohesive mythology for their new nation. **Herites** are usually more concerned with action, but relish in tales of Tribal or Fatimal treachery and evil. Any story that will back their view that the Fatimas must be destroyed is generally embraced by the Herites, regardless of veracity. **Jackers**, if anything, are more active than even Herites and usually have little time for stories. The large number of Fallen Joanites in their number, however, has translated into a growing tradition of heroic tales designed to strengthen the heart against the horrors to come. Finally, the young **Children of Lilith** have embraced storytelling like few others. Even though the time of Lilith is just past, the Children's tales are full of those "glory days" and the exploits of the Fallen Fatima.

Above all else, Fallen are individuals, and the above stereotypes only scratch the surface. There are Doomsayers who have little patience for stories and Jackers who collect heroic sagas. Following are some of the more prominent storytellers on Hom:



VERUKA THE WRAITH

Perhaps the leading storyteller of all Fallen, this ancient Doomsayer and Fallen Yagan tries to warn young exiles about the struggles ahead. She talks of the Prophecy of Joshua and of the Ravager's ways when He still walked the land. She has been weakened by her ordeal during the time of Lilith and her storytelling has become less frequent and more apocalyptic. (See *Tribe 8 Rulebook*, p. 104.)



DEN-HADES & HALOS

The two Guides on Hom often use storytelling in their efforts to teach young Fallen about the ways of Synthesis and Spirit. Halos is the less skilled of the two, generally giving lessons in a didactic manner. Den-Hades, despite her cackles, is a skilled *raconteuse* and often speaks of the early days of the Tribes and of the Nomads. Both Guides seem to suffer from a certain guilt, however, and tales of the past are almost painful to them. (See *Tribe 8 Rulebook*, pp. 100 and 82.)



DEUS

The beautiful young "Poet of the Fallen" is in the process of writing a grand epic of the Eighth Tribe, inspired by the journals and memoirs of his lover Altara Ven. Deus regales audiences with tales of their fellows, often using seductive tones only a Fallen Magdalite could produce. Deus has a hedonistic streak, however, and months can pass between stories as he gives into his urges. (See **Tribe 8 Rulebook**, p. 106.)



HAVARK

This escaped-Serf-cum-Doomsayer often tells tales of horror about the Z'bri. He opens his listeners' imaginations to the most sickening parts of the H'l Kar, all the while leaving the audience with the sinking impression that the Z'bri understand more than they ever will. Jackers form the bulk of his audience, culling his tales for avenues of attack on the enemy. (See **Vimary Sourcebook**, p. 106.)

WEAVING EMULAAN AND THE RING

The Legends presented in Chapter Two of this book are intended to be run as either stand alone quests or as a joint narrative, tying all of the stories together into a mini-cycle. The following sections give you ways to incorporate the legends into your existing cycle, supplying information on the people, locales and events that take place. There will be several hooks to get Player cells involved in the stories and possible outcomes for the end of each legend. The stories can play out as they did in Emulaan's tale, or be manipulated to your liking.

The legends can be set at any point within your current cycle and many parts can be easily adapted to be used as flashbacks, flash-forwards or Vision Quests (especially the Ritual of Akasha). The non-linear nature of the legends allows the sequence of events to be manipulated with ease. The **Weaver's Screen and Assistant** (pp. 3-8) gives excellent advice on how to use advanced Weaving techniques, such as shifting the passage of time and cyclical play.

CHARACTER DESTINIES

A multitude of characters present themselves throughout the legends in this book. In some cases, their exact fates are left a mystery. This is intentional, for it allows you, as the Weaver, to include them in the Legends at your discretion and perhaps in other parts of your cycle as allies, enemies, contacts, or any number of other roles. The characters can be used at any time and slotted into the storyline to fit your cycle and quests. It is a good idea to weave the characters into your stories at an early stage so the Players are familiar with them. Creating relationships early on, before the character is needed in respect to the quest, allows a seamless movement from the cycle's backdrop story to the legends.

The character statistics and the descriptions given correspond to a time just preceding the relevant legend presented in Chapter One. They are not under any ill-effects or changes from the events in the stories, unless you see fit to make it otherwise. You may use them as described, or in an entirely different fashion; feel free to add, subtract and change elements at will, making the legends unique to your group's style of play and power level.

FORMAT

The resources for each legend follow a standard format. It opens with insights into the backstory of events, providing information that has led up to the starting point in the legend. Notes on the cast of the legend follow the backstory, giving you ways to use them in various ways and referring to their complete descriptions at the end of the chapter (or in other supplements). Some of the minor characters are not detailed because they are intended to be replaced with the PCs (e.g. Jarick's cell in the **Forgotten Fortress**). The next sections feature various prominent resources, such as key locations,

organizations or events. Each description concludes with plot suggestions, including comments on how to hook the players into the legend, what avenues and outcomes lead from the eventual successes or failures of the cell, and ways in which you can connect the quest to the other legends and create a seamless cycle.

Character descriptions appear at the end of this chapter.

THE RITUAL OF AKASHA

See pages 6 to 37 for the text of the legend.

At the beginning of the Legend *The Ritual of Akasha*, Emulaan — a Fallen Poet — is preparing for a Quest into the River of Dream. Leading up to the story, he worked closely with Den Hades and Veruka the Wraith in readying the ritual to take place. Emulaan, as stated, wishes to learn of past important events that helped shape the Nation and the people of Vimary, in the hopes that it will shed light on the future. He learns far more than he ever imagined in his quest, and gets caught up in a plot of epic proportions.

THE CAST

The Ritual of Akasha brings together several of the important storyteller figures among the Fallen. These characters, although involved in their own plans and plots, can also serve as mentors or elders in a **Tribe 8** cycle. They are perhaps best suited to communicate the history of the Fallen — and even the Seven Tribes — to the Players and their characters. As the Player's cell becomes more and more active, these characters will also record and spread stories about the PCs. These tales can be an excellent tool for Weavers to reward heroic action and punish treachery and cowardice. Once these characters are well established in a cycle as resources, Weavers can bring them to center stage with great effect. If the PCs are used to telling their tales to Veruka and Emulaan, how will they react if these elders come under attack?

Information on **Veruka the Wraith** and **Den-Hades** appears in the **Tribe 8 Rulebook** (pages 104 and 100, respectively). Details on **Emulaan the Poet** and **Mari-Anne Melina** appear on pages 51 and 52 of this book.

THE SHELTER

Administered by Mari-Anne Melina, the Shelter is a safe house and haven for Fallen of every Outlook. There, the different cells gather and recover from their wounds, whether physical or spiritual. The Shelter is located by a grove near the walls of Hom on the north side. It is a large house with three levels and many rooms. Mari-Anne has the aid of many helpers, to keep the place well maintained and to help heal those seeking rest within. The Shelter is effectively a safer alternative to Junks, the oft-times violent Dive in the heart of Hom and detailed on page 107 of the **Tribe 8 Rulebook**. It is frequented by the reflective among the Fallen, while those looking for a good time usually prefer Junks.

The Shelter's grounds are surrounded by beautiful flowers and bushes, with winding paths to wile away the days. There is a pond nearby where one can relax and enjoy the safety within the grounds of the Shelter. There are enchanted wards set up around the perimeter to sense Z'bri Atmospheres and other undesirable intentions — but one must be wary to stay within those boundaries.

Injured Fallen who come to the Shelter recover on the uppermost level, which serves as a hostel with healers to attend the ill and wounded. The main level holds a large and warm common room strewn with comfortable pillows and couches. Poets gather here and tell tales and legends to awe and inspire their listeners. The kitchen is a favorite hang-out for the ever present Fallen, and is far from the violent and rowdy watering holes found elsewhere in Hom — such as Junks. It is relaxed and an abundance of food and drink can be had there. Of course, it doesn't accommodate those with more rowdy tendencies.

The basement of the Shelter is where Mari-Anne conducts her rituals and dream quests. Many of Hom's luminaries use the basement because they know that they will not be disturbed in their studies and Quests into the River of Dream.

