



Arduin Grimoire **III**

Stock Number 82-017

ISBN 0-940918-45-5

In Memoriam
David A. Hargrave

died — August 29, 1988

**Let life triumph whenever and whenever it can
but shirk not death in a good cause and in good company.**

David A. Hargrave died — in his sleep — August 29, 1988 after suffering for many years from a heart disability with diabetic complications. He is survived by his wife, Brigitt, and by a multitude of friends and fans throughout the world.

He will not be forgotten because, somewhere beyond the Ebon Gates atop the Plateau of Forever, somewhere in that oldest and grandest of legendary worlds, somewhere in Arduin, we know that David Crossworlder still resides, walking the streets of Talismondè, sailing the Misty Sea or scaling the heights of the Mickleback Mountains.

And so, until we meet again, Dave, we hoist a mug of Fairy Mead and drink to the memory of friendship and adventures shared.

Ben Ezzell — Dragon Tree Press

The Winds Of Chance



By *David A. Hargrave*

Arduin Grimoire Volume VIII

First Edition — October 1988

Special Preface (DAVE'S SOAPBOX)

This book, like all other "Arduin" books (past, present and future) is solely a work of fiction and fantasy. As such it contains a wide range of creatures and characters that have been specifically conjured up and created for the enjoyment and edification of those who choose to read my work.

Occasionally a very few people will take offense at what I have written, usually for some obscure and/or wrong reason. That goes with the territory as they say, and I make no apologies.

What I write is **entirely fiction** and is **never** meant to refer to any specific person, living or deceased **without said person's express permission** (either verbally or in writing).

A fantasy "world" such as Arduin is, by its very existence, the natural abode of a myriad of creatures and beings which are **entirely** the "children" of my own imagination and dreams. To take offense at such **fictional fantasy writing** is not only **wrong** and **unwarranted** but **entirely stupid**.

If unlimited and unfettered fantasy may upset or anger you (for any reason whatsoever) — then, by all means(!), exercise your own right **NOT TO READ THE MATERIAL** in question. Whether it is authored by myself or anyone else, fantasy and fiction is meant for pure enjoyment and fun, and is **never** intended to cause controversy (thought that **does** inadvertently happen from time to time).

My work is offered in the hopes that **most of you** will enjoy its wild flights of fancy and imagination. With that in mind I invite those of you who enjoy such work to read on, and remind those contentious few who don't, to **pass this book by**. Whatever you choose to do, it's your choice and your choice alone.

DEDICATION

This, the eighth volume in the chronicles of Arduin, is sincerely dedicated to the new lady in my life, Brigitt. May we both find the happiness we are looking for. Together.

And, as always, to Ben and Mary of Dragon Tree Press and to James Mathis of Grimoire Games go my respect and thanks. For all those years, folks, you hung in there with me and made it possible to bring Arduin's never-ending story to those who wanted and needed it. Thanks again.

Special thanks to my shield brother Mike Nelson. Just for "being there" when needed.

Lastly, it would be no dedication at all unless I wished the fans of the Arduin Legion a fond and heartfelt "THANK YOU!" Without your continued support for more than 12 years none of this would have been possible at all. Thanks my friends.

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SPECIAL NOTES

Whenever we say "he" or "him", we are simply using the proper English language. Of course we also mean and imply "she" and "her" as well. Arduin is now and always has been without regard to race, creed, color, or gender. It is a timeless message of love and brotherhood meant for everyone of any age and culture. That's what Arduin is really all about; the equality of every sapient entity, no matter where in the Multiverse its origins may be.

Some Arduin Abbreviations and Their Meanings

- RS: indicates a *Royal Sovereign*; a large, 5 oz gold coin.
 GS: indicates a *Gold Sovereign*; the standard 1 oz gold coin.
 GC: indicates a *Gold Crown*; a one-half oz gold coin.
 GHC: is a one-quarter oz gold coin called, appropriately enough, a *Gold Half Crown*.
 SP: indicates the *Silver Penny*; the standard Arduinian 1 oz silver coin.
 SHP: is, obviously, the *Silver Half Penny* or *H'apenny*.
 QSP: is the one-quarter oz *Quarter Silver Penny* or, more simply, *Quarter*.
 SB: indicates a wedge-shaped sliver of silver of one-eighth oz weight, called the *Silver Bit*.
 CP: indicates the standard Arduinian 1 oz copper coin called a *Copper Penny* or *Copper*.
 HCP: is, of course, the one-half oz copper coin called a *Half Copper* or *H'ecopper*.
 CB: is the wedge-shaped one-eighth oz copper sliver called a *Copper Bit* or *Bitty*.

Note that as a general standard, one ounce of gold is equal in value to twenty (20) ounces of silver. And one ounce of silver is equal in value to twenty (20) ounces of copper.

As a final note, remember that most common folk in Arduin tend to own and use the copper coins or silver "quarters" and "bits" a lot more than any gold piece. Gold is usually the domain of the lords, ladies, and rich merchants of the land.

Other Arduinian Abbreviations You Might Find Handy

- AC: "Armour Class" (ie type of armour protection) of a target.
 AF: "Attack Factor" or ability of something to attack something else.
 AGIL: "Agility" of the item, person, etc in question.
 BF: "Battle Factor", the new system which has supplanted the old style attack system (see AF above).
 CF: "Coordination Factor" of the object, person, etc. This is the average of the AGILity and DEXterity scores.
 CHAR: An object or being's "CHARisma" or how "seemly" or "comely" they/it are.
 CON: "CONstitution" or physical ruggedness of an object or being.
 DEX: "DEXterity" (see CF above).
 DF: "Defense Factor" -- like AF (above) has been supplanted by the new Battle Factor System.
 EL: Character's "Experience Level" or, more simply put, how advanced in knowledge they may be in their chosen job or profession. The higher the EL, the more experienced they are.
 FRP: "Fantasy Role Playing" (just like these rules!) A variant is FRPG or Fantasy Role Playing GAME.
 GM: "Game Master", the person who is telling the story and adjudicating all of the game rules for the players. And, YES, a GM can also be a player at the same time.
 HP: The maximum number of "Hit Points" or amount of damage a person or object can sustain before it ceases to function/live.
 INT: The raw "INtelligence" of any being (or computer). As a general rule, figure that each INT point is roughly equivalent to about nine (9) points in an "IQ" score.
 MRS: "Magikal Resistance Save" or the percentage chance anyone or anything has of resisting (to greater or lesser degree) any and all sorts of magik directed at it.
 OP: "Order of Power" of any magik in question. This is not specifically how powerful the magik in question is; no, it's more like how difficult it is to perform and how much "mana" is used to make it work. The greater the OP, the harder it is to do, etc.
 RCH: Any "Random Critical Hit" derived from any of the appropriate charts for same.
 RF: "Reasoning Factor" of any sapient being or machine, it is actually the average of the INtelligence and WISdom scores.
 STR: "STRength" of any character or other item.
 WIS: "WISdom" of any sapient entity, alive or not. Wisdom is not how smart you are (which is what INT is) but is more like "How much do you know". See the difference?

Also, from time to time, there will be words and names drawn straight from the Arduinian language. Where it is necessary to the reader's full understanding of the term in question, I will also give an English equivalent. Where it's not, I won't.

One final word here; the Arduinian language is somewhat similar to our world's French language. 17th century French, that is. However, as this similarity is really not all that close, please don't expect to find everything as you would in a French language text. Obviously, you won't.

THE PLATEAU OF FOREVER

One generally enters Arduin proper through the so-called "Great Gates" located atop the mile-high butte called "The Plateau of Forever". This huge monolithic block of granite is the primary geographical feature in North East Arduin, and can be seen for more than forty miles in any direction.

The "Gates" proper are a series of thirteen basalt menhirs, each three hundred feet high. They are arranged in a circle with a fifty-five foot space between each of the stones. Said stones, by the way, are fifty feet wide and thirty-three feet thick and capped by over-lapping lintel stones themselves thirty feet wide, seven feet thick and eight feet long (thus overlapping twelve and a half feet upon each of the two upright menhirs that each capstone rests on).

All of this sits atop a sort of miniature "step pyramid" formed by one hundred 13" high steps of more black basaltic rock. The entire "rise" of these steps being some one hundred and eight feet and 1/3 inch or so. All in all from its base to the top of the capstones it rises about four hundred and fifteen feet!

The actual trans-dimensional and temporal gates are the thirteen spaces between the menhirs, with arrivals seemingly stepping (or otherwise) out of thin air between them, facing towards the steps.

This gargantuan construction sits in a clearing approximately 7/10 of a mile long by a little over 1/2 mile across. The surrounding trees are massive Sequoias that stand anywhere from 500' to 700' high! Their ruddy red boles are as thick as 60', though the average tends to be around 50' or so.

Spotted seemingly at random about the edges of the clearing are groups of gaily-colored tents and pavilions of all manner of type and kind. They range in size from that of a small "pup tent" to a couple capable of housing a complete three ring circus under their canvas.

More seem to be clustered at the eastern and western ends than elsewhere however, and there also is where the majority of the plateau's guards, bureaucrats and incoming and outgoing travellers seem to be. Here also, at the western end, is the large pavilion flying the pennon of the Arduinian "Warden Of The Marches".

It is this office that will greet all incoming beings, charge them their entry tax of one (1) ounce of silver (or its equivalent) per each intelligent being and ten (10) ounces of copper (or equivalent) for each non-intelligent creature. This fee gets the entrants a fired-clay tablet listing their name, place of origin, entry date, reason for visit and the name and seal of the official approving their entry. Sort of a "Visa" or "Passport". Outsiders who lose this important "document" and don't report it right away can get into plenty of trouble.

However, everyone actually born within the geographical confines of Arduin is "Mystikally Marked" within three days of their birth. This invisible mark can nonetheless be magically perceived by certain devices employed by the Warden Of The Marches. Thus real Arduinians never have to pay the entry tax, and fakers claiming such exemption are soon caught!

Please note that whenever beings step through the Great Gates they are *always* met by a contingent of guards. Said contingent can be of any race or military type but will *always* be equal in numbers to 250% of the number of the entrants.

The guards have the duty of defending the gates from invaders, wild beasts and diverse "monsters" up to no good. they also escort all new arrivals to the pavilion of the Warden.

People leaving Arduin via these gates are also checked to ascertain that they are not wanted criminals fleeing their lawful retribution. Few real criminals ever manage to fool the Warden and his guards.

Once all the official stuff is concluded the new entrants are pointed towards the western end of the clearing to a "highway" wide path of smooth, beaten earth. This roadway, though never paved, has seen the tramp of so many feet for so many years that for its entire sixteen mile length it is as hard as any stone road.

At its western terminus lies the edge of the high butte, and *the only way down* (or up) unless one has wings! Here are the ancient but well-maintained lifts that ply the western face of the mile-high rock.

The current owner and operator of this mechanical marvel is one "Washanogg Thundervoice", an old and grizzled Throon (see the Monster List) of truly heroic proportions! Standing nearly ten feet tall, this bright blue four-armed being is just the thing to keep the four colossal Emerald Oliphanuts (again see the Monster List) working at the bronze "turnstiles" that power the whole contraption.

Each lift (and there are two of them) is a wooden platform 40' long by 20' wide. It has a 3' high wooden "picket fence" railing all round, and can sustain loads of up to twelve tons safely. Or so Washanogg insists!

One goes down whilst the other comes up simultaneously at an incredibly slow rate. The trip, either direction, requires about forty-five minutes and is accompanied by a swaying motion much akin to a ship in a high sea. Many an unprepared rider has gotten "sea sick" using these lifts, so never stand *under* one in motion!

As it is the only game in town so to speak, the operator can charge pretty much what he wants (and what he can get away with). So the current rate is one (1) ounce of gold (or equivalent) per man, beast or baggage to ride his device!

However once at the bottom, the small hamlet called Watchtown is but about a mile to the west, along the beautiful Heaven Thunder River banks. Of course you first have to get through the massed hovels of Lowtown which is infested with hordes of beggars of all ilks. then you have to cross the bridge spanning the half-mile wide river and get through the town's gates before the "Last Bell" when they are closed for the night. All this you must first do, but then again that is a story for another time.

Welcome home, Traveller! Arduin awaits!

Optional Character (Racial) Bonuses

This section will allow the GM (and player) to add even more individuality and “differences” in campaign play. Please note that these “adds” are **in addition** to all other such previously listed in any of my works. “Through diversity to playability” is a motto of mine.

Due to the sheer size of this section, abbreviations are used in nearly every case. But don't be discouraged as it only takes a little common sense to properly "read" the listings. For example, TRACK indicates a character's skill in "tracking/following" spoor and/or other such trail indicators; EVADE is, of course, Escape and Evasion; HIDE is the ability to keep from being found (i.e. "hiding out") whether "in the bush" or in the alleys and streets of some city. You get the idea here. All it takes is a bit of care and common sense.

As a further note, please remember that each of the bonuses apply **ONLY TO THE PARTICULAR RACE AS LISTED** and to no others! And **ONLY WHEN SAID RACIAL TYPE IS PRACTICING THE SKILL OR PROFESSION AS INDICATED**. Got it? Good!

As a closing note, I will strongly recommend that all GMs exercise caution and discretion when allowing these “adds” to be used by their players. The listed character modifiers can and should be “whittled to fit” each individual character’s history and background and are not meant to be the “be all and end all” of such tinkering. And, if you see that your favorite character class or race is omitted, well, make up your own lists using what I have given you as a general outline.

Remember! Diversity of character means more fun in play! The world ain't made up of clones that all look and act alike, you know!

	Other Skill Bonuses by Racial Type and Skill Categories					
	Thief	Assassin	Forester	Martial Artist		
Racial Stock	+5% CON	N/A	+3% track	N/A		
Amazon	+7% climb	+5% climb	+20% track	+10% breaking		
Barbarian (Blue)	+30% climb	+45% missiles*	+25% track	+1 skill		
Deodanthi	+5% climb	+20% lockpick	+7% evade	+5% pain control		
Dwarf, City	+10% climb	+33% deactivate	+3% track	+10% pain control		
Dwarf, Mountain	+12% burglary	+13 knives*	N/A	+1 skill		
Elf, City	+5% lockpick	+7% missiles*	+5% track			
Elf, Half	+15% appraisal	+7% knives*	+18% track	N/A		
Elf, Elf, High	+5% evade	+20% poison	N/A	N/A		
Elf, Sea	+15% hide	+5% missiles*	+25% track	N/A		
Elf, Woods	+9% pickpocket	+15% poison	+7% track	N/A		
Goblin	+13% deactivate	N/A	13% evade	N/A		
Hobbit	N/A	+15% disguise	N/A	N/A		
Human	+25% pickpocket	+15% knives*	N/A	+2 skills		
Khai-Shang	+25% burglary	N/A	N/A	+2 skills		
Khai-Zirin	+15% lockpick	+33% poison	+10% track	+20% evade		
Kobbit	+5% burglary	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Kobold	N/A	N/A	+13% track	N/A		
Orc, Low	N/A	N/A	+12% track	N/A		
Pandah-Hha	+33% deactivate	+20% missiles*	N/A	N/A		
Phraint	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Saurig, Desert	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Saurig, Swamp	N/A	+20% poison	N/A	+15% breaking		
Urik Hai	N/A	+30% track	N/A	+10% breaking		
Woolfing	+20% sleight of hand	*all attacks	+10% track	+10 pain control		

Other Skill Bonuses by Racial Type and Skill Categories			
Racial Stock	Beast Master	Alchemist	Highwayman
Amazon	N/A	N/A	+5% disguise
Barbarian (Blue)	+5% control	N/A	+30% evade
Deodanth	N/A	N/A	+33% evade
Dwarf, City	N/A	+15% potency*	+5% evade
Dwarf, Mountain	N/A	+5% potency*	+10% evade
Elf, City	N/A	N/A	+15% disguise
Elf, Half	+3% control	+N/A	+5% track
Elf, High	+3% control	N/A	+13% track
Elf, Sea	+2 animals	N/A	N/A
Elf, Woods	+1 animal	+30% poison	N/A
Goblin	N/A	N/A	+30% evade
Hobbit	N/A	N/A	+15% evade
Human	N/A	N/A	N/A
Khai-Shang	N/A	N/A	+20% disguise
Khai-Zirin	N/A	N/A	+20% hide
Kobbit	N/A	N/A	+25% evade
Kobold	+7% control	N/A	+15% evade
Orc, Low	N/A	+10% poison	N/A
Pandah-Hha	N/A	+7% potency*	+5% evade
Phraint	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saurig, Desert	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saurig, Swamp	N/A	N/A	N/A
Urik Hai	N/A	+25% potency*	N/A
Wolfling	N/A	N/A	+10% track
			+30% track

*all works

Witch Hunter
+5 EGO
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
+3 EGO
+4 EGO
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
+8 EGO
+5% prayer
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A

Other Skill Bonuses by Racial Type and Skill Categories			
Racial Stock	Priest	Paladin	Beggar
Amazon	N/A	+4 EGO	N/A
Barbarian (Blue)	+10% potions*	N/A	N/A
Deodanth	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dwarf, City	+5% prayer	N/A	N/A
Dwarf, Mountain	+5% bless	+5% heal	N/A
Elf, City	N/A	+5% prayer	+25% earnings
Elf, Half	+10% healing	+10% prayer	+15% earnings
Elf, High	+5% prayer	+10% heal	N/A
Elf, Sea	N/A	N/A	N/A
Elf, Woods	+5% healing	N/A	N/A
Goblin	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hobbit	+20% healing	N/A	+10 earnings
Human	N/A	N/A	+10% earnings
Khai-Shang	N/A	N/A	N/A
Khai-Zirin	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kobbit	+5% bless	+5% prayer	+75% earnings
Kobold	+8% cure	+3% heal	+10% potions
Orc, Low	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pandah-Hha	+7% prayer	+5 BF	N/A
Phraint	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saurig, Desert	+15% potions*	+5 BF	N/A
Saurig, Swamp	+13% potions*	+4 BF	N/A
Urik Hai	+15% prayer	+6 EGO	N/A
Wolfling	+10% cure	N/A	N/A

* potency

Courtesan
+10% earnings
+5% earnings
+25% earnings
N/A
N/A
+5% earnings
+5% potions
+30% earnings
+45% earnings
+10% earnings
N/A
+5% earnings
N/A
N/A
+75% earnings
+10% potions
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A

Racial Stock	Trader	Other Skill Bonuses by Racial Type and Skill Categories	Adventurer	Gladiator	Warrior
Amazon	+15% earnings		+2 END	+1 to BF	N/A
Barbarian (Blue)	N/A		N/A	+2 BF	+4 BF
Deodanth	N/A		+30% track	+7 BF	N/A
Dwarf, City	+10% deal		N/A	N/A	N/A
Dwarf, Mountain	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A
Elf, City	N/A		+15% evade	+3 AGIL	N/A
Elf, Half	N/A		+3 END	+1 DEX	N/A
Elf, High	N/A		+5% track	+2 AGIL	N/A
Elf, Sea	N/A		N/A	+5 BF	N/A
Elf, Woods	N/A		+5% evade	+20% missiles	N/A
Goblin	N/A		+15% evade	+5% missiles	+10% attack
Hobbit	+5% earnings		+4 END	+10% missiles	N/A
Human	N/A		+10% track	+4 BF	N/A
Khai-Shang	N/A		+2 END	+2 BF	N/A
Khai-Zirin	N/A		+20% track	+5 BF	N/A
Kobbit	+2 END		+30% evade	+20% missiles	N/A
Kobold	N/A		+10% evade	+10% missiles	N/A
Orc, Low	N/A		+3 END	+1 BF	N/A
Pandah-Hha	+10% earnings		+15% track	+2 BF	N/A
Phraint	N/A		N/A	+3 BF	N/A
Saurig, Desert	N/A		N/A	+6 BF	N/A
Saurig, Swamp	N/A		N/A	+3 BF	N/A
Urik Hai	N/A		N/A	+2 BF	N/A
Wolfing	N/A		+30% track	+5 BF	N/A

These charts are usable in the "legacy generation" of new characters being rolled up. However, it is used instead of the charts preceeding. This is used to show the different cultural backgrounds of races other than human. Roll percentile dice to see which listed skill/ability it will be.

Optional Skills For Amazons

Die Roll	Skills
01-02	Sailmaker (01-20%), Ropemaker (21-45%), Ship's Carpenter (46-60%), Sailor (61-100%).
03-04	Ship's Cook (01-25%), Shipwright (26-35%), Fisherman (36-75%), Net-maker (76-100%)
05-06	Javelin maker (01-25%), Swordsmith (26-50%), Armourer (51-75%), Bowyer/Fletcher (75-100%)
07-08	Seamstress/Tailor (01-35%), Tanner (36-45%), Leather Worker (46-70%), Shoemaker (71-100%)
09-10	Weaver (01-20%), Dyer (21-40%), Lantern Maker (41-50%), Candlemaker (51-70%), Sailor (71-100%)
11-12	Houndmaster (01-30%), Falconer (31-50%), Sheep/goat Herder (51-80%), Farmer (81-100%)
13-14	Cattleman (01-25%), Horse Rancher (26-35%), Lumberjack (36-50%), Glassblower (51-100%)
15-16	Coppersmith (01-30%), Blacksmith (31-50%), Cooper (51-70%), Brewer (71-100%)
17-18	Sailor (01-40%), Pearldiver (41-45%), Channel Pilot (46-55%), 3rd Officer (66-100%)
19	2nd Officer (01-40%), 1st Officer (41-60%), Ship's Captain (61-65%), Corsair (66-100%)*
20	Corsair (01-30%)*, Ship OWNER (31-35%)**, Shipwright (36-100%)

* A Corsair is a seagoing Highwayman

** A ship owner is not necessarily a sailor. It just means that they've inherited a vessel. See chart following for further elaboration.

Die Roll	Ship / Boat owned	Notes
1	8'-15' rowboat (dory)	A "working" boat
2	15'-22' open sailboat (pleasure)	not designed for open sea
3	18'-29' closed sailboat (pleasure)	designed for calm, inshore travel
4	30'-40' sailing ship (non-commercial)	designed for world travel
5	21'-32' (sail) fishing boat	tough working vessel
6	41'-60' commercial sailing ship	a world trade ship
7	Bireme "corsair" ship	GM adjudicated as to size, crew
8	Trireme "corsair" ship	(if any) and other such details
9	61'-90' commercial sailing vessel	as per #6 but bigger
10	other, GM adjudicated vessel	

Roll to see condition of the vessel: 1-3 "average"; 4-5 "excellent"; 6 "poor". Unless otherwise noted, all commercial vessels have a 65% chance of having a full crew.

Optional Skills for Dwarves

Die Roll	Skills
01-02	Armourer (01-35%), Weapons Maker (36-60%), Blacksmith (61-90%), Mortician (91-100%)
03-04	Miner (01-45%), Lantern Maker (46-70%), Candlemaker (71-90%), Glass Blower (91-100%)
05-06	Stone Mason (01-45%), Bricklayer (46-60%), Brickmaker (61-85%), Carpenter (86-100%)
07-08	Gemcutter (01-35%), Jeweler (36-55%), Silversmith (56-90%), Goldsmith (91-100%)
09-10	Mushroom Farmer (01-45%), Well Driller (46-60%), Drill Maker (61-90%), Dyer (91-100%)
11-12	Rope Maker (01-15%), Chain Maker (16-35%), Leather Worker (36-60%), Bootmaker (61-100%)
13-14	Quarry Worker (01-40%), Foundry (iron) Worker (41-80%), Hound Master (81-100%)
15-16	Fertilizer (guano) Gatherer (01-45%), Apprentice (only!) Herbalist (46-60%), Matchmaker (61-100%)
17-18	Archeologist (01-15%), Printer (16-30%), Bookbinder (31-50%), Papermaker (51-100%)
19	Arachnid "Rancher" (01-10%), Spider Silk "Processor" (11-25%), Apprentice (only!) Alchemist (51-100%)
20	Apprentice (only!) Smith-Mage (01-15%), Apprentice (only!) Techno (16-100%)

Optional Skills for Hobbits

Die Roll	Skills
01-02	Confectioner (01-10%), Baker (11-30%), Cook (31-90%), Chef (91-100%)
03-04	Jelly/Jam Maker (01-15%), Farmer (16-90%), Sheep Herder (91-98%), Beekeeper (99-100%)
05-06	(Beet) Sugar Distiller (01-20%), Truffle / Mushroom Farmer (21-60%), Carpenter (61-100%)
07-08	Fisherman (01-35%), Cattle Rancher (36-45%), Poultry Rancher (46-75%), Potter (76-100%)
09-10	Leather Worker (01-15%), Shoe / Sandal Maker (16-20%), Fish "Rancher" (21-50%), Beekeeper (51-100%)
11-12	Well Digger (01-10%), Baker (11-30%), Cook (31-75%), Farmer (76-90%), Lumberjack (91-100%)
13-14	Brickmaker (01-05%), Bricklayer (06-15%), Tobacconist (16-45%), Brewer (46-100%)
15-16	Tobacco Grower (01-40%), Pipe Maker (41-60%), Tile (ceramic) Maker (61-85%), Cook (86-100%)
17-18	Vintner (01-15%), Glass Blower (bottles) (16-30%), Orchard Tender (31-75%), Baker (76-100%)
19	Jeweler (01-10%), Candlemaker (11-25%), Parasol Maker (26-35%), Cook (36-65%), Vintner (66-100%)
20	Linguist (extra 6-10 languages) (01-20%), Book Binder (21-30%), Paper Maker (31-45%), Ink Maker (46-50%), Paint Maker (51-60%), Dyer (61-65%), Weaver (66-75%), Confectioner (76-85%), Jelly / Jam Maker (86-95%), Blacksmith (96-100%)

Optional Skills for Elves

Die Roll	Skills
01	Boyer (01-40%), Fletcher (41-70%), Armourer (71-90%), Weapons Smith (91-100%)
02	Orchard Tender (01-45%), Apprentice (only!) Herbalist (46-85%), Candle Maker (86-100%)
03	Tree Farmer (01-60%), Beekeeper (61-90%), Musical Instrument (choose type) Maker (91-100%)
04	Fisherman (01-05%), Animal Herder (06-10%), Poultry Tender (11-15%), Apprentice (only!) Forester (16-100%)
05	Singer (01-35%), Musician (choose instrument) (36-90%), Vintner (91-98%), Brewer, Ale (99-100%)
06	Dancer (01-15%), Weaver (16-35%), Leather Worker (36-60%), Boot / Shoe Maker (61-100%)
07	Seamstress/Tailor (01-20%), Dyer (21-35%), Carpenter (36-55%), Metalsmith (56-100%)
08	Goldsmith (01-15%), Silversmith (16-35%), Jeweler (36-50%), Basket Weaver, etc (51-100%)
09	Rope Maker (01-15%), Horticulturist (flowers only) (16-45%), Perfume Distiller (46-100%)
10	Chimes / Bell Maker (20%), Canoe Builder (21-35%), Sugar (cane) "maker" (36-100%)
11	Cosmetics "maker" (01-05%), Bowyer (06-15%), Fletcher (15-25%), Swordsmith (26-100%)
12	Singer (01-10%), Beekeeper (11-25%), Spear Maker (26-45%), Tree Farmer (46-100%)
13	Scribe (01-30%), Silversmith (31-50%), Flute Maker (51-65%), Vintner (66-100%)
14	Brewer, Ale or Beer (01-25%), Saddler (25-50%), Gem Cutter (51-55%), Weaver (56-100%)
15	Threadmaker (01-05%), Papyrus Maker (06-15%), Book Binder (15-26%), Glass Maker (27-100%)
16	Lens Grinder (01-10%), Silversmith (11-20%), Arrowhead (only!) Maker (21-100%)
17	Beekeeper (01-15%), Scribe (16-25%), Ink Maker (26-35%), Apprentice (only!) Forester (36-100%)
18	Musicbox Maker (01-105%), Apprentice (only!) Smith-Mage (11-35%), Carpenter (36-100%)
19	General Farmer (01-20%), Leather Worker (21-45%), Musical Instrument (choose) Maker (46-100%)
20	Commercial Hunting Guide (01-25%), Apprentice (only!) Forester (26-90%), Smith-Mage (91-100%)

Optional Skills for Orc-kind

Die Roll	Skills
01-02	Blacksmith (01-25%), Armourer (26-35%), Weaponsmith (36-50%), Animal (choice) Herder (51-100%)
03-04	Brewer (01-20%), Farmer (21-40%), Adobe Brick Maker (41-50%), Basket Weaver, etc (51-100%)
05-06	Leather Worker (01-25%), Potter (26-35%), Weaver (36-50%), Boot Maker (51-65%), Candle Maker (66-100%)
07-08	Fisherman (01-20%), Cook (21-30%), Net Maker (31-35%), Axe-head (only!) Maker (36-100%)
09-10	Gravel Quarry Worker (01-25%), Stone Mason (26-30%), Apprentice (only!) Alchemist (31-100%)
11-12	Apprentice (only!) Medicine Man (01-15%), Smelter / Foundry Worker (16-50%), Farmer (51-100%)
13-14	Miner (01-30%), Mortician (31-50%), Embalmer (only!) (51-75%), Tailor / Seamstress (76-100%)
15-16	Spear Maker (01-25%), Bowyer / Fletcher (26-50%), Glue Maker (51-85%), Cook (86-100%)
17-18	Crossbow Maker (01-20%), Butcher (21-65%), Lumberjack (66-90%), Employed as Draft Animal (91-100%)
19	Rope Maker (01-15%), Metalsmith (16-25%), Gravedigger (26-35%), Shield Maker (36-100%)
20	Dock Worker (01-05%), Warehouse Worker (06-10%), Road (construction) Worker (11-25%), Glass Blower (26-30%), Swordsmith (31-35%), Tanner (36-55%), Turpentine Distiller (56-100%)

Please look for other character races in the next volume (ARDUIN GRIMOIRE IX). And, please! Feel free to expand upon these examples as you see fit.