THE RITUAL OF AKASHA PROPER

The Ritual of Akasha is a very dangerous and volatile ritual that can have massive negative repercussions on a novice or ill-prepared Dreamer. The Ritual's purpose is to glimpse into the record of existence, to a place where all things are stored, into the collective memory of the Goddess. The Akashic Spirit is a necessary element of the ritual and a Dream Quest must be made to convince the Spirit to take part. This is a Quest in itself and can be played out beforehand, should the Weaver wish it. The Akashic Spirit must be convinced that the Dreamer is capable of carrying out the Ritual and that the motivation behind it will not harm the Goddess. This can be roleplayed as a conversation between the Dreamer and the Spirit, or the Dreamer must pass a Dreaming test against a Threshold of 7 to convince the Spirit. The Akashic Spirit is immensely powerful and beyond the scope of statistics. If it is insulted or mistrusts the PC, then it will simply disappear, removing any hopes of its aid in the Player's quest.

Once the Spirit has agreed to take part in the Ritual, the Dreamer must create a focus for it. Scrolls are a standard focus, for they allow the Spirit to record all of the events that transpire once the ritual begins. In order to take part in the ritual, the Dreamer must have a Dreaming Skill of at least 2, meaning that they are past the point of being considered a novice. They must also have a Ritual Skill of at least 1, the higher the better. Also, it should be noted that having ritual support from other experienced Dreamers is a sound investment when performing this and other powerful rituals (see *Ritual Support*, pp. 162-163 of the **Tribe 8 Rulebook**).

3. Weaver Resources

The Dreamer enters a trance and communes with the Spirit of Akasha. They then delve into the memory of the Goddess, guided by the Dreamer's motivations and goals. The dream quest will show very lucid and clear visions of past events, and allow the Dreamer herself to interact with those events. The Dreamer takes on the role of a person who was present at the actual experience, getting a first-person view of history. Meanwhile, the Spirit of Akasha is recording, upon the scrolls, everything the Dreamer witnesses. The nature of the visions are very sporadic and the scenes may change without warning, placing the Dreamer into an entirely new environment at a whim. These transitions, although abrupt, are rarely entirely random. Rather, the Spirit of Akasha guides the dreamer to follow a thread of events or influence that even she may not yet realize exists. Weavers can also use the Ritual to hint at backstories and subplots within their cycles, allowing the Players to learn of situations they would not normally be a part of.

QUEST HOOKS

There are several ways for a Weaver to incorporate the Ritual of Akasha into her cycle. The ritual itself is best used to set the stage for other quests in the cycle, hinting at future events or sending PCs off in a new direction. If a Weaver wishes to use the ritual as part of a cycle based on *Emulaan and the Ring*, the visions participants receive should coincide with events in the other legends. The Players may witness a Tribal village being raided, as in *The Forsaken*, or see the *Festival of Closing* turn into a winter nightmare. The possibilities are endless, and Weavers are free to use any devices they feel are necessary.

Other possibilities include:

Visions of Akasha: There is an important ritual taking place at the Shelter, and Emulaan the Poet has invited the cell to take part in the proceedings. The PCs are unaware of the exact nature of their summons and are told of Emulaan's purpose in much the same way he informs Mari-Anne and the others in the basement of the Shelter. The cell is to aid Emulaan as ritualists, but they end up caught in the visions as well. The Weaver can then use the sights and sounds witnessed to incorporate different aspects of events within the cycle.

Caught in the Past: In a variation of the above scenario, the ritual continues to go wrong and one or more person becomes caught in the memories of the Goddess. As the ritual ends, those characters are in a deep coma, stripped of their souls. The other PCs must undertake a dangerous quest to free their friend and journey into the tale itself, most likely by adopting the guise of other people in the tale. Can they rewrite history?

Messengers in Dream: The cell has been asked to go on a Dream Quest to contact the Spirit of Akasha on behalf of a patron Elder of Hom. The events that unfold and the power of the Spirit itself becomes an enlightening journey for those involved, revealing much of their inner natures and destinies. The Dream Quest can also be a stepping stone for the cell members to learn new, and so far undiscovered elements of Synthesis and the River of Dream.

THE RING OF MAHAKALA

See pages 11 to 15 for the text of the legend.

Emulaan's first vision allows him to re-experience the discovery of the cursed ring containing the soul of Mahakala, the Melanis Chainer whose evil pervades Emulaan's tale. The poor Agnites in *The Ring of Mahakala* were completely taken by surprise by the intrusion of the Melanis Chainer. Leading up to the story, Mahakala was lost in the waterways of Vimary. It was pure accident that Dagmar saw the ring that day, and unfortunately brought the evil that lay within it to the surface. The Agnites never knew what hit them. Much of what occurred to bring Mahakala to such a fate was shown in *An Act of Treason* (pp. 30-33). There he was tricked by Eshlazi, a Sangis Joh'an, into chaining himself to the ring. The time in between that legend and *The Ring of Mahakala* is uncertain, although the Weaver can toy with exact dates to suit her purpose.

THE CAST

Dagmar and the other Agnites in this tale are fairly typical members of their tribe, young members of the Children's caste in the prime of their lives. Their petty jealousies and deep felt affections, which coexist in a typically capricious contradiction, can and do lead to emotional abuse and acts of great heroism. In the context of this tale, they are essentially victims and all end up fodder for Mahakala's perversions, but they can play different roles in your cycle. If Dagmar or another is a PC's friend, they may feel their death most acutely. One or more of the Agnites could also escape this horrific experience, either suddenly maturing or dipping into madness. Perhaps the PCs' reaction to her will decide which. If necessary, use the Agnite Barren archetype, although these Children should have BLD -1 or -2, PSY +1 and some may have combat Skills at level 1.

Mahakala itself is the villain of this entire cycle of legends. His background and game statistics (as well as those of the ring) appear on page 54.

THE RED CAN

Playground contains a vast network of mazes and tunnels for the Agnites to get lost in, but they have always preferred playing around the Red Can. It is an old water tower that collapsed straight down on itself and still stands erect, albeit a lot lower to the ground. The area now called 'Red Can' includes all of the surrounding forest and city, and the area is completely overgrown with foliage and trees lined with paths and ravines that lead to the sunken city. Agnites are found here at all times, but they may be difficult to see. Dahlia gave a gift to Agnes one year which allows the Red Can and its surrounding woods to shift — ever so slightly — so that only an expert could navigate the same way twice. It supplies endless days of enjoyment to the Agnite Children, and even some of the Barren sneak in for a good game of hide-and-go-seek. Of course, when they're found, they aren't dealt with very nicely.

QUEST HOOKS

The vision of Emulaan is bloody indeed and leaves no survivors, but these events can be modified and become the center of many different quests. If Weavers wish to use the entire cycle of legends presented in Chapter One, it is critical that Mahakala and its ring escape this first encounter, but other than that there are few limits. Whereas *The Ritual of Akasha* served to foreshadow coming events through visions, actively playing this legend can serve as a terrifyingly real brush with evil. By the end of the quest, the cell should know they are dealing with a dangerous and vile creature and be ready to take great risks to do so. Possible quests include:

An Evil Uncovered: The cell finds the ring in much the same manner as Dagmar. Perhaps it washes ashore on Hom, or they see it during one of their trips to Tribal territory. The ring could show up anywhere. Whoever takes possession of the ring succumbs to its enticing qualities and may put it on. Once that happens, Mahakala will attempt to Soul Steal the wearer and then slay their companions. If you want to avoid making a PC into a killer, an NPC could find the ring.

A Fiend in Need: The cell encounters an old friend who is acting strangely. Unbeknownst to the cell, it is actually Mahakala. He asks for help in certain matters that will allow him to track down his enemy, the Joh'an Eshlazi. The cell may be duped into confronting a Z'bri, only to further Mahakala's plans. Will they learn the truth about their 'friend' before it's too late?

A Time for Heroes: The ring must be destroyed and only the strong and courageous can do it. The secrets behind the ancient ring must first be discovered to understand its true source of power. The Quest could lead the cell all over the face of Vimary and perhaps beyond, into the Outlands. How the ring can actually be destroyed is a mystery. Will they be able to accomplish their task before Mahakala takes another victim? This quest can be a set up to discover the secrets behind other legends, such as *The Forgotten Fortress* and *The Forsaken*. The cell may ask Mira and her Circle to aid them in defeating the ancient enemy, perhaps restoring the Crusaders Circle to their former glory.

A DARK PLAN

See pages 16 to 18 for the text of the legend.