Thieves in Arduin A Personal Look

Throughout the years I have had *numerous* requests to share some of the knowledge I have concerning some of the "better known" thieves and assassins currently (or in recent times) that are "working" in Arduin. Well, due to the, shall we say, rather 'sensitive' nature of the information requested (and the high value I place upon my poor life!), I have, until now, been somewhat reluctant to make public what I know. However, after much negotiation and with some considerable remuneration to the parties (and Guild) in question, I now have permission to give *brief* and *very sketchy* "histories" and such concerning *a few* of the more well-known thieves of Arduin. Not too surprisingly, though, the Assassins' Guild has rather forcibly made it known to myself that they are most definitely *not* interested in *any publicity whatsoever*. I can understand why, too ... Anyhow, here then are some of what you asked for: thieves of Arduin.

Farron Flame Hair. Is a human male *about* thirty years old (though he can pass for as young as 18-20 when dressed for it). He is slightly less than 6' tall and weighs in at a wiry 150 lbs or so. Fairly handsome, with a cleft chin and wonderful dimples (when he smiles), this hazel-eyed rogue is quite the "lady's man". His two real trade marks are his shoulder-length "flame-red" hair and the scarlet cloaks and tunics he likes to wear. He has been a guided and working thief since the age of 17, and has attained about the 9th ranking of expertise over the last 13 years or so. Though not too well-known for his ability with weapons, he none-the-less carries a silver-hilted rapier, *reputedly* of elven make that is supposed to be "magikal" in some manner and which he calls "Dire Necessity". And there are at *least* a half dozen throwing blades (two of which are known to be silver-washed). And while known as an indifferent knife-thrower, there are several who know him who say that his "apparent" lack of swordsmanship is, in truth, a rather clever dodge for a very expert rapier fighter. His only *publicly known* "fight" was one that took place during a particular holiday night a few years back wherein he had to suddenly flee from the window (three floors up) of a rich merchant's house that he had been "working in". It seems that the merchant's guards burst in upon him and even pursued him out the window and across the rooftops for more than a mile! In the running battle ("mostly running", according to Farron) he managed to knock one guard off a rooftop and "caused him grievous bodily harm" due to the fall. The second guard he got rid of by "lopping off three fingers and a thumb on his sword arm". The last finally cornered him atop a stables and the thief had no choice but to stand and fight it out. Apparently the sword fight lasted nearly five minutes, at the end of which the guard had been killed by a thrust through his heart. Farron was untouched. His only comment about that night was: "Damned if I'll ever forget to wear my soft-soled 'running shoes' while I'm working, again!"

Farron's main claim to fame, however, is his *reported* "involvement" in three rather infamous "jobs" during the last several years. The first was the looting of the temple of Shaggrath in Melkalund, that supposedly netted him "a ruby the size of a pear". The second was the taking of the legendary "Eyes of Arganos" (a pair of opals, each the size of a duck's egg) from the heavily-guarded (both mundanely and arcanelly) estate of the powerful wizard "Shubos the Elder". Lastly, and most recently was his purported involvement with the "disappearance" of Baron Tagge's black sapphire-

studded platinum coronet. The value of this item is estimated at somewhere in the neighborhood of 11,000 G.S. Needless to say there has *never* been any "conclusive proof" of Farron's involvement in any of these "happenings". Had there been, it is safe to say that a sure and probably fatal retribution would have already overtaken him.

One final note about this thief: he is known to be a very close friend and working "partner" of Kiralla Kaereen, also known as "The Hornet". Whether they are more than just working friends is not known by anyone willing to speak of it.

Kiralla Kaereen, AKA "The Hornet": is a human female approximately 25 years old but looks about 18-20 due to her "baby face" and manner of dress. She is a smidgen less than 5'3" tall, weighs no more than 105 pounds and has close-cropped "honey blonde" hair. With a "peaches and cream" complexion and very rosy cheeks she looks like a young "Mary Poppins". That soft and child-like look and demeanor, her "baby blue" eyes and lack of any obvious weapons has gotten a lot of rough and ready types in a lot of trouble due to the simple fact that her nickname *has been earned*. She is a veritable arsenal of knives, blades, stars and other such edged throwing objects. She has been known to have as many as thirty (30!) on her person at times, and is never without *at least* 20 or so. All are, of course, fairly small and most definitely hidden up sleeves, down the back of her neck, in her boots and so on.

She has been a guilded and working thief since she was 16 years old (about 9 years ago) and in that time she has attained the 6th level of expertise in her chosen profession. She is highly regarded in the guild as an "up and comer" as well as "too much of a man-killer for any one man to handle". In fact her *only* known male friend is Farron (see above), and the extent of that friendship is not publicly known. However she was involved with him in several "jobs", the most famous of which was the taking of the infamous Eyes of Arganos (see above). On her own she is known for one "job" and one wild and bloody melee of which she was the sole survivor. The melee took place in the Melkalund undercity "inn" called "Wild Ways and, though details are lacking, ended up with seventeen (17!) dead "patrons" scattered all about her. *At least twelve* died with one or more of her throwing objects imbedded in a fatal location. Neither she nor the workers at the Inn will say what started the fight, but they do say "The Hornet finished it. Quick, too." Since that time, she has avoided the Melkalund undercity, simply saying: "It ain't got nuthin left I need ta see."

The "solo" job she is known for was the "disappearance" of a **life-sized** statue of a dwarven king (all in armor and royally accoutered) made of solid gold and encrusted with more than 300 gems of various sorts. Its value is at least 100,000 G.S., and it was last seen in a dwarven-built "strong room" hewn from solid granite and with only a single locked door. The door was of solid bronze at least 20" thick and had five class seven (difficult!) locks. It was also guarded by a pair of tethered air sharks of considerable size. Not only that, it was smack dab in the middle of a dwarven "home hill" with more than 7000 inhabitants close by at all hours. How it was taken and how the air sharks were slain without a mark on them was, and is, her secret. Needless to say she is now a bit wary of most dwarven folk, seeing as how they highly resented the theft of their "First King Under The Mountain". But with *no conclusive proof* of her actual complicity in the crime, well ...

She likes to wear black and yellow "hornet striped" clothing while on the job, and has been known to stoop to using poison coatings on her throwing weapons. Rumor

has it that it comes from the great jade tree hornet of far away "Green Hell", and is nasty stuff indeed.

***Cymbalyne Starbird:** is a very young human female about 14 or 15 years of age that stands close to 5'6" tall and weighs in at a lithe 115 pounds. She is of a dark olive complexion with amber colored eyes and coal black hair which she wears in ringletted curls cut close to her very shapely head. *Exceptionally beautiful*, she is still "growing up" and will, in all likelihood, become a true "femme fatale" as she gets older. She has a predilection for dressing all in black, from a silk and hooded cloak, to thigh-high leather boots. She even affects a black satin half-mask in the likeness of a raven's face from time to time. Thus her nickname of "Nite Bird" or, sometimes, "Nite Raven".

Rumor has it that she was a member of a "rogue" street urchin gang called "The Black Rabbits" for nearly nine years (from ages 3-11) and only recently entered the guild. That too is a rather odd deal as she graduated in only two and a half years (a new record). Another "odd deal" is the fact that her **real name is not known* to any except the inner circle of the guild. Cymbalyne etc is a definite *alias* according to those in the know at said guild. Another oddity is that, racially, she resembles those from the dread and dark land called Marmachand. And, to go along with that observation there is the barest hint and whisper that she is one of those rare and secretive types known as "rogue magicians" (see AG V). But that is only a *whisper* of a *rumor*. Another "rumor" says that she carries an "invisible weapon". And as she has *never* been seen with any weapon of any sort, well, it *might* just be true!

She is the primary "suspect" in four of the last two years' most amazing thefts, all of which are still under active "investigation" by various people and organizations. The first was a straight-forward entry into a sleeping Trader's bedchambers and the "lifting" of a magikal ruby and gold ring right off of his hand. He *never* woke, but the next morning he found it missing and his trained Battlehawk (see AG VI) was sliced practically in two on his coverlet. The fact that it had been killed not only swiftly, *but silently as well* was a real marvel. The value of this ring (called "Fireknuckle" by the way) is estimated at more than 17,000 G.S.

The second "job" she is credited with was the taking of a pair of 13" tall idols of the "old" goddess "Sindra" (see AG VI). One was of black jade, the other of black ivory. Supposedly "cursed", the pair had an incalculable value due to their rumored "mystik properties of prophesy and divination". They were stolen from the altar of The Temple Of The Dark Dancer located, oddly enough, in Marmachand. Not much is known of this temple or its defenses, but the "rumor" has it that a lesser demon was the principal guardian! *At least* six previous attempts to steal the pair of idols had resulted in the utter and total dismemberment of the thieves involved. Yuck ...

The third theft "of renown" attributed to her was of a fabulous "silver opal" the size of a large orange called "The Heart of Boreas". This gem, worth an estimated 150,000 G.S., was locked away on an "iron barge" in the harbor at Talismondé. Lit day and night by more than 300 lanterns, and with never less than a dozen warriors on guard *at all times*, the metal barge was thought to be as impenetrable as humanly possible. Even the single door into the "strong hold" was magikally locked by a powerful mage. Needless to say, when retired Admiral (and Count) Gamesheka discovered the theft, he was outraged. The door was *still physically locked*, but the mys-

tik chains had been broken and none of the guards saw anything at all. Even when "put to the question" by alchemical and arcane means, the guards remembered nothing irregular at all. How it was taken remains a mystery today.

Lastly, this young thief is the supposed perpetrator of just about the most (in)famous theft in the last couple of hundred years in Arduin. It seems like a certain "treasure map" on a parchment scroll was "lifted" right out of the main library at the College of Sages! Something like this has not happened in many centuries due to the extremely dense and thorough mystik defenses and safeguards there. But steal it she most likely did, and get away with it too it seems. Even when "invited" to have a "private discussion" with her King and liege lord, she obviously managed to keep herself out of "harm's way" somehow. Whether she cut a deal for its return, or she simply "fooled 'em" is not known. Ask her and she just says: "The King? Oh, he just wanted my opinion on how such a theft could have been done. That's all ..." Talk about sang froid! As to level of expertise, well, most "in the know" observers give her an EL 6-8 rating.

As a last note, Cymbalyne is a "Master Class" chess player and *regularly* competes in tournaments in Arduin as well as in the surrounding nations. So far she has won once, placed Second twice and Third once. You can bet you'll be hearing more of this young woman in the years to come.

More Street Urchin Gangs

What follows is a (partial) list of Arduin's street urchin "gangs". They are noted by city/location, number of members and appropriate notes.

Gang Name	City/Location	Size	Notes
Blackleg "Family"	Talismondé	170	reputed to have close ties with the Black Lotus Society
Glass Rose Gang	" "	85	renowned for their wealth
Silver Arrow "Tribe"	" "	77	all members have "clven" blood
Odd Walkers	" "	75	no "humans" allowed
Flying Foot Gang	" "	72	all are martial arts students
Watersnake Gang	" "	70	a water-front outfit
Kill Kittens	" "	56	all girl group
The Nite-Eyes "Clan"	Melkalund	155	must have goblin or orc blood
Zig-Zag Gang	" "	103	none can exceed age 13
Brickyard Boys	" "	88	all male gang
Tumblerunners	" "	71	mostly kobbits and hobbits
Red Lantern "Mob"	" "	54	about 75% female
Long Nose "Mob"	Khurahaen	92	renowned as premier "spies"
Golden Grasshopper Gang	" "	110	about 85% asian stock
The 3-Legged Cat "Clan"	" "	80	all carry kukri-like knives
Crimson Dove "Clan"	" "	66	about 80% female
Jade Frog "Family"	Nythaarna	93	well known as fences
Yellow Dog Gang	" "	75	arch enemies of the "Sharks"
Sewer Sharks	" "	74	a predatory, sadistic group
Black Skull Gang	" "	60	reputedly spy for the King(!)
Crimson Cutlass "Clan"	Vorlnyaas	108	all must be of Amazon blood
Whistleshot "Family"	" "	81	known as masters of the slingshot
Snow Owl "Clan"	" "	73	most members are full or part Amerindian "blooded" (Sioux)
Tick Tock "Kids"	" "	70	closely tied to the College of Technology
Rumble Rats	Rumbletown	39	though small, supposedly the "toughest" gang in all Arduin!
Grey Wolf "Clan"	Watchtown	43	at home in the woods as well as in town -- renowned trackers
Roof Rat Gang	Bordertown	41	they excell in "roof running"
Red Ravens	Leiberton	40	some rumors say these kids are all "Psi-Rogues"!
Hole in the Rock Gang	Mickleby	48	their main hideout has never been discovered by a non-member
High Divers	Pearl House	36	excellent swimmers, etc

THE ILLEGAL DRUGS OF ARDUIN

Opening Notes

These drugs, due to their lethal (and highly addictive) nature are all *banned* in Arduin (and in many other nations). Their sale constitutes a *killing offense* by law and "dealers" are summarily *burned alive* for trafficking in them. Be warned!

"**SNYFF**": A pale violet powder of very fine "cut" and with an aroma that is strongly reminiscent of crushed roses. It is 91-100% addictive with only *one* (1) use. The user feels utterly invincible and, at times, "God-like". Each dose lasts less time than the previous one and users become suicidally desperate to regain their "high". And as the stuff costs 7-10 G.S. *per gram* (one dose), they rapidly turn to crime to support their habit. However, after 21-30 doses its "build-up" in the user becomes toxic and they die.