Emulaan next vision brings him into the very halls of tribal power, only to discover that the fiendish ring has beat him there. By this time, Mahakala had escaped the Agnites in Playground and had found ways to work his way up the ranks of the Terasheban, possessing one body after the next. He had learned of the existence of the Forgotten Fortress, and worked out a plan to discover its whereabouts and current status. He used the guise of Terasheban Judge Aramis to put his plot into motion and, in so doing, came that much closer to accomplishing his goals. *A Dark Plan* is set as more of an interlude, but can still be used as the source of an investigative quest by the Weaver.

THE CAST

A Dark Plan occurs at the highest levels of power in the Seven Tribes, among the luminaries of the Grand Council and the High Judges of Tera Sheba. Mahakala is playing a dangerous game, because the Sheban Eminence of Truth could expose him if he drew enough attention to warrant its use upon him. The characters in play here are among the most powerful in Vimary and the events of this legend can have repercussions across the Seven Tribes and into Hom. Certainly Mahakala's manipulation of the Tribes into uncovering the Forgotten Fortress is one such example, but Weavers could easily have other intrigues come to plague their PCs. Mahakala's murders may be blamed on Herites or even on the Player Characters themselves, for example. A Terasheban or other tribal in the halls of power may suspect Aramis or another of Mahakala's victims and call for a secret investigation, one that could involve tribal PCs or victimize Fallen ones.

Mahakala's background and game statistics appear on page 54. Aramis is a prominent Judge; use the game statistics for Verra Thaim'on (*Tribe 8 Rulebook*, p. 64) with KNO +1 and Synthesis level 1. High Judge Cylix Seth'on appears in detail on page 95 of the *Vimary Sourcebook*, but can be assumed to have similar game statistics, although with level 3 Synthesis.

QUEST HOOKS

A Dark Plan can be used as inspiration for creating an investigative quest into the Judges of Tera Sheba and the many secret orders among them. The cell — in trying to discover the whereabouts of Mahakala after the previous legend — may have found themselves, of all places, at the steps of the Council Ruins. During their investigations, they may stumble across all sorts of hidden clues and trails leading them to uncover such orders as the Black Owls (a secretive order sponsored by the Owl totem) or the Crucible (an anti-Fallen conspiracy). Details on the Black Owls appear on page 84 of *Children of Lilith*; for the Crucible, see pages 135-136 of the *Vimary Sourcebook*.

The Weaver can also run a series of small adventures that layer the plots within the Tribes, forming an intricate network of lies and secrets. What will the Players do with the information they gather and how will they escape those who wish to silence them? The legend is also very useful for a Tribal Quest Circle investigating possible heretics among the Grand Council and its entourage.

THE FORGOTTEN FORTRESS

See pages 19 to 24 for the text of the legend.

Mahakala, by this time, has used his influence among the Judges of Vimary to play the Fallen as sacrificial lambs in a plot that they have no real knowledge of. Jarick, a Doomsayer, was the candidate chosen for the job, and was manipulated into believing that he was on a noble quest to discover hidden wisdom that would lead the Fallen to brighter days. At the same time that the Terasheban were sending him false visions, Mahakala disappeared into the night, confident in the knowledge that his secret was safe, at least for a while longer.

In the Skyrealms, Eshlazi became suspicious of Mahakala's resurfacing. He received news that individuals were being discovered murdered in the night with their eyes stolen from their sockets. Eshlazi became wary at this time and sent out several of his serfs to lend truth to his fears... that Mahakala still lived, and hunted for him.

Emulaan's vision, however, followed Jarick and his deadly encounter with the Fortress.

THE CAST

Jarick and his cell are largely victims of the Fortress in the legend as experienced by Emulaan, but this may not necessarily be the case in your cycle. One or more members may either escape or avoid the Fortress and carry word of its evil back to Hom. Jarick himself is detailed on page 55 and could be a friend, rival or acquaintance of the Player Characters. If he is a friend, his disappearance may launch the cell on a quest into the wilderness of the River of Dream.

Even if the Fortress does claim the members of his cell as described in Chapter One, that need not be their end. Spirits can remain strong within the River of Dream and contact the living, and one or more of these murdered Fallen could appear to a sensitive PC in dream. Again, these visions become all the more powerful if you establish a connection between the victims and the PCs before their untimely death. Even if they are rivals, a haunting should be enough to motivate some investigation. If necessary, use the various Fallen archetypes for Jarick's cell-mates. Statistics for the Koleris spirits who inhabit the Fortress appear on page 56.

THE FORTRESS

The Forgotten Fortress was once a powerful Koleris Lord's domain during the Age of Camps. It lost much of its power in the beginning days of the Liberation, and suddenly vanished across the fold, lost and forgotten. The Fortress did not cease to exist, however, as was thought among the Z'bri and the newly formed Tribes. It became a shadow realm, neither existing in reality nor in the Dream, but somewhere in between. It is likely to have occurred due to a Melanis attempt to save the Fortress from destruction, but the exact truth is unknown, except to those Z'bri who were inside when it vanished. All those within, mainly Koleris Horde warriors and Melanis Diplomats, became chained to the Fortress. It exists in its own Dream Orb, appearing sporadically in different areas of the Outlands.

The Fortress manifests itself without rhyme or reason, although it never appears more than a day's ride from its previous site. The surrounding lands become increasingly cold, regardless of seasonal or weather patterns, transforming the area into a frigid and icy landscape. Harsh winter storms, snow, hurricane force winds and the death of all foliage strip the land bare. The climate change is brought on by the collective Atmosphere of the trapped Koleris spirits, taking on the rage and anger of the beasts. It affects an area for kilometers around.

Those caught within the Koleris Atmosphere suffer the effects of exposure at a rapid pace unless they seek shelter. Unfortunately, being caught in the shadow realm of the Fortress leads to one place only: within the damned halls themselves.

Externally, the Fortress appears huge and imposing. It is almost three kilometers (clicks) in circumference and higher than one can see due to the harsh storm which rips around it. The entrance looks like a gaping maw, lined with teeth of ice, stone and metal. Within, the halls twist and turn in a chaotic fashion, leading to chambers and halls of immense proportions. There are pools of bodily fluids, mainly blood and bile. The architecture is jagged and hard, as though the walls themselves could be used as weapons. Any blood that falls on the ground or splatters the walls within the Fortress is soaked up and disappears. The walls seem to glow after it feeds, although its appetite is never sated.

Those who enter are affected by the Koleris Atmosphere and are in great peril of losing their minds to fits of rage and insanity. There are also the ever present spirits of the Z'bri within that seek to destroy the intruders by engaging them in Spirit combat (see statistics on page 56). For the ill prepared and hapless travelers who enter the Forgotten Fortress, their lives hang loosely in the balance.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

The Forgotten Fortress has an extremely powerful Koleris Atmosphere, but no Sundering ability. Anyone within the Fortress must pass a PSY test vs. a Threshold of 6 every hour in order to resist the dark urges caused by the Atmosphere. The results of the Atmosphere are summarized in the table below, but Weavers should keep their results secret and play characters against each as appropriate, using all the tricks of horror films (e.g. fleeting images of violence, steps echoing through the halls, halls leading in circles). The longer visitors remain inside the Fortress, the more likely they are to lose their minds. The Fortress normally only stays in one area for a day before disappearing into Dream again. (If Mahakala does manage to control the Fortress in its final manifestation at the *Festival of Closing*, it will remain until he is dealt with.)

It is uncertain how often the Fortress manifests, but Weavers are advised to allow it to occur based on the requirements of their cycle. See the *Tribe 8 Rulebook*, p.181, for more on the Koleris Atmosphere.

FORTRESS ATMOSPHERE

MoF	Result
(MoS 1+)	No effect. No need to reroll for (MoS +1) hours.
0	Unease and tension.
1	Growing fear; jumping at shadows.
2	Barely suppressed anger; one companion becomes <i>intolerable</i>
3	Paranoia; one companion <i>cannot</i> be trusted
4	Lack of control; acting on impulse (as Koleris Atmosphere)
5+	Murder is the solution...
Fumble	Instant rage and attack (as Koleris Atmosphere).

QUEST HOOKS

The Forgotten Fortress is an exciting and terrifying addition to any cycle and can be inserted regardless of where the PC cell is, whether in Vimary or the Outlands. Here are a few plot hooks to lure the characters to the deadly Shadow Realm, some which can tie into other legends from Chapter One:

False Visions: Jarick and perhaps a few of the members of the PC cell receive visions of a massive structure in the Outlands. The visions themselves seem to be calling to the characters to follow and find... something. The dreams are, of course, brought on by Mahakala, who has deceived the Nation into believing that the Fortress can be used as an artifact of good (see *A Dark Plan*). The cell may join together with Jarick and travel into the Outlands in search of the ancient artifact only to discover the true horror of what it really is.

Storm Warning: The Cell is exploring the Outlands when, much to their dismay, the weather turns deathly cold. They seek out some place to shelter for the night and stumble across the imposing Fortress. They may learn what it is, once inside, and should they survive and escape, race back to Vimary and Hom to warn the people of the danger that is soon to arrive.

A Deadly Passage: Tying into *The Forsaken* (pp. 25-29), the cell may be in alliance with Mira and her Crusaders, hoping that they can find and destroy the Forgotten Fortress. Any Fallen cell that acts violently against the Z'bri would be interested in destroying it, as would a Tribal Circle that is on the verge of being banished. Perhaps they look to the Crusaders to save them before it's too late. Defeating the Fortress could be considered a right of passage.

A Costly Mission: The story of *The Ring of Mahakala* may be known to some, and word of its revival may have come to the fore. Either Cylix Seth'on or Eshlazi Yrthranivak may want to learn more of the Fortress and Mahakala's plans before anyone else catches wind of it. They may secretly set up their own expedition, either using a Fallen cell or a Tribal Circle, to learn its mysteries and secrets.

THE FORSAKEN

See pages 25 to 29 for the text of the legend.

Emulaan's next vision brought him into a rogue band of Joanite Templars, led by a woman named Mira, who were on a quest to destroy the Forgotten Fortress. Ivan, at the start of the legend, saw the Fortress closer than it had ever been before. ("We saw it over the Horizon. It was there, Mira, we almost had it!" he stated.) The rogues, aside from their many other duties, regarded the Fortress as a major goal in their fight against the Z'bri. While the Templars carried out their duties, Mahakala made certain that his new host was going to play the perfect role in allowing him to both acquire a powerful vessel to face his enemy and safely lead him to the Fortress so he could take control over the vessel's movements and power. The host he had chosen to get him close to the Fortress was the lost Templar's daughter, Monika Kil'on. He had learned of Mira and her Crusaders from his contacts among the Terashebens, and made haste to ensure he was in the right place at the right time. Mira, blind to the fact that her daughter was actually possessed by the thing she hated the most, fell right into the dark plan of the evil Z'bri.

THE CAST

The Squat and the rogue Crusaders who appear in *The Forsaken* can make excellent additions to any cycle that takes characters into the Outlands. There are many bands of Squats there; Luther Boarhead and his armed and dangerous raiders are the most renowned, but there are some smaller and less known factions as well. Segal and his band are one such example. They are a nomadic group, and if they had failed to come across Mira and her forsaken Circle of Templars, they would probably have been killed or assimilated by Luther's clan a long time ago. Even without the presence of the Joanites they can make for an interesting addition to a cycle. If the PCs are fighting Boarhead, Segal could make an excellent ally, although his unsavory ways may make the Players question whether Boarhead is really so bad after all. Background and game statistics for Segal appear on page 61.

3. Weaver Resources

The Templars can appear in almost any cycle that deals with the Joanites. They are an extreme example of the problem's within the Warrior's tribe. Abandoned thanks to political maneuvering by Terasheban and others, they have not been wholly abandoned by their indecisive Fatima. And yet, they are not necessarily heroic, for without guidance they have embarked on a bloody war against all who they see as tainted — including innocent Tribals. Fallen Joanites might be able to reform them into Jackers, while Joanite PCs might be able to bring them back into the fold, but they have much to account for. Background and game statistics for Mira and Monika appear on pages 57 and 58, respectively.

QUEST HOOKS

Most of the encounters with the Crusaders Circle will take place in the Outlands. The cell may be present at a raid led by Mira and including the Squats. This could happen at a new Fallen village or an outlying Tribal settlement. The Outlands are vast and limitless in their expanse; one never knows who will show up next. The Squats and Crusaders travel with many tents and makeshift shelters that are easily set up and taken down as needed. Mira is careful to not leave any traces of the group's passing and has their tracks well covered. However, they may be seen and encountered by the PCs' cell, although a scout will almost always spot any passers-by before they themselves are seen. The camp will then be warned and deal with the strangers (in this case the PCs) in a neutral manner, looking for any signs of hostility or danger. Possible quests include:

Against the Boar's Head: The much feared and voracious Luther Boarhead attacks the group of PCs in the hopes of gaining some new slaves. The PC cell fights off the first wave, but are soon overtaken by the Squat onslaught. Mira and Braline, who see the attack taking place, quickly come to the decision to aid the PCs. The Crusaders fight off Boarhead's troops but now have an enemy of great notoriety. How will the PCs repay the debt owed to their unlikely rescuers?

Templar Madness: A group of Tribal PCs may be involved with setting up a new village on the fringes of Vimary. Just as all seems to be going well, the village is attacked and must be defended. In the middle of the pitched battle, one of the PCs sees Tribal markings upon a raider's face and arms! Who are the attackers and why are they betraying their own kind? This scenario allows the Weaver to start a group of Players as Tribals, only to banish them at a later date as they discover the truth about the Forsaken and the deals made to ensure that the Crusades were abandoned. As they discover the dark secrets hidden with the Terasheban and the Old Guard, they will make many enemies.

Against the Fortress: The PC cell escapes the Forgotten Fortress and is on the verge of death after the ordeal. They are taken in by a band of Squats and discover the Crusaders living among them. They are questioned as to what they witnessed within, and are invited to help destroy the Z'bri Shadow Realm once and for all.

The Curse of the Ring: The PC cell has tracked the Ring of Mahakala to the Outlands and discover it is among Segal's Band. The cell investigates the group, trying to find out who is possessed by Mahakala. Can they save Mira from her "daughter," and will she listen to such outlandish claims after finally being reunited with Monika? Often the truth is hard to believe, and the cell may have to resort to some drastic measures.

AN ACT OF TREASON

See pages 30 to 33 for the text of the legend.

This legend incorporates two time periods; the first occurring before the banishment of Eshlazi and the Chaining of Mahakala, the second set in the present. The legends pull together and come to a head at this point, and many of the secrets unfold. In Eshlazi's flashback, his enemies (including Mahakala), betrayed his affiliation with the Hunters to the Prince of his domain. Eshlazi's subsequent "demotion" to Joh'an and sentencing to be Chained were quick and without mercy, in proper Z'bri fashion. As we know, Eshlazi escaped the Chaining ritual and fled to the Skyrealms to fashion a new power-base under his own rule.

Things went fairly smoothly for him for many decades, until word came that his ancient enemy had resurfaced. Eshlazi's role in the legends is often double edged. He is a Joh'an that has caused much harm to those he encounters, but his immediate task is to stop Mahakala. Therein lies the dilemma.

THE CAST

Mahakala, seen here in the past before his imprisonment in the ring he intended for Eshlazi, is a good example of the Melanis torturers very unlucky Player Characters might come into contact with. If you wish to make use of Mahakala at this time, use the statistics on page 54 with the Physical Attributes of a Melanis Iv'chet. Weavers embarking on a cycle who wish to make use of the cycle of legends in Chapter One, could even start matters before *An Act of Treason*. If the PCs meet Mahakala before his Chaining, they may later have a true insight into the evil they are facing.

A similar treatment would also be effective with Eshlazi, setting up a difficult choice at the climax of this legendary cycle. The cell may become aware of his presence at an early stage in your cycle and see him as a major enemy, only to resort to using his knowledge and capabilities as an ally to help them defeat a more dangerous enemy. The more heart-wrenching you can make this decision, the better.

QUEST HOOKS

There are many ways to use Eshlazi and his relationship with Mahakala. Eshlazi is a dark and brooding figure, cruel in his attentions, but who occasionally can be helpful. His help, however, always has a price. Some possibilities include:

Helping Hands: A stranger approaches the PCs and cryptically warns them that a great evil is rising in Vimary. It is actually Eshlazi, and he acts as a shadowy guide, helping the cell discover the danger that hangs over the land, a danger known as Mahakala. He will give them clues and advice to help them piece together Mahakala's plans and actions, allowing the cell to do all of the dirty work. Will they learn of the stranger's true nature and, if so, will they still help him destroy Mahakala?