"**BENJHAM**": This drug is the "raw" leaf of a plant found only in the most inaccessible regions of the jungles of Green Hell. It is recognizable by its shiny blue-black color and seven-lobed shape (it smells like rotted mint leaves). Users chew the whole leaf (it lasts 21-60 minutes) and while doing so, become totally and wholly "zoned-out" and unaware of their surroundings. This trance-like dream state becomes so attractive to the user that, eventually, they'll sit "stoned", chewing their leaves, until they starve to death (or die of dehydration). It has a 91-100% rate of addiction from the very first usage. However, as the leaves only cost 1-3 S.P. each, it is still a "spreading plague" that is difficult to control or stop.

"**TWITCH**": This emerald green, aromatic (smells like spearmint) liquid is probably one of the easiest of the "killer drugs" to obtain. At a nominal cost of only 11-20 C.P. per one (1) ounce dose, it is well within the financial means of just about anyone. Habitual users suffer a slow degeneration of their nervous system which, in 31-60 months, causes death. but in its latter stages users continually spasm, twitch and seem "palsied", hence its nickname. But users, by then, are so far gone into their "twitch-dreams", they never notice. This euphoria-inducing drug is 85% addictive at its first use, increasing by 5%, cumulatively, each use thereafter. A sure warning sign of "pre-twitch" stage users is their sickly-sweet spearmint smelling breath and body odor. Users are usually referred to as "Twichies".

"**DAZZLE**": A glittering silver-gold powder of no discernable odor, with a consistency of fine-ground flour. It makes the user (who dissolves about one ounce in any *wine*, then drinks it) see everything as through a multi-hued kaleidoscope for 1-3 hours. It is about 5% addictive on a *cumulative* curve each time it is used (ie: 10 uses means 50% chance of addiction and so on). Its 3 to 5 S.P. per one dose makes it available mostly to the upper classes and lesser nobility (where it is a favorite).

Users become "blind" to all around them and tend to sit, enraptured, as they watch the wondrous colors flow and change about them. Continued use causes the skin and hair to "glitter" faintly with a sort of "silvery-sparkle", and after 3-5 years of such usage, the addict finally dies. This is because the chemical impregnates the skin so much it cannot "breathe", so suffocation eventually ensues. This stuff is an al-

chemical concoction out of dread Marmachand (where it was invented as a means to keep slave-victims "happy" prior to being bloodily sacrificed). Users are often referred to as "Sparklers" or "Glitterbugs".

SPECIAL NOTICE

We *never* advocate the taking of drugs, mind-altering substances or even over-use of alcoholic beverages. Just the opposite in fact, for to survive in a world like Arduin (or any other), you must *always* have your wits about you. Drugs are for losers and can only get you killed in the long run. So remember this Arduinian saying: "A drugged out (or drunk) swordsman is a DEAD swordsman."



The Real World And Its Deadly Creatures

This section was done after repeated requests from fans for information about "real world" dangers and dangerous creatures. It took several months of painstaking research and many late nite hours of studying to come up with the following **true information**.

What follows is a brief description of the creature in question and the general efficacy of its venom (where appropriate). I have refrained from giving its "stats" except for HP and CF rating so it can be used in game play. Said stats appear in parentheses at the end of each description (HP followed by CF).

I strongly recommend against assigning any AC rating except, perhaps, AC9 or AC8. Here then are some of the deadliest critters "the real world" has to offer.

Snakes / Vipers / Etc.

Australian Brown Snake: Found ONLY in Australia, this 2'-4' long serpent ranges in color from dun to dark brown. The venom is moderately toxic with a 25% fatality rate. Its symptoms are: acute respiratory and pulmonary distress leading to cardiac arrest (death). (HP 4-6 — CF 14-17)

Asian Pit Viper: Another moderate sized snake (2'-5' long), this one has several different color schemes depending on its Asiatic location. And, although its mortality rate is quite low (about 5%), all of its bites cause severe tissue damage in the immediate area of venom injection. (HP 3-5 — CF 14-17)

Bushmaster: A moderately large serpent found only on African savannas, it ranges up to 9' in length. It is most often a brown color with grayish markings along its length. It has a low mortality rate of about 5% but, because of its very long fangs, can easily penetrate bush pants and even leather boots when it strikes. (HP 5-9 — CF 12-15)

Boomslang: Another serpent found exclusively on African savannas, it rarely exceeds 6' in length. Nondescript in coloration, it is one of the deadliest snakes in the entire "real world" with a venom mortality approaching 85%! This is frequently followed by a brief "recovery" period, then sudden death ensues from massive internal hemorrhaging. (HP 3-5 — CF 15-18)

Black Mamba: This fast moving and large serpent (occasionally exceeding 14') is native to the central and southern African areas. It is, perhaps, the most feared African snake due to the fact that its venom approaches 100% fatality without a near-immediate anti-venom injection. The symptoms are: rapid onset of dizziness, difficulty in breathing and highly erratic heart palpitations. (HP 8-12 — CF 16-19)

Coral Snake: Found only in North America, south of Canada, this small (2'-4') snake is easily recognizable by its colorful rings of (mainly) red and black. Its very small teeth (no fangs) also make it difficult to be bitten by it under most normal circumstances. However, as that bite is nearly painless (it would not awake a sleeper), it is very possible to be bitten on the ear lobe or other such area while camping. The paralytic venom is quite slow acting but approaches 65-75% fatality without an anti-venom injection. (HP 2-4 — CF 12-15)

Cotton Mouth / Water Moccasin: Usually found throughout the North American states (from Virginia to Texas) in wet or swampy areas, this 4'-6' long serpent is an excellent swimmer and moderately aggressive critter. It derives its name from the "cottony-looking" lining of its mouth which it prominently displays when threatened. Though of fairly low mortality (15-20%), its venom acts extremely fast and causes severe tissue damage in large areas of the extremity (i.e. arm, leg, etc) which has been bitten. This is due to its utterly destructive effects on red blood cells. (HP 4-7 — CF 13-16)

Copperhead: Another snake that is basically North American in habitat (from New England to Texas), it rarely exceeds 4' in length. Though its reddish-brown ("copper") coloration would make it easy to recognize, its propensity to burrow down under piles of fallen leaves with the same color makes it damn hard to notice under most circumstances. The bite, while very seldom fatal (1% or less), causes very painful swelling and tenderness in the area struck. (HP 1-3 — CF 14-17)

Common (Asian) Cobra: Usually 4'-8' in length, this dun to brown colored serpent ranges all over South-East Asia (from Malaysia to China). And, though its venom causes severe tissue damage and, fairly frequently, paralysis, it is seldom fatal (6-15%). (HP 4-8 / CF 15-18)

Desert Horned Viper: Less than 3' long, this small serpent prefers the warm and dry desert areas of the African continent. It is usually not very aggressive and has only a 5% fatality rate for its venom (though some painful swelling can occur in the immediate areas of said bite). It is not one of the greatly feared snakes of Africa. (HP 1-2 — CF 13-15)

Death Adder: This 3' long Australian serpent earned its reputation from the 50-60% mortality rate of its venom, its high aggressiveness, and because its coloration makes it pretty near invisible in the warm and dry terrain it favors. Symptoms of its bite are: a rapid onset of faintness, respiratory and cardiac distress and inability to concentrate. (HP 1-3 — CF 16-19)

(The) European Viper (Family): These small (generally less than 2' long) and variably colored serpents are found in just about every area of the European continent where people are not populous. Their venom, whilst having a low mortality rate (5%), does cause not only moderate tissue damage around the bite but also quite excessive bleeding. (HP 1-2 — CF 13-15)

Fer-de-Lance: This extremely aggressive serpent is 5'-7' long and has distinctive grey and brown body markings. It is found only on the island of Martinique and is greatly feared there due to its high mortality rate of 75%+. The venom attacks through the victim's bloodstream and their nervous system simultaneously, causing immediate inability to function properly (i.e. clumsiness, shaking, etc). (NO STATS)

Gaboon Viper: This is a brownish colored serpent that is quite "fat" in relation to its 7' (or more) length. The overly large head/mouth contains huge fangs up to 2" (or more) in length that are quite capable of penetrating bush clothing and even leather boots. The mortality rate of the venom exceeds 50% and causes massive tissue damage as well as internal bleeding. It is found in Africa anywhere south of the Great Sahara desert. (HP 4-7 — CF 13-17)

(The) Krait (Family): This is the infamous "two-step" snake of the South-East Asia areas (from Thailand to southern China). It seldom exceeds 4' in length and has many color variations. Its venom is one of the deadliest in the world (averaging 90%) and, even with immediate and proper anti-venom treatment, more than 50% still die. Symptoms are an immediate onset of numbness and a sleepiness from which far too few ever awaken. (HP 2-4 — CF 16-19)

King Cobra: With its (up to) 18' length, wide flaring hood and deadly venom (75-85%), this serpent truly deserves the appellation of "King". Found throughout Asia (from India to parts of China), it is an utterly fearless and, at times, quite aggressive foe of man. Do note, however, that they seldom inject a truly fatal amount of venom when they bite (perhaps a fatal dose as little as 20% of the time with about a 20% fatality rate the other 80% of the time). Even so, the small amounts alone are enough to rapidly cause dizziness, difficulty in breathing, erratic heart beat, a painful swelling of the bite area and a 75-85% rate of unconsciousness. In a "full bite", unconsciousness approaches 100%. (HP 11-20 — CF 15-20)

Puff Adder: This 3'-5' long, brownish colored (and extraordinarily "fat" serpent can be encountered throughout the Middle East and Africa, south of the Sahara desert. Its venom causes excruciating (nearly immobilizing) pain, internal bleeding, extreme swelling in the area bitten and vertigo/dizziness. This is quite rapid after the bite and leads to its moderate 35-35% mortality rate. (HP 4-6 — CF 14-16)

(The) Rattlesnake (Family): These reptiles can be encountered virtually anyplace in the Western hemisphere and range in coloration as well as size (from only 12" or so for the desert dwelling "Sidewinder" to more than 8' for the "Timber" variety). Their rapid acting venom causes swelling in the area bitten, usually very severe pain and frequently necessitates amputation of the stricken limb due to the terrible tissue damage. However, mortality is generally low, being only about 15% with the exception being the dread "Mojave Rattlesnake" with a mortality rate close to 75%. (HP 1-8 — CF 12-19)

Russel's Viper / Tic-palonga: Reaching 5' and more, this serpent is found throughout SouthEast Asia and is, probably, the kind most commonly involved in attack/bite reports. Its venom has a moderately low mortality rate of 10-30% but causes internal bleeding which is difficult to control. Little else is known about this reptile even though it is so common and so frequently attacks man. (HP 2-4 — CF 13-16)

Ringhals ("Spitting") Cobra: This variety of cobra has its own listing due to its ability to attack by "spitting or squirting" its venom — from small holes in the upper front of its fangs — in deliberate attack attempts against the head/eyes of its foes. It is accurate about 75% of the time out to its full 6'-8' range. The snake apparently instinctively always goes for the "head/eye" shot. The venom is roughly equal to the previously described common cobra. If it is not immediately washed from the eyes, it can produce permanent damage. If left untreated for any length of time, then blindness is nearly 100% certain. There is evidence that milk, applied topically, neutralizes the enzymatic action of the venom. Specifically, the cases cited discussed human milk, squirted into a victim's eyes which neutralized the venom resulting in only minor tissue damage that healed. Ranging in size from 5'-7', these snakes are found in southern Africa only (thank goodness)! (HP 4-8 — CF 15-18)

Sharp-nosed Pit Viper: Ranging in size from 3'-5' in length, these serpents can be found in eastern China on down into Viet Nam / Indo-China. These vipers have the most potent venom in their family of serpents with a 45-65% mortality rate. Symptoms of their bite consist of a very rapid swelling (to extreme size), great pain, tissue damage and copious internal bleeding. Not known for their aggressiveness, they nonetheless show little fear of man or his proximity. (HP 3-5 — CF 12-16)

(The) Sea Snake (Family): These grey-green serpents grow up to 10' in length and may be encountered anywhere throughout the Pacific and Indian Oceans (except for the cold northern Pacific). They have a virtually painless bite (and less than half the time will they bother to inject their venom). Fairly curious and moderately aggressive (and frequently mis-identified as an eel), their low mortality (15%) nonetheless causes an extreme danger to bitten swimmers. This is due to the side effects of: extreme pain, muscle spasms and paralysis which can cause the victim to drown. (HP 7-12 — CF 15-18)

Saw-Scaled Carpet Viper: This tan to brownish colored serpent seldom exceeds 2' in length and may be found in any warm and dry area from India to Africa. Its venom is figured to be at least three times (3X) as toxic as the Common Cobra and has a mortality rate in the 75-90% range. The venom is extremely fast acting and causes: high fever, severe bleeding of the bitten area and unconsciousness in a matter of minutes. (HP 1-3 — CF 15-18)

Tiger Snake: This 2'-6' long serpent is, mercifully, found only in Australia. Also, thankfully, it is readily identified by its "banded" coloration. Most herpetologists think that this snake venom is, gram for gram, the most toxic in the entire world. Without immediate anti-venom treatment, the mortality is close to 100% as can be without actually being that fearsome figure. This is the *true* "two step snake" and its bite symptoms are: severe pain, extreme mental "disturbances" and hallucinations, cardiac and respiratory distress, then numbness and paralysis leading invariably to death. (HP 2-5 — CF 16-20)

Taipan: This grey-green serpent is found only in parts of Australia and on the island of New Guinea. It ranges in size from 8'-12' and, *if aroused*, is considered the most aggressive and fierce snake in the entire world. *It just keeps coming* at its opponent, *continually* striking them even after they are down and unmoving. To make matters worse, it also has one of the deadliest venoms in the world (approaching a 95% mortality rate). Its symptoms are: rapid difficulty in breathing and paralysis. (HP 6-11 — CF 16-19)

Yellow Beard: This aptly named snake, some 6'-7' in length, can be found from tropical Mexico down through Brazil. Its venom, while causing severe tissue damage in the bitten area, nonetheless has a *low* mortality rate around 15%. (HP 4-7 — CF 12-15)

Yellow (Cape) Cobra: Found *only* in southern-most Africa, it ranges in size up to 7' in length. It is listed separately here because it has the most potent venom in the entire cobra family. This venom has a mortality rate that is, *consistently*, in the 80-85% range and is extremely rapid acting. Its symptoms are: intense swelling / pain of the bitten area and severe breathing and cardiac difficulties. (HP 5-8 — CF 15-18)

Special Note: Please remember that only about 65% of the time will *any* venomous serpent's bite be envenomed. For many reasons, ranging from having

used it all up to just plain contrariness, serpents will frequently *not have/use* venom in their attack(s). But, *each and every* snake bite (from venomous *and* non-venomous serpents) has quite a definite risk (perhaps 25-33%) of a tetanus infection. The dictionary defines this sort of infection thus: "an acute, *often fatal* infectious disease caused by a bacillus, *Clostridium tetani*, that generally enters the body through wounds and is characterized by rigidity and spasmodic contractions of the voluntary muscles." It is also called "lockjaw". This disease, without proper treatment for more than just a couple of days, is usually fatal about 65% of the time.