Curse of the Joh'an: The cell enters Eshlazi's Skyrealms and attacks the Serf inhabitants. They confront the lord of the domain, Eshlazi, who kidnaps and Soul Steals one of the characters. He conducts a ritual that allows him to Soul Steal the afflicted PC at any time. He then lets the cell escape intact, allowing the nightmare to begin. Eshlazi possesses the character at inopportune times and makes them do perverse and vile acts, such as rape, assault and murder. The cell must save their companion from committing any more horrendous acts, before it's too late. The Weaver can tie in *The Shelter* (see p. 43) and have Mari-Anne help them with Vision Quests to overcome the evil Joh'an, and with rituals to strengthen the unity of the cell.

The Devil You Know: The trail of the Ring of Mahakala leads to Bazaar and the Festival of Closing. The cell knows that events are coming to a dangerous finish and must use any and all options open to them to stop the Fortress from appearing at its intended time. They seek the help of the one being that knows more of Mahakala and his evil plan than anyone else... Eshlazi.

THE FESTIVAL OF CLOSING

See pages 34 to 37 for the text of the legend.

Emulaan's final vision is a terrifying glimpse into his own future. The final confrontation between two ancient enemies takes place at this time. Mahakala has managed to control the effects of the Forgotten Fortress, and has arranged for it to show itself in Bazaar during the final night of the Festival of Closing. He has also taken over Mira Kil'on's body and is using her Circle (who have no knowledge of her possessed state) to secure the area once it shows itself.

The fate of Monika Kil'on is left undecided, to allow the Weaver leeway in controlling the events and dynamics of the Legend. Eshlazi is waiting Mahakala to show himself, and is hidden within the crowds of people at the Festival.

Knowing the Fortress is coming, Emulaan goes to the Festival armed with a Yagan Flesher poison given to him by Veruka. He hopes this poison will stop the possessed body long enough for him to remove the ring in order to destroy it. In his vision, Emulaan comes close to victory but ultimately fails. He requires the help of other brave Fallen if he is to triumph, and this is where the PCs come in...

THE CAST

Most of the major players have been introduced within the previous Legends, but many folk with smaller roles will be present at the Festival. The Weaver can detail and include as many personalities as she deems necessary to make the Festival come to life. Including regular characters and subplots from your own cycle will also enrich the day's events. Most of the Tribal and Fallen archetypes will appear in one form or another at the Festival.

THE FESTIVAL

Although much smaller and less grandiose than the Liberation Festival, the Festival of Closing is an important time in Vimary, and enjoyed by many of its inhabitants. The Festival is a ceremony showing respect to the Nomads and the ancestors from the Camps who gave their lives to close the Fold. Like most festivals, the Dahlians take care of the entertainment and perform several passion plays re-enacting the events that transpired so many generations ago.

The Festival is traditionally held in Bazaar during the early summer, making it easy for all members of the Nation to attend. The Festival lasts two days and vanishes as quickly as it arrived. The first day is basically a large feast. Massive tables within colorful tents hold a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and meats for all to enjoy. That night, the Yagan Guild of Mordreds, accompanied by the guidance and memories of the Old Ones, create massive visions of the Closing Ceremony. It is a sad and somber ritual, but the glimpses of the horrors of the past grants many participants renewed strength and zeal in their love for their Fatima. It is followed at midnight by a silent prayer for the sacrifices made by the Nomads.

The Dahlians, who are normally dancing and frolicking throughout the festival grounds, are strangely quiet during the hours of prayer. For once, Bazaar is quiet. The next day, the Dahlians renew the festive air of the proceedings and most are ready to indulge in the entertainment offered after the previous night's mass.

The Magdalites set up booths offering various services and the soft caresses of their embrace. The Yagans tell people of their fortunes, but mainly hold quiet vigils throughout the grounds. The Evans bring an abundance of food and compete with each other for favorite dishes and savory desserts.

The Joanites and Terashebands of the Watch keep a constant eye on the entire Festival, looking for signs of Fallen and Squat intruders who wish to instigate violence and seed dissent. The Agnites run and play within all of the structures created for the site, and help the Dahlians with much of the preparations and decorating. The Agnites especially enjoy the Festival of Closing because it represents a time before even the Fatimas existed, which makes the Youngest Sister feel more on par with Her venerable Siblings.

3. Weaver Resources

The second and final night of the Festival brings an elaborate passion play that lasts for four hours and involves all of the senses and many different Dahlian Caravans. The play itself is a proving ground for many new players and, during this time, Dahlia chooses which of Her children will have the starring roles for the Liberation Festival in the following Spring.

The Fatimas are not always present for the Festival of Closing, however, as the Festival glorifies a time before They existed. A Festival-goer may see a glimpse of one of the Sisters watching the passion play from a distance, with an inquisitive and curious look upon Her face.

THE FLESHER POISON

The Yagan Fleshers have many different sedatives, elixirs and potions that they use to further their dark arts. A less well known, but equally important, aspect of their work is the creation of poisons. There are varying degrees of toxins that they make and use, each one unique in form and function. This legend introduces a "no nonsense" poison that is intended for one purpose only — the death of the recipient. For poison rules see pp. 152-153 of the *Tribe 8 Rulebook*.

Potency:	12-15 (depending on the creator's ability)
Effects:	Fatal Toxin
Onset Time:	1 minute
Often Possessed By:	Yagan Fleshers, Assassins, Priests.

QUEST HOOKS

The Festival of Closing can serve as the venue of countless quests and encounters, both related and unrelated to the story of Mahakala. The Festival deals with the time before the Fatimas and hence is popular with the Fallen and even with some of the more mystically inclined Keepers. Possible events include:

Secret Encounters: The Festival of Closing has arrived and many Fallen in Hom are risking attendance. The cell must evade the local authorities and sneak their way into the Festival grounds. It will be a time where they meet up with old friends and family, forgetting all about the lonely lives they lead as the so-called Eighth Tribe.

Emulaan's Tale: Emulaan approaches the cell and tells them of the Forgotten Fortress and Mahakala's plot to plunge Vimary into a new Age of Camps. He needs their help to search for the insane Melanis, but doesn't know which celebrant is possessed by the fiend. The cell must risk being noticed by the Watch and confront Mahakala, all before a devastating winter storm descends on the Festival, the last warning that the Forgotten Fortress is not far away.

The Daughter's Tale: Monika Kil'on survived Mahakala's betrayal, and returns to Vimary before the others. She uses her influence to warn the Grand Council of the evil that has returned. Raising the alarm would create anarchy among the populace, however, and a Tribal Circle must be formed to deal with the situation. Tribal PCs could be chosen for the role, unaware of the exact magnitude of the unfolding events.



EMULAAAN THE POET

Emulaan was once a Terasheban Lorekeeper, and was enamored with the recording of history and law. Despite his best intentions, however, Emulaan soon became privy to some of the intrigues within the Wise Tribe. He learned of the Crucible and many other dealings that were, in his mind, morally questionable. He opposed certain judgments and found himself on the wrong end of an internal purge within the Tribe, which in turn led to his banishment.

Since that time, Emulaan has become an influential member of the Fallen. He takes his work very seriously and is willing to risk everything for his beliefs. He has a respected role as a Lightbringer, and strives to unite the Eighth Tribe by teaching them the mistakes made by people in the past. Emulaan knows that the Eighth Tribe is setting history for the generations to come, and is determined to make sure all is recorded in an accurate fashion. He is not a wallflower, however, and actively takes part in the destiny of the Fallen, as opposed to some who simply stand by and watch events unfold. He tirelessly involves himself in quests that delve into lost stories and forgotten artifacts, the Legends and the Ritual of Akasha being his most recent undertaking. He understands that he has a long and hard road ahead of him but is undaunted by the role he must play.

Outlook: Lightbringer (Fallen Terasheban)

Highlights: Determined, historian, respectful

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	-1	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	-1
INF	+1	KNO	+3	PER	0	PSY	+1	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	1	STA	30	UD	3	AD	4

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Craft (paper)	2	+1	Law	1	+3	Mythology	3	+3
Etiquette	3	+1	Leadership	2	+1	Ritual	2	+3
Human Per.	2	+1	Lore (T. Sheba)	1	+3	Sneak	1	0
Investigation	2	0	Melee	1	+0	Teaching	1	+1

SYNTHESIS

Synthesis Skill Rating:	2
Eminences:	Wisdom, Unity
Aspects:	Tradition

Equipment: Emulaan carries a staff (AD+7). He is also armed with the Flesher Poison in the Festival of Closing (see page 50).



MARI-ANNE MELINA

A loving and spiritual woman, Mari-Anne Melina seems to epitomize the caring nature of Evans, even among the Fallen. Those in her company have a difficult time feeling anger or pain, calmed by her powerful aura of peace. Somehow, she always has time for those who need her and never asks for anything in return for her services, although she never needs to... people just volunteer.

This friendly image is largely true, but results from a horrific experience in her youth. Mari-Anne was captured by Z'bri raiders as a young Nurse and subjected to vile tortures. The Melanis in charge of her agony was fascinated by her response to pain: a desire to heal her tormentor. The fiend manipulated the young tribal using rituals and tortures to warp her very heart, and finally inserted a part of himself into her. Since then, Mari-Anne's Eminence of Empathy has been stronger than ever, creating the loving, trusting atmosphere described above. The Melanis is there as well, however, having a secret bond with her; its Atmosphere leaches out and tricks Mari-Anne's friends to reveal their secrets to her. Eva recognized the evil within her and she exiled the young Nurse, but no Fallen knows of her corruption. Mari-Anne herself knows she is a corrupting force but cannot share this secret because of the fiend's power over her. Ironically, her guilt only drives her into more acts of caring, which further feed secrets to her tormentor.

Outlook: Lightbringer (Fallen Evan)

Highlights: Caring, devoted, hard-working

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	-1	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	0
INF	+1	KNO	+1	PER	+1	PSY	+2	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	3	AD	3

SKILLS

Skills	Level	Attr.	Skills	Level	Attr.	Skills	Level	Attr.
Cooking	3	+1	Human Per.	3	+2	Ritual	3	+1
Dreaming	2	+2	Lore (Meditat.)	1	+1	Teaching	2	+1
Healing	2	+1	Music (Sing)	2	+1			
Herbalism	2	+1	Notice	1	+1			

SYNTHESIS

Synthesis Skill Rating:	3
Eminences:	Empathy, Unity
Aspects:	Anima

Equipment/Notes: Miscellaneous herbs, a small scythe (AD +2). Her Empathy makes those around her friendly (roll WIL vs. 5 to avoid this behavior). Anyone in conversation with her will eventually reveal a secret unless she rolls PSY vs. Threshold of 6.



ESHLAZI YRTHRANIVAK

Many years ago, Eshlazi was a Sangis Count under the Baron's rule. He was also a secret ally of the Z'bri group known as the Hunters. His affiliation with the Hunters was brought to the attention of the Prince of his domain by Mahakala, and Eshlazi was sentenced to be Chained to a silver ring, a gift to Mahakala by the Prince for loyal service. The Chaining ritual was interrupted by Eshlazi with the clever use of Soul Stealing, which gave him the opportunity to escape from the Ziggurat.

As a Joh'an, Eshlazi was disturbed with the twisted state of his race, and saw the true power that the Fatimas held in Vimary. Eshlazi devised a plan. He was working towards finding a way to understand humans and mimic their behavior, in order to gain power and influence among them. The exiled Sangis's ultimate goal was to use the humans to allow himself to cross the Fold. They were lofty plans, but the one thing he had was time; that is, until he learned that his old enemy had resurfaced. Eshlazi began his preparations for the inevitable confrontation, creating a human form for himself. The body of a Magdalite proved to be the most alluring and resilient of Eshlazi's hosts. He gave himself over to Eshlazi in a ritual and lost his soul in the process. Eshlazi is now bonded in this body, which is slowly transforming to reflect its damnation, and could only transfer into another one with a lengthy ritual.

Faction: Joh'an (Sangis)

Highlights: Seductive, manipulative, enticing

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	+2	APP	+3	BLD	+1	CRE	+4	FIT	+1
INF	+2	KNO	+3	PER	+2	PSY	0	WIL	+3
STR	+1	HEA	+1	STA	35	UD	8	AD	7

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	+2	Human Percep.	1	0	Mythology	2	+3
Disguise	3	+4	Intimidate	3	+1	Notice	2	+2
Dodge	2	+2	Lore (H'I Kar)	3	+3	Sneak	2	+2
Grooming	2	+3	Lore (Hunters)	3	+3	Theatrics	1	+2
Hand-to-Hand	3	+2	Melee	2	+2	Throwing	2	+2

SUNDERING

Sundering Skill Rating:	3
Atmosphere:	Sangis
Aspects:	Appeasement, Soul Stealing, Exsanguination

Equipment/Notes: Eshlazi prefers to use his hands in killing: claws (UD+6), but does use modified throwing spikes (AD+5) or a modified Scimitar Sword (parry +1, AD+11).





MAHAKALA

As evil as they come, Mahakala is a dangerous and ruthless foe. Unfortunately, by the time his presence is noticed, he has disappeared into the form of a new victim. Mahakala was a Melanis Chainer in his glory days, a manipulator unlike any other. He never cared for the Baron and House Sangis, and has always longed for the return of the days when Tibor ruled. He wishes to use the power of the Forgotten Fortress to allow himself to impose his rule upon Vimary and all of the surrounding lands, including the Ziggurat. He would like nothing short of controlling humans and Z'bri alike, forming a new Age of Camps under his rule as Baron.

The years of being trapped in a ring has driven Mahakala quite insane. He cannot stop himself from incessantly giggling at anything he finds even remotely humorous and has a paranoia of losing the ring that traps him, afraid that it may slip from the finger of his host. He also has the habit of sneering at any Agnites that he runs across.

House: Melanis

Highlights: Driven, Vengeful, Murderous.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	*	APP	*	BLD	*	CRE	+1	FIT	*
INF	+4	KNO	+2	PER	+2	PSY	+4	WIL	+2
STR	*	HEA	*	STA	*	UD	*	AD	*

*Mahakala's physical attributes depend on the body possessed at that time.

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	1	+2	Intimidate	2	*	Lore (Z'bri)	4	+2
Dodge	2	*	Leadership	1	+4	Mythology	3	+2
Hand-to-Hand	2	*	Lore (H'I Kar)	4	+2	Sneak	2	*

* The modifying Attribute is based on the host vessel.

SUNDERING

Sundering Skill Rating:	2
Atmosphere:	Melanis
Aspects:	Animation, Chaining

Special Abilities (The Ring): ***Soul Stealing:*** Mahakala can Soul Steal whomever puts on the ring, as if it had that Sundering Aspect at a Skill level of 4/+4. The minimum Threshold is 5 rather than 6. ***Enchantment:*** Those who encounter the ring must pass a WIL roll vs. 6 to resist placing the ring on their finger. Those with the Eminence of Recognition get +2 to the resistance roll. Those with the Eminence of Capriciousness get a -1 to the resistance roll.

JARICK THE LOST

Some believe that upon their banishment, the laws and influence of the Nation no longer need to concern them, that they are beyond the clenching reach of the Tribes and all that they control. Jarick and his doomed quest are a sign that it is not always so. Jarick was a Yagan Flesher before his exile and a Doomsayer afterwards. Needless to say, he was a very silent and eerie individual. Jarick received visions of a grand and wondrous place within the Outlands, a place that held magic and wonder. He organized a cell to accompany him on a journey to discover what lay at the other end of his visions. He had no idea that the Dreams he witnessed were set in motion by Mahakala in the guise of a Terasheban Judge (see *A Dark Plan*, p. 16).

Jarick comes across as a very reserved and insightful man. He seems to look into a person's soul and judge them for what they are. When roleplaying Jarick, stress that when he speaks, others listen attentively to his words. He has a commanding and whispering voice that demands attention and respect.

Outlook: Doomsayer (Fallen Yagan)

Highlights: Serious, quiet, insightful

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	+1	APP	-1	BLD	+1	CRE	0	FIT	+2
INF	+1	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	+1	WIL	+3
STR	+1	HEA	+2	STA	40	UD	5	AD	7

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	1	+2	Intimidate	2	+1	Navigation	1	+0
Dreaming	2	+1	Lore (Outlands)	1	+0	Notice	2	+2
Dodge	1	+1	Melee	2	+1	Survival	1	+0

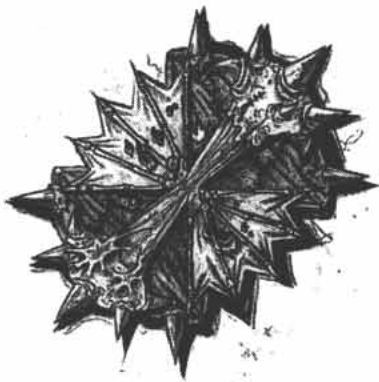
SYNTHESIS

Synthesis Skill Rating:	1
Eminences:	Fate, Mystery
Aspects:	none

Equipment: Long Sword (AD+11), leather armor (AR 5).