Editor's Note: Snakes, venomous or otherwise, are not aggressive and normally attack only to capture prey or to defend themselves if threatened and unable to escape! If you encounter one of these "real world" creepy-crawlies ... simply leave them alone! If you get bit ... it was probably your own fault. Snakes are important to the ecology and should not be harmed ... ever! (*And, yes, we do like snakes — they're friends and we treat them with the proper respect due friends.*) These same cautions apply to all of the species following.

Lizards

Gila Monster: This sluggish and slow-moving reptile is found only in the high deserts of the south-western United States and Mexico. It is up to 30" in length and covered with yellowish and/or pinkish "bead-like" scales. Its venom, if not treated with the proper anti-venom, approaches 80-85%. The bite victim suffers an immediate and severe pain rapidly followed by vomiting, harsh and severe thirst, great difficulty in swallowing and a weakness of the entire body which approaches paralysis in its effects. Note as well that once they have clamped down on a victim, these critters hang on just like a pit bull. (HP 2-4 — CF 9-11)

Mexican Beaded Lizard: Very similar in all respects to its "cousin" the Gila Monster, it is found in the western coastal areas of Mexico *only* and is (if anything) even more sluggish and slow.

Insects / Arthropods / Spiders

Ants: Found world-wide, these insects come in too many colors, types and sizes to even attempt a partial catalogue here. The only time they can be deadly is when massive numbers of them sting a person or when the dread "army ants" overwhelm a victim and, literally, strip the flesh from their bones. And, occasionally, some poor victim will have an "allergic reaction" to their formic acid stings and die from systemic shock. But this is so rare as to have *no statistical merit*.

Atrax Spiders (several varieties): Often larger than a tarantula, these big spiders are found only in Australia (Thank the Gods for that!). Generally not aggressive towards man, they have a very slow acting venom which causes breathing/respiratory difficulties and has a *low* mortality rate of only 5%. (HP 1 — CF 1-16)

Bees, Hornets, Wasps, etc: Also found the world over, these winged insects have only a slightly greater mortality than the afore-mentioned ants. All propaganda about "killer bees" notwithstanding, simply put, they usually don't hurt all that much — except in massive numbers or where that oh so rare allergic reaction is involved.

Brown Recluse / Fiddleback Spider: These small (pea-sized or less), oblong bodied spiders can be found anywhere on the North American continent. They are, as their name implies, quite reclusive and timid towards man. Their venom is also slow acting but causes the wound to ulcerate painfully. Victims will frequently (60%) develop a high fever (and all that brings about) but, in any case, will suffer pain, nausea and severe stomach cramps. The ulceration(s) may persist for several months but the mortality rate is quite low (only 1-5%). (HP 1 — CF 14-16)

Black Widow: This spider is not a prowler and stays within its web-home assiduously so it will not be encountered unless you actively disturb its "house" (i.e. web). Small (pea-sized usually) and round bodied, their black color readily accentuates the red to orange "hour glass" marking on its underside that makes it so visually identifiable. It (or its relatives) can be found anywhere in the world from temperate to tropical zones. It is, perhaps, the best known of the "deadly spiders". Its bite causes an immediate and quite sharp pain that is swiftly followed by a weakness of the entire body, clammy skin, difficulty breathing and a muscular rigidity that approaches real paralysis in the bitten limb/extremity. This venom is primarily a neurotoxin and the systemic effects will begin in anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour. There is extreme individual variation in the toxic results. Children and smaller people can even go into intense spasmodic convulsions of great severity. Mortality is *quite low*, only about 6-10%.

Centipedes, Millipedes, etc: Centipedes *are* venomous but millipedes absolutely *are not*, no matter how much they resemble each other. Found just about everywhere in the world where there is a moist, warm environment, they are usually quite timid where man is concerned. Mortality from centipede bites is quite low, no more than 5-10% at best and the vast majority of the types that are dangerous are found only in Asia. (HP 1-2 — CF 16-19)

Funnel-Web Spider: A native of Australia with rather drab colors, the Funnel-Web spider is a bit larger than the Black Widow, with a body about the size of a small bean. The spider is rather aggressive in its web and several bites are recorded each year. The venom is more toxic than Black Widow venom with perhaps half-a-dozen people dying each year from the bite. Again, primarily the very old, young and weak are most at risk; estimate fatal toxicity at the 20% level. There have been reports of these spiders biting through light leather, so it appears to have a very capable set of fangs.

Scorpion(s): Sizes, coloration and degree of aggressiveness vary widely within this class of dangerous critter. So does the potency of the venom they use (from 35-85% but add another 10-15% for children and/or smaller people). They can be encountered in one form or another just about anywhere where it's warm. But, in all cases, the venom will cause severe pain and swelling which will radiate outwards from the sting point. It also causes cramps, vomiting, diarrhea, respiratory problems and, occasionally, intense emotional problems*. (HP 1-2 / CF 12-19)

* Having been "ambushed" by one of these little buggers in Viet Nam, I can, from unequivocal first-hand experience, tell you that they are nothing to mess about with! — DAH

Tarantula: This is the huge, hairy and ugly fellow you always see in the movies as a "real and true killer" ... when, in fact, these relatively slow-moving spiders* are

nothing of the sort. They can be encountered world-wide in any warm, dry climate and have many color schemes ranging from a reddish to dark black (with many combinations thereof). And, while their bite can certainly be quite painful, even causing moderate swelling and itching, they are generally known to be fairly harmless to humans. However, there is some evidence that tarantula venom is more dangerous to cold-blooded victims. Most of the experiments have been done on reptiles and the observed results have shown higher mortality than for similar sized mammals. Also, tarantulas do have numerous body hairs that are referred to as 'urticating' hairs. These hairs have microspines and barbs that cause extreme temporary irritation to eyes and mucous membranes. There also appear to be some sort of irritating chemical coating the hairs. (HP 1-2 — CF 10-14)

* In many areas (including south-western US), tarantulas are often caught as cute "pets" (a lot of the girls I knew really liked them). They are not aggressive if handled correctly and carefully but can and will jump surprising distances (up to 15' horizontally). Still, these are best left alone. — the editor

Oceanic / Aquatic Creatures

Octopi: Mostly found in warm waters (world-wide), these ugly, eight-armed creatures have gotten a *generally undeserved* reputation for ferocity and attacks on people. Note that their reputation is *not* for their bite being envenomed, few know that *all octopi* have just that! *All of them!* But, truth to tell, said venom is usually *total-ly non-toxic to humans*. However, said venom is frequently strong enough to cause breathing difficulty and a very rapid onset of paralysis! Not the kind of thing a swimmer likes to have happen. Didn't know that, didja?!! It's true! But, generally speaking, those that have been documented as having killed humans tend to most often have been one of the smaller ("Blue Ringed", for example) varieties that are found in the South Pacific. In these cases, the mortality has ranged from 35-50%. Remember also that, in general again, they are moderately intelligent, can change their color quite rapidly (making them nearly invisible at times) and be anywhere from a few inches to 20', 30' or more feet across. Supposedly "shy and timid", I'd just as soon go as far away from one as I possibly could. I ain't no hero! (HP 4-40 — CF 15-18)

Portuguese Man-Of-War: These jellyfish-like critters can have trailing tentacles up to 70' in length but are usually seen from the surface. Atop the water is their red to purple colored "sail" and as many as several hundred at one time may be encountered. Found throughout the world's oceans, wherever there is warm water, they can be quite deadly to unwary swimmers. But, as they have no real mode of self-propulsion (for attack purposes), they must be blundered into accidentally for such damage as they can do to be done. While the "sting" of their tentacles is seldom fatal (5% mortality), their contact with flesh causes immediate and quite excruciating pain, swelling and itching. Most deaths from their touch results from the shock of the sheer magnitude of the pain involved and/or resultant drowning. (HP 6-24 — CF 3-6)

Sea Wasp: Another type of "jellyfish" that is most often encountered in warm Pacific waters. It is of translucent blue-white coloration (usually) and can have trailing tentacles up to 30' in length and more. Its toxin's effect is so incredibly rapid that, even with anti-venom immediately available, death usually ensues in the victim too fast for it to be effectively used. The extremely excruciating pain and severe respiratory effects of the toxin gives it a mortality rate of 75-90%. (HP 4-15 — CF 3-6)

Stingray (Family): These come in several varieties, sizes and colors but are most often encountered in tropical or temperate waters. There are even a few *fresh water* types! Their sting, while seldom fatal (perhaps 1-5%), almost always ulcerates into a real mess that has about a 40% chance of becoming gangrenous. If left untreated for any moderate length of time, this effect can result in the loss of a foot, other limb or, in rare cases, death through blood poisoning. At any rate, the toxin has quite a rapid onset that causes severe pain, some swelling, nausea and vomiting as well as breathing difficulties. (HP 5-50 — CF 12-17)

Stonefish: This lumpy, generally rock-colored (and near-rock shaped) fish lies motionless in tide pools and other warm, shallow bodies of water (mostly in the Indian and Pacific oceans). It has a series of very sharp and needle-like spines along its back that have a venom that is world renowned for rapidity of effect and the *unimaginably terrible pain* that comes from this. It has been noted that, occasionally, some victims go stark raving mad from this terrifyingly potent effect. However, as a full body paralysis follows the initial puncture of the spines so very rapidly, most victims have only enough time to scream bloody murder for a few seconds. The mortality rate though is only a *low* 10-15% but few ever fully recover *psychologically* from the searing pain they have endured. (HP 3-6 — CF 12-15)

Turkey / Lion Fish: A more colorful relative of the afore mentioned Stonefish, this (usually) orange, red or other such colored fish (mostly in stripe-like patterns) resembles nothing so much as some mad Parisian dress designer's dream in flowing chiffon and silks. Like "curtains in a breeze" is how they have sometimes been described. Yet they too sport *hidden* needles along their dorsal spine and can inject a toxin much like that of the stonefish. Thankfully it is of a less (but not that "less") painful and lethal nature (1-5% mortality rate). And, as they are "free swimmers" and not "tidepool land mines", you would probably have to deliberately grab one to get "nailed" as the pun would have it.

Cone Shells: These prettily-colored and quite delicate-looking sea shells (with attendant mollusc living inside) can be found throughout the Pacific and Indian oceans. However, if picked up or otherwise "handled", they "shoot" a tiny barbed spine into the victim that carries a toxin of quite unusual properties. It causes drowsiness and a slowly "creeping" paralysis over a period of several minutes. The mortality rate is very low, only about 5% but, for any diver to be thus effected, usually means death by drowning.

That about wraps it up for dangerous "creepie crawlies" of our world and I hope it makes you think about just what is in the environment around yourself ... and let's not even mention the really big nasties like "lions and tigers and bears, OH MY!..."

NOTABLE PERSONAGES OF THE ARDUIN II CAMPAIGN

Harlen Of The Golden Hand: is a noted "Highwayman" who plies his trade on several of the secondary and lesser byways of Arduin(II). About 30 years old, 6' tall and with blonde-haired and blue-eyed good looks, he is also well-known as a "lady's man" and womanizer. He can readily be identified by his "Missing" left hand that has been replaced with a solid gold replica of the lost limb. However, said "golden Hand" is usually hidden by a black velvet glove. When not off doing his own "thing", he can most often be encountered in the city of Vaalgard. There he reputedly has "several" lady friends (and he supposedly likes to "keep 'em all happy!") At any rate, his choice of clothing tends to be of the muted and less colorful hues, though usually of the finest velvet. His choice of weapon is a beautiful silver inlaid saber with a gold filigree basket hilt and large ruby pommel carved in the likeness of a spread-winged eagle. he calls the weapon "Hellwing" and it is rumored to be a potent magikal weapon of unknown properties. In battle he frequently uses his golden hand to block/parry with (and, rarely, even as a bludgeon-weapon), but will never kill unless there is absolutely no other way out for him. He also never takes any "Lady's" jewelry or other "ornaments" (though cash is fine with him!). He currently has a 1, 245 G.S. price on his head, posted by the Bureau Of Highway Safety. For game purposes consider him about EL 9 with a 103 BF.

Danroy Oddeyes: is almost totally unknown outside the Assassins' Guild where he is a highly respected and much-feared "brother". Of unremarkable looks and personality, he is a sort of "everyman". His age can be anything from 25-50, his hair whatever suits him and his clothing and demeanor always match the "job requirements". Thus there is no hard and fast description of the deadly fellow. His only distinguishing features are his eyes. The right one is a pleasant dark brown but his left is an "icy emerald green". With more than fifty (50) legal and registered successful "Kills", he is one of the most efficient and deadly assassins in more than a century. He is also the highest paid guild member currently working. Rumors say that his last "hit" brought him a fee of nearly 300, 000 G.S.! he is also rumored to be unable to leave his home city of Talismondé due to a curse laid upon him many years ago by a dying Druid he had killed. Whether it is true or not has never been confirmed, but there is strong evidence that Oddeyes hasn't left the city in more than a quarter of a century! He is master of all weapons in the assassins' arsenal but seems to prefer a steel wire garrotte. For game purposes figure that he is EL 44 and has a 156 BF. Oh, and he gave his permission for this write-up!

Ganelon The Hawk: is perhaps one of the most famous mercenary officers (he's currently an Under-Captain) in the last twenty years. Only 24 years old, he is remembered (best) in song and story for his single-handed defense of "mile High Bridge" during the last Black Orc Insurgency. His masterful wielding of his magikal great sword "Myringus" and 8' tall long bow "Direwind" reportedly accounted for more than 130 orc soldiers! The many farming families that his heroic defense saved have, in gratitude, erected a cast bronze, life-size statue of him next to that famous bridge. It is also known that his handsome, 6'4" tall red-haired half-elf warrior also turned down a commission in the King's Own Royal Guards! Unheard of! Currently he is

the most sought-after "single-sell sword" in all the kingdom. He can usually be found in the (in)famous Ruby Rifleman Inn in Talsimonde, and can be easily recognized by his gold-washed scale armor and eagle-winged great helm. For game purposes consider him EL 10 with a 155 BF (and 145% "to hit" chance with his longbow).