3. Weaver Resources



KOLERIS SPIRITS

Within the Forgotten Fortress (see p. 46), and actually a part of the structure itself, are innumerable Koleris spirits. There are likely to be some Melanis spirits as well and others can be included if the Weaver sees it fit. To escape the Fortress, each individual caught within must overcome a Koleris spirit. To do so, they must enter the River of Dream and seek out an adversary. Should the PC defeat the spirit, they will lapse into a deep sleep and awaken outside, wherever the Fortress manifested, although the Fortress itself will be nowhere to be seen. Losing to a Koleris Spirit traps the character's soul within the evil place and they must be rescued by others at a later time. This could be a Quest in itself, and Weavers are encouraged to use the Forgotten Fortress as a re-occurring blight to Vimary and the Outlands for sessions to come.

House: Koleris (spirit forms only)

Highlight: Savage, murderous

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	+2*	APP	-2	BLD	+4*	CRE	+2	FIT	0*
INF	+2	KNO	+1	PSY	0	PER	+3	WIL	+4
STR	+4	HEA	+2	STA	45	UD	11	AD	11

*Spirit form only.

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	3	+3	Intimidate	2	+4	Lore (Fortress)	4	+1
Dodge	2	+2	Lore (Z'bn)	1	+1	Mythology	1	+1
Hand-to-Hand	4	+2						

SUNDERING

Sundering Skill Level:	0
Atmosphere:	Koleris
Aspects:	none

MIRA (MIRABELLA KIL'ON)

Most Tribals believe that the Crusades ended many years ago; that the Z'bri are no longer the threat they once were. Little do the inhabitants of Vimary know that there are still a few Templars who carry on the old ways, that the Crusades are still very much a reality. Mira — once Mirabella Kil'on, a Templar Crusader of the highest order — and her Circle are an example of the lost souls who still take the fight to the enemy.

It was close to seventeen years ago when Mira accompanied Joan on her last Crusade. She had much to look forward to in life — a young daughter, a loving husband, the cheering of the Tribes upon her return, the glory of battle and the fight for what she held so dear. However, it was not to be. Mira and her Circle were in the midst of destroying a roving party of Chained Z'bri when Joan disappeared from the battle, lost in the dark folds of the land. The Circle regrouped after defeating the Gek'roh and returned to Vimary, where they realized they had been forsaken. The Crusades had been put to an end by the Old Guard and the Terashebans. Mira and her fellows, giving into despair, became the ultimate Hermit Blades, going out to fight the Z'bri wherever they saw them — even among outlying Tribal settlements.

Tribe: Joanite (Hermit Blade)

Highlights: Natural leader, stern, disciplined

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	+2
INF	+2	KNO	+1	PER	+2	PSY	-1	WIL	+2
STR	+1	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	5	AD	6

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Archery	1	+1	Intimidate	1	0	Melee	3	+1
Combat Sense	3	+2	Leadership	3	+2	Navigation	2	+1
Dodge	2	+1	Lore (Outlands)	3	+1	Notice	2	+2
Hand-to-Hand	2	+1	Lore (Squats)	2	+1	Riding	2	0
Sneak	1	+1	Survival	2	+1	Swimming	1	+2
Tactics	3	+1						

SYNTHESIS

Synthesis Skill Rating:	2
Eminences:	Fury, Devotion
Aspects:	Battle, Sacrifice

Equipment: Blade of Joan (ACC +1, Parry +1, AD+13); leather armor (AR 5).





MONIKA KIL'ON

An orphaned child in a hostile land called Vimary, Monika grew up under the harsh guidance of the Terasheban, although she herself was a Joanite. She barely knew her parents, Mirabella and Tulka Kil'on, the only real connection to them being her clan name. She was seven summers old the last time she saw her mother and father. She was told in her youth that her mother had died in a Crusade and that her father was killed by a Fallen traitor. Monika grew up hating the Fallen for this reason and made it her personal duty to use any and all means necessary in seeing to their demise. She was taken in by a harsh faction of the Terasheban known as the Crucible and was, at the young age of eighteen summers, given responsibility within the Watch.

Monika is not comfortable in her authority and she is quick to punish anyone that stands in her way. Those under her command fear her as much as those she passes judgment on. She is looked upon warmly by Cylix Seth'on and Nostra Guy'on alike, however, both of whom grant her freedom in carrying out her duties.

Tribe: Joanite (Watch)

Highlights: Cruel, hateful, disciplined

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	+2	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	-1	FIT	+1
INF	+1	KNO	0	PER	+1	PSY	-1	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	4	AD	6

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	+1	Intimidate	2	0	Riding	2	-1
Dodge	2	+2	Lore (Crucible)	1	0	Sneak	1	+2
Hand-to-Hand	1	+2	Melee	3	+2	Tactics	1	-1
Interrogation	2	+1	Notice	2	+1			

SYNTHESIS

Synthesis Skill Rating:	0
Eminences:	Fury, Devotion
Aspects:	none

Equipment: Long Sword (AD+11), chain armor (AR 10, Enc-1).

IVAN LUTHER'ON

Ivan, Mira's most trusted and loyal warrior, is a swordsman second to none. He was trained in his youth to obey his superiors and never falter in the face of the enemy. He took those words to heart and became a shining star among the Templars of Joan. He didn't have an eye for leadership, however, and is quite comfortable without the responsibility that comes with rank and status. He will never betray Mira and will protect and follow her to the death.

Ivan will always obey Mira's commands to the letter, making certain that no duty is left undone or forgotten. He will not speak unless it is necessary and should be close to Mira at all times... unless she has told him otherwise.

Tribe: Joanite (Hermit Blade)

Highlights: Loyal, quiet, trustworthy

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	+2	APP	-1	BLD	+2	CRE	-1	FIT	+1
INF	-1	KNO	0	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	+1
STR	+1	HEA	+1	STA	40	UD	8	AD	10

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Archery	2	+2	Lore (Outlands)	1	0	Notice	2	+1
Combat Sense	3	+1	Lore (Squats)	1	0	Riding	2	0
Dodge	2	+2	Melee	4	+2			
Hand-to-Hand	2	+2	Navigation	1	0			

SYNTHESIS

Synthesis Skill Rating:	1
Eminences:	Fury, Devotion
Aspects:	Sacrifice

Equipment: Long Sword (AD+11), leather armor (AR 5).





BRALINE UHAN'ON

Braline comes from a strong lineage of Templars and was shocked after Joan left their side. She was the last to admit to the events that transpired on the night of Joan's abandonment. She still believes that returning to Vimary and confronting the Grand Council would be the best option for regaining their status as members of the Nation. However, she would rather convince her companions to join her than abandon them in turn.

Mira and Braline butt heads on occasion, especially when it comes to attacking Tribal villages, but she hasn't found it within herself to act against her commander, and won't, unless she feels her soul is in danger. She has little care for the Squats who the Crusaders is forced to interact with, although she does tolerate them to a certain extent. Braline was the one who made the decision that no members of the Sisterhood were to be harmed in the raids upon Tribal settlements, thinking that if such a crime were to be committed, the Circle would surely be banished without any hopes of returning to the land they once called home.

Tribe: Joanite (Hermit Blade)

Highlights: Loyal, faithful, superstitious

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	0	APP	+1	BLD	-1	CRE	+2	FIT	+1
INF	+1	KNO	+2	PER	+1	PSY	+1	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	25	UD	4	AD	4

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Archery	2	0	Lore (Squats)	2	+2	Notice	3	+1
Combat Sense	2	+1	Lore (Tribes)	3	+2	Riding	3	+1
Dodge	2	0	Melee	2	0	Tactics	1	+2
Hand-to-Hand	2	0						

SYNTHESIS

Synthesis Skill Rating:	2
Eminences:	Fury, Devotion
Aspects:	Sacrifice

Equipment: Long Sword (AD+11), leather armor (AR 5), various Medallions of Joan (they provide +1 against fear and panic in combat, but they have desensitized her to the suffering she and her fellows are causing).