Terek Two-Swords: is a retired gladiator (from Vaalgard) currently residing in Sarkhinor, where he is the head of the most famous "Fighting School/House" in all the land: "The House Of The Double Sword". This 6'8" tall, 295-lb warrior won 210 combats (188 "kills") and was "knighted" by the King for "his valor, skill and will to win - unmatched in all the world!" Not only imposing in size, but for his method of using full-sized "bastard" swords in both hands simultaneously, this warrior is highly respected by all and liked by most. He is easily recognizable by his 13" (per side!) waxed and "twirled" mustaches and his loud, booming laughter. At a youngish age of fifty, he still works out twice a day with his trainees, and even now, never loses a fight! A prodigious trencherman and drinker, he likes nothing better than to fight all day and party all night! For game purposes figure him as an EL 40(!) and with a 181 BF.

Wiridon Foxfoot: is something of a "legend" in Smallshire where he currently resides (and owns/runs the Far traveller Inn). A Thief by former trade (now semi-retired) he is that very same Hobbit that was part of the new legendary "World Circle Adventure" that spanned the globe over a seventeen-year period. Many were their adventures and many were those who died along the way. Of the twenty-two who began the adventure only Wiridon and two others came home. Thus it is understandable why so many simply call him "The Survivor". Though only 51 years old, he looks closer to 70 - hair mostly white and many scars upon his face and body. In truth, he has "survived" much. Of average size for his kind, he is mainly recognizable by the huge 89 carat black ruby he wears in his left ear lobe. On stormy nights this gem will pulse and flash in time to the thunder with "a somber and bloody fire". he calls this earring "my soulmate" but has never said why. He is a great and famous story teller and reputedly knows where the wreck (and fabulous treasure) of the infamous corsair ship "Foam Falcon" now lies. He is also spoken of in awe by other Hobbit-kind for his unerring and uncanny accuracy with a sling and lead shot. He has been noted upon several occasions to have "shot the eye out of a running squirrel at one hundred paces!" For game purposes, figure him as an EL 28 Thief and having a 170% accuracy with said sling. Oh, and his BF would be about 105.

"Random": is one of Arduin's (in)famous characters that practically everyone has heard about but very few have actually met. His origins, age and profession are unknown (though much speculated upon) but he has definitely been encountered as a mercenary sell sword, Senior Captain in a military force, Thief, Bard, Magician and just about any other profession one can think of. And he was quite good at whatever he was doing at the time. Though he only looks to be about 30 years old, and looks "fully human", he has been known (and spoken of) for at least 100 years. he always seems to show up just prior to some "great happening" or great world event, and always leaves shortly after it has been "concluded". As he does "his own thing" though these "happenings", it is difficult to ascertain if he is "on the side of good or evil" as it were. He just "is" for all practical purposes. Note as well that although he does repeat his chosen "profession" from time to time, he never appears twice in a row doing the same sort of job. So for game purposes figure him at least EL 20 in whatever he is doing at the time and remember also that he is a fully capable warrior, magician and

so on! Few who "mess with" him survive to say that they tried! You can recognize him by his unusual gold-pupiled eyes and a "lightning-shaped" scar running down his right forearm. Otherwise his choice of dress, armor, weaponry etc might as well be "random". As a final note, he is known to never drink anything except clear, pure water.



T'Zirkys T'Sallass is perhaps one of the strangest beings one can ever encounter. Her racial heritage appears to be a mix of Khai Zirin, Woods Elf and Amazon! Standing a regal 7' tall, and quite well-muscled, this 35-year-old, gold and silvery furred (and striped) humanoid, has become one of Arduin's most famous Thieves due to her exploits in the dread and deadly "Temple Of The Flame Spydars". In fact she still wears the massive four-strand "blue ruby" necklace, taken in that foray, supposedly worth more than 200,000 G.S. And few indeed are those who would contest her for its possession as she is also a well-known and justifiably feared "duelist" with few equals. Her un-matched ability with her magikal (so it is said) rapier called "Firecat" and main gauche (called "Razortooth") has been the death of more than 40 known opponents. Rumours say her actual number of "kills" is probably closer to 80! Quite beautiful in her bizarre and unusual way, she is never without one or two male admirers constantly near her. But as her "attention span" for such "play" is quite short, these fellows tend to change on a nearly daily basis. For game purposes figure her an EL 16 Thief and EL 11 warrior (with a 139 BF). Oh, one final note concerning this curious, cat-like being, she is supposedly capable of doubling or even tripling her speed in battle, but as none have lived to confirm this, it is still a rumor only. But be warned!

New Character Class DREAMWEAVER

This is the *rarest* and least understood of all of Arduin's "classes of characters" and has only become known to exist (publicly anyway) in the last 70 years or so. In fact, their becoming an "official college" is said to have been at the behest of the reigning monarch, Elric Of The Dragon Tower. It is also believed that *only* said monarch can actually approve and permit each individual student to this almost never spoken of program of training. And, to date, no more than 35 beings have managed to graduate from the small "College" that is hidden away in a tiny, high security, compound adjacent to the Main College Of Magik in Talslimonde, capitol city of Arduin. And of those 35, *only 21 are still active* in this "school/style" of magik. See the list at the end of this section for the names of these beings.

The basic training for such folk begins at age three(3) and lasts for thirteen (13) years. At that time they are "passed out" as apprentices for advanced studies in the real world under the guidance of a **True Dreamer** (ie fully graduated Dreamweaver). This apprenticeship lasts another seven (7) years and only 1-3% of those apprentices ever actually "make the grade" and graduate.

The apprentices who fail usually re-apply to the more "standard" colleges of magik (ie Rune Weavers, Masters of Illusion, etc), and in a year or so, graduate from them, usually "with honors". These graduates are also *usually* considered as EL 2-4, depending upon their aptitude and ability when so graduated, due to their *intensive* prior training by the True Dreamers.

The basic training of Dreamweavers covers not only the more "normal" magikal disciplines, but also goes into "Dream Works". This branch of magik is only operable when the magician is in a *sleeping (or trance) "Dream State"*. Because it is possible to do "anything" in ones dreams, it makes for extremely powerful and awesomely effective magik. *But inside the dream only*. The "catch" here is where so many apprentices fail. For the true Dreamweaver **can** manifest the dream results *into reality*! Thus there is very little an accomplished mage of this type cannot, eventually, do. The other magicians (of all types) greatly fear and (grudgingly) respect Dreamweavers because of this. They also like to *pretend* that Dreamweavers *don't exist*, and will practically *never* mention them *for any reason*. Probably because their power so manifestly overshadows their own. Thus few people outside the ranks of magicians have even ever heard of these powerful and secretive people.

For game purposes consider *all of the apprentices* as EL 1 Masters Of Illusion (85%); Runeweavers (15%); or straight Mages (5%). After all, even in ones dreams *you have to understand basic magik* if you wish to get magikal results!

Graduated Dreamweavers *seldom* employ "mundane" or "real magik", but *can do so* if pressed. They can be considered to be one-third (1/3) their Dreamweaver level as "real magicians" for game play purposes. As an example: An EL1-3 Dreamweaver would be equal to an EL 1 Mage etc, one that is, say EL 11 as a Dreamweaver, would be equal to a regular (etc) magician of EL 4. And so on and so forth.

Dreamweavers *never*, ever indulge (willingly) in magikal confrontations, duels etc because they know that all they have to do is to attack such an enemy through their

dreamworks, where said enemy cannot (usually) fight back. They are truly deadly people to have against you.

There are no hard, pre-set guidelines on just how much a Dreamweaver may accomplish at any given "level" of experience. It is entirely up to the GM to set for their own particular ideas of who can do what and when. However I will give you a few generalized examples of how this power "works".

- a) An EL 1 Dreamweaver is travelling with a group of adventurers going down into an ancient tomb for "loot and glory" as they say. The group's Thief realizes that he *cannot* open the next door blocking the party's passage. So the Dreamweaver sits down and goes into an *automatic* trance (they can do this in 1-3 seconds) and conjures up in his mind his "dreamworks power" and actually visualizes the Thief successfully opening the locked portal on his very next try. He then "shunts" a single mana point (1) into the "works" to empower it and snaps out of the trance and tells the Thief to "open the door, I have dreamed it, so it shall pass". And the Thief, with a shrug, goes and *does just that!* He opens the door! This is a relatively simple and "minor" way in which Dream Weavers may affect or change the "real world".
- b) An EL 4 Dreamweaver is in his library puzzling over an ancient tome from an untold past age and in a language now long forgotten and unknown in the world today. he goes into his trance and dreams that he can readily read the book. After shunting two (2) mana point into the "works" to empower it, he snaps open his eyes and lo and behold, he can read the tome. Some time later he comes to a passage he is most intrigued in but finds that the next two pages are missing. What to do? Simple, he goes into his dream-state (trance) and *dreams that the pages are still there!* Using five (5) mana points to empower this dream he then awakens and sees those missing pages right there before his eyes. He then reads them, copying them carefully on other sheets of parchment, as he knows that these "dream pages" *are not really there* and that they will *fade away* in a very short time (usually in 3-7 minutes). This is a moderately difficult thing for a Dream Weaver to accomplish, but nothing seriously difficult for them to learn to do.
- c) An EL 9 Dreamweaver is fleeing upwards from the dank, dark depths of a cavern. And he knows that not too far behind him comes the dreaded undead creatures that his delving and probing have awakened. he has but a very few moments before they catch up to him; but what is this? He has taken a wrong turning and now a wide and "bottomless" crevasse stands between him and the safety of the light of day! What to do? Thinking fast, he sits cross-legged and goes into the dream-state. **There** he rapidly but carefully "builds" a stone bridge across the wide crevasse and then sees himself racing safely across! He then shunts 20 mana points "into" his newly built bridge to give it "substance".Awakening he sees the bridge there before him and unhesitatingly runs across it. Just in time! Boiling up from the depths behind him come the horde of undead! They rapidly shamble towards the bridge and ... fall wailing into the chasm below as the "bridge" flickers and fades from existence! He safely speeds upward and away, saved once again by his power of dreams. This creation of a "solid/real" existence for dream works is *very difficult* indeed for

them to learn, and *not* something readily available to the "lesser" adepts of this form of magik.

- d) An EL 20 Dreamweaver has sat crosslegged and utterly motionless for more than an hour, painstakingly "creating" in his dreams the image of a royal treasury that was described in minute detail, in an old and dusty tome he had read. As he creates the image, he thinks and ponders long and hard upon what was written about this treasury vault and the time and culture that constructed it so many years ago. *He sees himself there*, in the silent and unpopulated chamber picking up the fantastic "Tiara Of Gwyendollyra", until now only a near forgotten legend. He sees himself, tiara in hand, fading from that long ago room and back into his own study chambers *with that fabulous treasure*. Slowly awakening, shuddering from the exertion and the terrible drain upon his inner mana (probably 60 or more), he opens his eyes to gaze at the *real* tiara in his hands. He has done it! He has "robbed the ages"! This sort of "time and space" dreaming is nothing less than "tampering" with the basic forces of the multiverse. it is incredibly difficult, extremely dangerous and *almost never* practiced by Dream Weavers. For it is far too easy to become *trapped* and/or "lost" in time and location. It is, simply put, almost too dangerous a way of dreaming to be worth trying. And *at least three* of the greatest practitioners ever known in this esoteric discipline have simply vanished, forever, within their own dreams while attempting such difficult feats.

As you can see, GM adjudication is not only needed but **required**, if such player characters are to be used in game play. Note as well that I cannot recommend strongly enough to GM's that such a class of player **not be allowed** except for *only the most experienced and honest of players*. And *never more than one* (1) Dreamweaver should be allowed in play at any one time in any single campaign. Also, each DM should draw up a simple list of what each "EL" Dreamweaver can accomplish (given the time and incentive to learn) with their dream works. A rough outline is all that is necessary, and as you *only have a single player* to deal with, you can adjudicate and add or subtract from the list as you see fit. This way this character class can never "overpower" or "dominate" the campaign.

In closing I want to reiterate that this class of player character could, if **allowed**, get out of hand totally, disrupting and (eventually) even *destroying a campaign*. So it behooves the GM to *not* allow all of their friends to utilize them in game play. Be very, very careful just who you allow to play such a class of character and feel free to eliminate him (or her) from game play if it is seen to be dominating game play.

Note also the extreme vulnerability of a Dreamweaver in their trance state. They are totally unaware of their surroundings and can be killed *physically* quite easily, if they are not properly guarded. If that happens they will wander in their own dreams, forever, *never* able to come back to the real and living world. Or if they are summarily "shaken out" of their trances, they can suffer a severe "psychic shock" that can do **anything** (GM adjudicated) from merely stunning them to outright killing them (or, more likely, driving them insane for short or long periods of time. Or even permanently.)

As promised earlier, here is the list of (and a bit about) these current practitioners of Dreamweaving:

1. **Sasahlon Nevermore**; a half human, half Amazonian male by birth, and approximately 48 years of age. He is quite tall (close to 6'9" in height), very slender and affects long (waist length), flowing blonde hair, unbound and "flying free". His current residence is in the Dreaming Isles where he is researching the "Gates Of Hell" with several high ranking priests and Runeweavers. His own ranking is *guessed to be* around EL 23.
2. **Jarnella K'Kwon**; a human of half Asian and half Black lineage, is extremely beautiful and very short/small (some 4'9"/88-lbs). About 35 years old, she favors silver bangles/jewelry, red silk robes and a shaven pate. Her location is probably in the Amazonian nation of Vargalla where she is reputedly delving into a cavern called "Mothermouth". Her own ranking is *known to be* EL 19.
3. **Yubai Hashoon**; a half Uruk, half human approximately 40 years old, some 6' tall and a bit on the "hefty" side (about 350 lbs). Bald and with bright orange-irised eyes, he favors a huge ruby in his left ear lobe and a small nose ring of black mithril. He is a flamboyant and garish dresser who tends to have a ring of one sort of another on all of his fingers as well as both thumbs. He is currently residing in Talismondé where he teaches at the college of magik (primarily in his own genre), and keeps watch on his apprentice (one Primrose Crystalthorn, a young and exotically beautiful lady of probable "Faerie" ancestry or blood-line). His own ranking is *known to be* EL 18.
4. **Dzeros Khazaad**; a desert nomad from the Great Sand Sea of approximately 39 years of age. He is dark-complected and has wavy, black hair worn short all round save for the "never cut" warrior's pigtail down his back (nearly to his waist). Most often dressed in the traditional black burnoose and red leather knee-high boots of his culture, he is also the only such graduate *known* to be a "master swordsman" and warrior in his own right. He uses the desert tulwar of course. His current whereabouts are not known, but it is rumored that he was headed for the ill-fated 3rd continent in search of the legendary "Chalice Of Zhoor-Gai". His own ranking is *thought to be* EL 14.
5. **Synzyn Opaleyes**; a female Deodanth approximately 120 years old and fairly small by that race's standards. Standing only 6' tall and weighing in at no more than 190 pounds, she would be considered a "runt" by others of her kind. She is also considered (by Deodanths) to be "tainted" due to the odd "opalescent" color of her eyes. Something never before seen in one of her race. She currently resides in dread and secretive Marmachand, where it is rumored that she is researching "The Eldest Dark" or some similar line of work. She has apparently been there more than 30 years now and is only known to still be alive from the infrequent correspondence she sends to her friend Yubai Hashoon. Her own ranking is *thought to be* around EL 28.
6. **Rogier Kasseaux**; a 27-year old human born and raised in Talismondé, Arduin. Being a very recent graduate of Dreamweaver training, he is known to be only EL 3 in this form of magik. Some 5'10" tall and around 165 lbs, he has brown hair and eyes and is "not at all bad to look upon". He seems to be very amused with life, himself and the world around him as he is *nearly always* smiling and telling

a joke or two. His current location seems to be the Royal Palace Of The King in Talismondé where he is "doing some work" for said ruler.