SEGAL THE "BOLD"

He likes to call himself Segal the Bold, but he is nothing more than a coward who hides behind the swords of Mira and her Crusaders. He rules his Squat band solely because Mira lets him. He cares little for helping his band achieve any great long term status or wealth. As long as Mira keeps supplying him with looted goods, food and enslaved women, he is content. His alliance with Mira also helps him to prevent the ever present Luther Boarhead from enforcing his rule upon the band.

Segal's band is structured around him, but most of the important decisions are made by Mira or Braline. The band was once ruled by Segal's father, Ruser the Big, and then his elder brother, Sogil the Stern. Both of the band's previous chiefs were killed by Mira for opposing her plans. Segal rules with a decadent and lax manner, never really stepping in on major decisions. Below him are three sub-chiefs who are more loyal to Mira than Segal.

There is a secret group within the band, however, that are fairly intelligent and have learned much from the Tribals in their midst. They call themselves the "Water Stones," and firmly believe that they are a part of the River of Dream, but haven't figured out how to perceive it. They are waiting for the day that the Crusaders return to Vimary and petition to be let back in. The Water Stones are hoping to be included in the Tribes at that time and come to understand all of the wonders of which they have been told.

Faction: Squat

Highlights: Repugnant, lazy, hedonistic

ATTRIBUTES

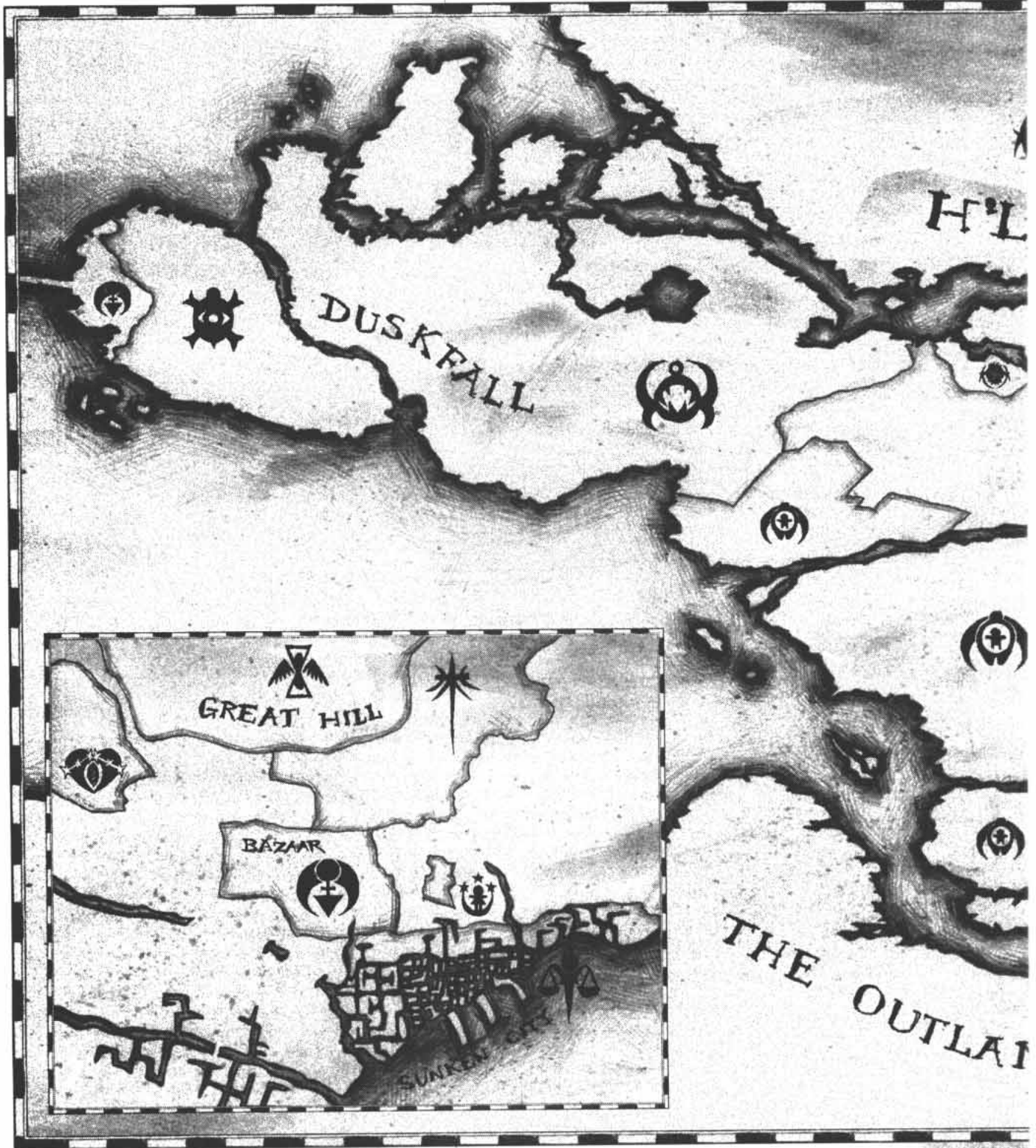
AGI	-1	APP	-3	BLD	-1	CRE	0	FIT	0
INF	+2	KNO	+2	PER	+1	PSY	-1	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	20	UD	2	AD	4

SKILLS

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Animal Handling	1	-1	Leadership	1	+2	Speak*	2	+2
Interrogation	2	0	Melee	2	-1	Survival (Outlands)	2	0
Law (Squats)	2	+2	Seduction	1	-3	*(Squat Dialect)		

Equipment: pick ax (Acc -1, AD+14), leather armor (AR 5).







TRIBE 8

NEW YEAR'S TRIBE

Tribe 8 enters its second year with a bang in *Children of Lillith*, but there's lots more stuff out now or on the horizon. Tribe 8 continues to be one of the most exciting game lines in the industry. Don't miss out!

TRIBE 8 PRODUCTS

Weaver's Screen and Assistant

DP9-802; 48 pages + 2-panel screen; \$18.95; AVAILABLE NOW

The Weaver's Assistant includes detailed advice on creating and running a cycle, a fully detailed quest to start things off, outlines of several subsequent quests (forming a four part mini-cycle), statistics for useful Non-Player Characters and several game aids. The Weaver's Assistant also comes packaged with the Tribe 8 Weaver's Screen, a full-color three-fold screen featuring gorgeous artwork on one side and all the useful game tables on the other.

Vimary Sourcebook

DP9-803; 144 pages; \$22.95; AVAILABLE NOW

The Vimary Sourcebook is the core supplement for the entire Tribe 8 game line. It details the full scope of the game's base setting, and provides countless ideas and resources for quests and cycles. It provides full coverage of history, prominent characters and areas, including tribal lands, Hon, the mysterious Rust Wastes and the dreaded H'l Kar, home of the Z'bri (with over a dozen evocative maps).

Tribe 8 Companion

DP9-805; 112 pages; \$19.95; AVAILABLE NOW

• The Tribe 8 Companion (DP9-805): The perfect complement to the T8 Rulebook. The Companion includes source material on Keepers, Joshua, Mary and Tribal Quest Circles, along with advanced rules, magical artifacts and a complete scenario.

Tribe 8 Jewelry

Georgia Panaritis, the premier creator of RPG-related fine jewelry, has produced a first series of pendants and brooches related to Tribe 8 (Tera Sheba, Joan, the Fallen, the Seven Tribes). Check out her web site at <http://www.cam.org/~java/TheCrypt/>, or the DP9 on-line catalog at <http://www.dp9.com/>.



UPCOMING PRODUCTS

• Word of the Pillars (DP9-808): Learn the secrets and the ways of Tera Sheba the Wise and Joan the Warrior in the first of the Tribe 8 Wordbooks. This product will include the complete history of the two Fatimas and their people, background on the most important tribe members, and special rules for each tribe.

• Horrors of the Z'bri (DP9-806): Open up the gates of H'l Kar and learn the secrets of the twisted Z'bri. The Baron — supreme in his decadence — rules over a court of twisted Counts, but other Beast have their own plans. The Flenis collective grows, while the Chained become legion in the wilderness. Just what terrifies the monsters themselves?

On-Line Support

Still can't get enough T8? Check out the Dream Pod 9 Funhouse at <http://www.dp9.com/funhouse/> for scenarios, legends and other articles relating to T8.

For more information on Tribe 8, visit Dream Pod 9's web site at www.dp9.com.