7. **Adorn Cloudwalker**; (AKA: Silverhand) an Arduinian woods elf about 145 years old who is missing his left hand. The missing hand, rumored to have been "eaten" by a swamp saurig during an ambush some years ago, has been replaced by a finely-crafted replica of silver. Said silver item is also quite strongly suggested to actually be a "wand" in the classic sense and "loaded" with "normal magik" for use in battle (or future ambushes!) He is known to be quite aggressively bigoted towards saurigs and other reptiles. So much so that he tends to dress head to toe in "reptile leather" clothing/boots etc. About "six-and-a-half feet tall", muscular and robust, he cannot be considered handsome due to savage claw scars (from that same saurig ambush) which disfigure his entire face. His current location is not known, but it is rumored that he has ventured into that terrible jungle known as "Green Hell" in an attempt to seek out and destroy the holy (to saurig-kind) "Mother Egg". His own ranking is *known to be* EL 17.
8. **Nathan Auburn**; a 30-year old human of nondescript looks and size who currently resides in Nythaarna where he is doing research in that branch of the college of magik's library. He is so unassuming in manner and looks that almost no one at the college there even realizes just what he actually is. His *known ranking* is EL 8.
9. **Rohanna Brandywine**; a beautiful female human, tall (6') and "red-headed", who looks to be 25 years old or so. In actuality she is known to be more than 50 years old but has, in some unknown manner, managed to put her ageing "on hold". She is now thought to be somewhere in the far north regions of the 5th continent, seeking the semi-mythical "City At The Edge Of Forever". Her constant companion and current "love interest", Samson Konockti Jones, an "Adventurer" of some renown, is also known to be accompanying her on her quest. She is *thought to be* ranked at around EL 15 or so.
10. **Gambleheart Darkfoot**; a hobbitt of odd and quite unknown lineage. He is about 75 years old, nearly 4' tall and very muscular for one of his race. He affects doeskin clothing, a beautiful crystal pipe carved in the likeness of a dragon, and is known to enjoy games of, shall we say, "chance". His current location is in the Arduinian city of Melkalund where he currently has a new apprentice named "Chazaru Lightbow" (a plains centaur!!!) under his care. There are quite a few rumors concerning his connection with a certain (in)famous Thief by the moniker of "The Cobra" and their "joint ventures" to acquire certain "artifacts of legend". Just how true they are is anyone's guess, and quite moot now since it has recently been learned that the thief in question has entered into a tripartite marriage contract with the scions of an old and respected Elven family of noble lineage. Anyway, the ranking of Gambleheart is *thought to be* about EL 13 or so.
11. **Andrakkus Blackthorn**; a half elf, half human male about 90 years old and approximately 6' tall. He is "well put together" and is known as an "archer of the finest kind". Apparently archery is his main *hobby* (he's certainly no warrior) and he regularly competes in local contests (usually placing high in the finalists' ranks). It is known that he seldom travels very far from his cottage just outside

Pearlhouse along the shores of the Misty Sea. He is *thought to be* ranked at about EL 11.

12. **Waraziri Goldenfur**; a Pandah-Hha some 45 years old and "average" for his kind. He is of the Kuhdai-Aho clan/caste, and had been sent for training as a Master Of Illusion, but was "discovered" to be "proper material" for the Dreamweavers at a preliminary screening and is thus the *only* Pahdah-Hha to *ever* be any sort of a magician other than an Illusionist. "After his recent graduation from apprentice, he left on a "journey of seeking that which is forgotten, yet longed for and desired", whatever that may mean. Thus his current whereabouts are unknown (he *did* head out of Arduin in a generally north-easterly direction). And 7 years ago, when he left, he was still an EL 1 Dreamweaver, so it is expected that he *probably still holds that ranking*.
13. **Kaeva Starcalled**; a half human and half "I High" elf about 90 years of age. She is approximately 5'10" tall, very slender and "boyish looking", with extremely short silver-gold hair (almost a military "burr-cut"). She affects "male" clothing and manner/style of dress and usually wears several throwing blades prominently about her person. In fact she is *frequently* mistaken for a teen-aged human *boy or young man*. Her current whereabouts are purported to be "somewhere in the Amazonian lands" (probably "The Misty Isles") where she is supposedly looking for her long-lost brother (they were thought to have been separated at a very early age, during a Goblin raid that left them orphaned.) Her ranking is now *believed to be* about EL 9.
14. **Bolivaht Zhand**; a Ghorfarian Kobbitt of uncertain age and of no particular looks other than those ascribed to one of his race. His current whereabouts are believed to be somewhere in the eastern border areas of the nation of Falohyr. It is there he has been rumored to have set out to discover the location of, and to explore, the legendary "Lost Caverns Of The Ruby Sun". He is believed to have graduated more than 50 years ago (making him pretty old for a Kobbitt), but his ranking can only be guessed at, and the "best guess" seems to be *around* EL 20 or so. And **YES** he is that very same Kobbitt who, 15 years ago, defeated the dread "Emperor Ghoul" in a (literally) "nightmare battle" that is rumored to have lasted 11 days and 11 nights.
15. **Zebadiah Sunlock**; a human from the land of Morvaen, and *the only one* to have begun his basic training after he had reached his "majority" (he was 19 years old when he began). He is now 78 years old, and the oldest "normal" human graduate still "active". He is about 5'8" tall and very wiry and strong for a human of his age. He is known to be a strict vegetarian and non-drinker. On the other hand he has quite a reputation as a rake and womanizer. His home for the last 40 years has been the Arduinian city of Khurahaen, where he is currently just finishing the training of one apprentice (named Minga Howlsister, a "barbarian from the northern steppes"), and beginning that of three other new apprentices (names not currently available). His own ranking is *known to be* EL 22.
16. **Joker Windhand**; a half human, half woods elf currently residing at the College Of Magik in Talismondé, Arduin, where he is a teacher. This 89 year old fellow is well-liked by his students and, in general, by the others at the college. he is "rather ordinary of looks", about 5'9" tall and of average weight and build for one of his race. However, his bright green hair and emerald green eyes, make

him stand out where he would otherwise naturally blend right in. And it is those very same colorful attributes which prompted his parents to bequeath him with his unusual first name. His own ranking is *known to be* EL 15.

17. **Doakan Ironheart**; another teacher at the Talismondé College Of Magik, is a Dwarf from the Mickleback Mountains and about 100 years old. He is a gruff and "rough-edged" individual, but liked by his students nonetheless. He is also one of the semi-legendary "Deep Delvers Of The Moondeep Moors", of current popular Bardic songs. His looks are quite striking as he has a "full and wild beard of red-iron hue", bushy eyebrows of the same color and a bulbous, drink-reddened nose. He is seldom seen without a tankard of ale to hand. His current ranking is *known to be* EL 16.
18. **Shanga Grimsword**; an extremely rare "arcane cross-breed" between Goblin and human. She is a strange and, oddly, compellingly "beautiful" woman about 55 years old (but could pass for 20). Bald except for a sort of "topknot" of midnight black hair that streams down to her ankles, she has pupil-less eyes of a "haunting hue reminiscent of blue-white fields of cold, cold ice". Standing 5' tall, her very muscular body has a golden-bronze color unlike any other being currently extant in Arduin today. She likes to dress in very skimpy and revealing "court dancer's" costume of the finest and sheerest spider silk. Believe me when I say that she *never* has to want for companionship! Her "feral beauty" has captured the heart of too many young men (of many different races) to even begin to count. But oddly enough she has *never* been known to actually "consort" with any man. Ever. Rumor has it that she is "seeking the perfect mate". Could be ... Anyway she is also a teacher at the Talismondé College Of Magik, specializing in "trans-reality gates/portals between dream and real-state worlds". Her own current ranking is *known to be* EL 21.
19. **Ta-Roque Ta-Rhade**; a "visitor from beyond the stars", probably human or human-related, of no determinate age (he could be 25 or 45), 7' tall and "thin as a rail", with pale amber eyes and a cinnamon-colored skin". He has vaguely pointed ears, somewhat like a half-elf and auburn hair. He also has 6 digits per hand instead of 5. He says he is "of the Jihiksaru" and is patiently a pacifist and utterly non-violent. His current location is the College Of Magik in Rumbletown, near the famous Thousand Thunder Falls, where he is researching the newly re-opened "Citadel of Thunder" (in the falls themselves). He is believed to have graduated about 25 years ago but is only recently returned from "behind the sky". His current rating is *believed to be* about EL 11.
20. **Jymboi Jhambo**; another of Arduin's "mixed-human" races, who is about 55 years old and 6' tall. He is slender but wiry and seems to have short, light-brown "fur" atop his head instead of actual hair. He is partial to pale green clothing and plays a wooden flute just about everywhere he goes. He is also most often seen accompanied by a *rare* "white raven" that sits atop his left shoulder. This raven seems to be quite intelligent and talks to Jymboi as an equal. But what its (his?) name is, or even why it is white, are mysteries that the Dreamweaver (and bird) seem unwilling to elucidate upon. His current location is in Melkalund, in Arduin, where he is working on some sort of "device". Said device being located in

his Alchemist friend's shop near Teapot Alley. His ranking is *believed to be* about EL 14.

21. **Calamity Cat**; a Khai-Zirin approximately 30 years old and in all ways (save for her rather odd name), quite ordinary for her kind. She is known to have travelled with the semi-legendary David Crossworlder*, and is rumored to have been his paramour. Her current location is unknown as she "let out" some two years ago to find her former companion. It seems that the rumors have him "trapped in the 21st plane of hell", and she (apparently) wasn't about to let him stay there. However as neither she (nor he) have been seen since then it is *highly likely* that they have *both* perished there. Her last *known* ranking was EL 4.
22. **Savoy Schultz**; a human or humans(?) of male gender and apparent age of about 65. Of average looks and size for an Arduinian, the legends have it that he was married to a beautiful courtesan named Kacrolyn Starceyes from Falohyr and, as she was dying from the bite of a Giant Emerald Tree Spider, he used his dreamworks to "bring his true love inside of himself". But, as he was at that time only EL 5, the process aged him more than 30 years. Now it is said he (they?) wander the world seeking a way for her to obtain physical form and for him to regain his lost youth. True or not, such a poignant love story certainly captures the hearts of most Arduinains and ignites the passions of Bards everywhere. For more "information" on this tragic tale refer to the currently popular (in Falohyr and Arduin) ballad called: "Two Souls Of The Rose". His (their?) current location and ranking are unknown at this time.

Well, that's it for the Dreamweavers. Please feel free to make use of these people in *your* games.

* The person referred to is also known to many as "Silver Pen", "Shadow Traveller" and, oddly enough, "Book Rider" and is the most famous sage and chronicler of Arduin's recent history.

ARDUINIAN MARTIAL ARTS

The Arduinian Martial Artist class of player character has been more than adequately covered in previous works of mine. However, little, if any, was said about the martial arts peculiar to the Arduinian world itself. Here then is a listing of the better known (but by no means entire number) of the various kinds in use throughout the Arduinian mythos. It is *not* meant to be a *definitive* explanation, no, it's just a bit of general information for you, as players, in order to add a little more "color" to your game play. They will be listed alphabetically by nation or culture, the very general explanation to follow.

Amazons: There are two basic sorts of Amazonian martial arts: the sort practiced by the semi-nomadic (some say "Corsair") sea-faring culture, and the sort used by the basically "land-bound" city states (of the ancient Greek pattern). The first, "T'Kalla-lal", translates literally as: "Flying Serpent". Its closest "real Earth" counterpart would be the nearly dance-like Brazilian art called "Capoeira". It is a very beautiful form of martial combat that uses cartwheels, flips and sweeps as well as spectacular jumps and kicks. The second type is called "Zan Zu-Ha", which is literally translated as "Three Fists", and is a lot like the Burmese martial art called "Bando". This particular art uses an assimilation of karate-like striking and kicks as well as judo-like holds and throws. The T'Kalla-Lal form is quite popular among human sailors that trade with any Amazonian ports, but as the female warriors tend to ignore males of any race, few non-Amazonian people ever really get a chance to learn much of it. Still many sailors have picked up bits and pieces of the art and in this much-abbreviated form it is called (rather derisively) "Kuk-las", or "Child's Foot".

Dwarves: The only real martial art of truly dwarven origins is called "Amak Gorgas". This translates as "Smash Everything". The closest "Earth analogues" would be both "Sumo" and "Aki-Jutsu", though it leans *much more* towards the former as it is a rather straight-forward "run the blighters over" style of combat. Many non-Dwarven people have mastered this form of martial art, most particularly those from the larger and more aggressive races. Throon use a variant (allowing for their extra height and arms) called "Thugga Aspa" which translates out to "Tear in half". Quite apt too....

Deodanths: There is only one recognized martial art that has originated with this race; it is called "Sshaazoor", and only the females are supposed to learn it. However many rogue males will have learned small amounts of this complex and fast-moving form of combat. The male variant is called "Shaasskah" and is nowhere near as effective as the parent art. The female type translates as a rough equivalent to the Japanese word "Banzai". It is also the female Deodanths' battle cry as they attack an opponent. The male variant translates as "Kill It". The parent (female) form most closely resembles "Jeet Kune Do", or simply put, "Whatever works". It utilizes slashing hand and foot strikes, amazing leaps and kicks as well as deceptive and confusing movements. While few non-Deodanth races have the strength, speed and agility to really use this form of unarmed combat to its maximum potential, many still embrace its "whatever works" philosophy. Most notably, the Royal Guard in Arduin, the famous "Red Dragons", are all trained by female Deodanths in this style of

fighting. And though, by law, they are all human, most have become very formidable practitioners of this deadly art.

Elven Kind: The Elves of Arduin all have their own forms of unarmed combat, each according to temperament and needs. All are, however, closely related to one form or another of our Earth's own Kung Fu techniques. The *Woods Elves* use something called "Aerillion", which translates to "Wind Dancing". It is quite like the Kung Fu style known as "Wing Chun", and uses everything from simultaneous strike/defend moves to hand/foot trapping moves and is, in general, a very aggressive and rapid style of combat. The *High Elves* utilize something called "Syllindion" which translates to "Ice Prevails". It is very similar to the style of Kung Fu called "Liu-Ho-Pa-Fa" and is primarily hand (or finger-tip) attacks, trapping moves and joint locking techniques. Very little foot moves or kicks (lower leg areas only) are used. The *Sea Elves* use a style called "Atael", which translates as "Waves". The closest Earth equivalent would be "Bak-Sing Choy-I-Fut" which uses a very fluid and elegant movement style. It places heavy emphasis on upper torso power and rapidly combining hand and arm attacks/defenses. It also has a series of kicks and jumping kicks that are beautiful and thrilling to behold. The *City Bred Elves* tend to use a combination style derived from the Aerillion and Syllindion "schools" of martial arts. It is called "Tionicca" which literally translates to "Street Dancing". It is this form which many humans have managed to learn and which they have come to call "Tee-Nikka" or just "Tee-En". Neither the Human or "Street Elven" variants are anywhere as elegant as their parent styles, but the argument that they are more effective (due to the down and dirty street fighting techniques that have been added) may be safely made.

Hobbits: Oddly enough these generally gentle and non-violent folks have evolved a form of martial arts out of strict necessity. Seen by the world on the whole a "easy pickings", this race came up with something they call "Tessared-Toliba", translated as "Surprise and Flatten". It is very much akin to our Earth's own "bonebreaking" style of Hawaiian "Lua" and the very rough and tumble style of "Jujutsu" prevalent towards the end of the 19th Century in Japan. It uses a high degree of anatomical knowledge, nerve and muscle centers and "weak points" of the various humanoid races they would be likely to encounter. It is one of the most effective surprise attacks that can be used against humans and humanoid victims known/extant in Arduin today. And it is a highly "secret" form of martial arts where blood oaths of death are sworn by its practitioners to insure that none but Hobbits can ever learn its techniques.

Humans: The Humans and Humanoids of the Arduinian mythos have nearly as many forms and styles of martial arts as there are nations on the world. However the single most prevalent form is the one currently (and for the last 100 years or so) in vogue within Arduin itself. It is called "Rhingorda", and this translates to "Jumping (or Leaping) Sandals". It is extremely close to the real Earth's "Savat" and "Muay Thai" (ie Thai kick-boxing), and relies on spectacularly fast combinations of high (sometimes leaping) kicks and straight-forward boxing-like punches. It is the "street toughs" most favored style of combat and a large percentage of any Arduinian city will know at least the basic rudiments of this form of martial arts. More than one foreign bully all agleam in his fine armor and with drawn weapon has been humbled (or worse) by the supposedly "defenseless" Arduinian citizen he has chosen to "teach a lesson to"!

Kobbits: This small, tough race has, over the centuries, developed a very simple, but formidable, style of unarmed combat called "Jookheft-Khoon", which is a very close approximation of our world's "Tae Kwon Do". It uses many kicks (usually leaping upwards as their opponents tended to be quite a bit taller than themselves), short, fast punches and extreme aggressiveness. "Jooks", as they are called, are known for their always closing rapidly to "short punch" range with their opponents. They specialize in an "up close and ugly, toe to toe, hammer and tongs" style of combat. A few humans and other non-Kobbit individuals have managed to master this brutal martial art, but as most of that race's main instructors refuse to teach others not of their ownkind, these individuals are far and few between.

Other Martial Arts in Arduin

These are the main "racial styles" of unarmed combat in Arduin, but many others utilize weaponed forms of combat that, in actuality, qualify as a "martial art". And, of course, the Assassins' Guild has its own style called "Khetta" that is a close analog of the semi-mythical "Ninjutsu" combined with the Okinawan "Shorei-Rya" style of Karate. Right out of old Earth's "Chop-Sockey" movies! Yeee-hai!!!

That's about it, I hope it has enlightened and entertained you. And please! Read up on martial arts at your local library. Try "Martial Arts, Traditions, History, People" by John Corcoran and Emil Ferkee - I cannot recommend it highly enough to those interested in who's who and what's what!

Hierarchy Of The Black Lotus Society

The following list is included for those GMs who wish to have a real and serious threat to the fabric of law and order in their world. Enough information is given about each of the BLS leaders so that, with very little additional work on the part of the GM, they can become very playable menaces. Remember though that each of these beings will have a whole infrastructure of subordinates and minions and will seldom (if ever) be encountered alone. Remember also that one of the BLS's prime laws is that of **SECRECY** so play these baddies as secretly as possible.

All of these BLS leaders have disguises and alter-egos which they hide behind and in which they can be run into practically anywhere in the everyday life of the characters. Here then are enough rotten apples to really sour your barrel. I give you:

AAOS (aka: The Mad God): **Race:** Supposedly a former Demon Lord, now a demoted demi-god. **Location:** Trapped in the "spaces between" the etherial and astral planes by the other gods. **EL:** functionally a Rune Weaver equivalent of at least the 100th level. **HP:** 1000 **AC:** 2 + 7 **BF:** 1000 (it's a God, remember?!) **CF:** 30 **Speed:** 1,500' (air) 300' (ground) **%Liar:** 100%

Looks: This being is an insane compendium of wings, claws, fanged mouths, tentacles, legs, arms and various other weird appendages all seemingly stuck haphazardly upon what vaguely resembles a humanoid frame some 30' tall. Its colors run the gamut of the entire spectrum and constantly shift, fade and brighten in seemingly random patterns. It is the epitome of a representation of chaos.

Attacks: The variety (and intensity) of its attacks are only limited by the GM's imagination. However, as a generalization, figure that each *physical* impact does at least 1d100 HP of damage. It also has a variety of rays, noxious gas clouds, toxic venom and other such goodies, again, all GM-adjudicated.

Notes: This being is immune to any physical attack by any weapon *not of at least +5 in potency* (due to magik). No fear, confusion, paralysis, poison/venom, psychic probe/attack, acid or magik of *less than* OP 6 can affect this creature in any manner. It regenerates itself at the incredible rate of 10 HP/melee round, regardless of the type of damage suffered. It can travel by "hell walking/flying", teleport itself at will, become invisible and change its *size* and mass by 500% (plus or minus) in just one melee round. Its other powers and abilities are too numerous (or unknown) to list here.

Special Note: This is the supreme leader of the Black Lotus Society (see also Chandra Khal). However, no one in that organization knows this! Aaos is like a shadowy puppet master, pulling the strings of his minions with the sheer force of his mind/will, all the while locked in his limbo-like prison. He schemes and plots, plans and manipulates all to but one end: the entropic collapse (and destruction) of the entire multiverse. A mad god indeed!

ANDREW DRING (aka: Captain Blood): **Race:** Human **Rank:** Head of the Rainbow Isles cell. **EL:** 18 as a corsair, 12 as a trader **HP:** 60 **BF:** 169 **CF:** 17 (22)

Looks: Varied, depending on whether he's playing his pirate role or his legitimate trader's pose. As a trader, he's rather typical for that sort. He's about 6' tall, sandy haired and has brown eyes.

Notes: He is actually an undead wraith but maintains a solid, alive state through an artifact called "The Ring of Tzanemos". However, for it to work, he must drink the blood of a sentient being each and every day. In his wraith state, his CF is increased by 5 to a 22 total.

ALLSTAIR ZODIAC: **Race:** Human (were-bear) **Rank:** Head of the BLS "enforcement" branch **EL:** 18 as an assassin, 9 as a warrior **HP:** 82 **BF:** 156 **CF:** 17

Looks: A burly, muscular individual some 6'4" tall, 265 lbs in weight with a ruddy complexion, auburn hair and beard and hazel eyes.

Notes: He is a cruel and savage killer and loves to maul his victims before killing them. Rumor has it that he killed and ate his two brothers to prove his loyalty to the BLS! Though he is at least 60 years old, his prized "Amulet of the Ages" keeps him at a functional biological age of only 25!

ARKWHON MATHEAUS OF DUNWICH (aka: The Acquisitioner): **Race:** Human (were-spyder) **Rank:** Head of the Recruitment branch **Location:** Mayor or Dunwich, Arduin **EL:** 18 as a priest/mage of Cthulhulos **HP:** 70 **BF:** 159 **CF:** 18 (23)

Looks: A fortyish, rotund, smiling man with rosy cheeks, bald spot and extraordinarily long fingers. His cold blue eyes, however, never smile.

Notes: He is a were-Red Fang spyder and wields an awesome staff called "Heart Devourer" of unknown properties. In his spyder form, his CF becomes 23.

THE BLACK ORCHID: **Race:** Human (were-cobra) **Rank:** Head of BLS cell in Chrysolia **EL:** 18 as an Illusion Master **HP:** 75 **BF:** 157 **CF:** 18 (22)

Looks: An incredibly beautiful woman (CHAR 18) of 6' height, sinuous and graceful build with long, dark hair, golden-pupiled eyes and dusky complexion.

Notes: She is a were-cobra who is renowned for the murder of each and every one of her numerous lovers though it is said she surrounds herself with many "children". In cobra form, her CF is increased to 22.

B'VAAR PENTHALOS (aka: The Black Dragon): **Race:** See notes **Rank:** Head of BLS cell in Ithalos **EL:** unknown but a wielder of "Dragon Magik" **HP:** 64 (human) 185 (dragon) **BF:** 118 (human) 310 (dragon) **CF:** 17 (human) 18 (dragon)

Looks: 6'3" tall, about 200 lbs, odd, ocher colored eyes that seem to have silvery specks in them and of a thirtyish look as to age.

Notes: It is not known whether he is a Black Dragon who is a were-human or a human who is a were-dragon! What is known is that he tends to *eat* those who displease him in even the slightest manner.

CHANDRA KHAL (aka: The Dark One): **Race:** Human (were-panther) **Rank:** The leader of the BLS **EL:** 28 as a "black" star-powered mage **HP:** 88 **BF:** 160 **CF:** 19 (25)

Looks: She has been variously described as an "ageless beauty", the "ultimate woman" and "she who walks in darkness", all in an attempt to give voice to her stunning beauty. She stands nearly 7' tall, is voluptuous, ebony-skinned and has emerald eyes described as "blazing".

Notes: No one knows how old she really is but it is whispered that she was the lover of the Demon Lord Aaos (before his ascension to god-hood) untold eons ago. She was supposedly killed during one of the numerous "god wars" of that mythic age and was reincarnated in this time by her former lover specifically to form the Black Lotus Society. It is also rumored that she herself has demonic blood in her veins due to the fact that an unknown demon (perhaps even Aaos?) raped her mother, conceiving her. In her panther form, her CF is increased to 25. She is now supposed to be "touched by Aaos" and thus immortal. It is also *known* that she regenerates much as does a vampire and has many powers of their kind. Little else is known of this, the leader of the most feared organization in all the Arduinian multiverse.

CHATHA ZAZATHI: **Race:** Half Elf **Rank:** Head of BLS library, archives and records branch **EL:** 15 as an Illusionist, 13 as a Thief **HP:** 71 **BF:** 158 **CF:** 17.5

Looks: Not at all like a Half-Elf — 7' tall, "burning" yellow eyes with green slit pupils, fine silver-colored hair, pale pearl-grey complexion, pointed teeth, very pointy ears, extremely long fingers (two thumbs per hand) with very long, translucently blue nails and a generally very slender, almost emaciated looking build.

Notes: The mother was Elven, the father a minor shape-changing demon of a type sometimes called "Rakshasha". She is "cannibalistic", sadistic, cruel and probably the most intelligent of all the BLS with the possible exception of "The Dark One". She is apparently also capable of either shape changing or illusion of a type so as to appear to be other people.

CIMMERIES: see writeup in the Demon Lords Of Hell.

CTHA-YAAR (aka: The General): **Race:** An alien, feline kind of generally humanoid shape **Rank:** The BLS "Inspector General" who is responsible for all security within the organization. **EL:** 20 as a Techno Warrior, 13 as an Assassin **HP:** 88 **BF:** 156 **CF:** 19.5

Looks: 6'6" tall, 240 lbs. Short, golden-red fur, gold and aquamarine "cat's eyes", retractile claws, etc. There is only a small, lynx-like ruff of a tail.

Notes: She wields a large array of technological gear from blasters to rocket-flight pack and is fully capable of piloting/navigating an interstellar spacecraft. The only other thing known about her is her quick temper, savage vengeance and predilection for the taste of plump, juicy Hobbits.

THE GREYLING: **Race:** Unknown **Rank:** Head of BLS cell in Morvaen **EL:** 16 as a priest/mage of the dread and dark "Elder Gods" **HP:** 76 **BF:** 172 **CF:** 16

Looks: A generally humanoid shaped being some 8' tall, completely covered in long grey hair or fur. Its seldom seen eyes are small and bright red.

Notes: It is extremely strong (perhaps as strong as STR 40!), seldom speaks and seems able to project a psychic aura of "fear" in a 20'-30' radius about itself at will. It is apparently incapable of feeling/reacting to pain from any source.

GOGRUS CHUN (aka: The Unavoidable): **Race:** Half-Ogre **Rank:** Head of BLS cell in Falohyr **EL:** 14 as a Medicine Man **HP:** 90 **BF:** 163 **CF:** 15.5

Looks: 8¹/₂' tall, ebony-skinned, scarlet eyes and incredibly "boneless" arms that end in sucker-covered, 3-fingered hands almost like tentacles.

Notes: The apparent offspring of a mating between an Octrilla and one of the "dark" ogre kind. He appears to be able to psychically track down or hunt down anyone he has ever gotten a "psychic sniff" of. This works not only across physical distances but temporally and dimensionally as well. No one has ever escaped him once he's decided to find them (and none have survived either). No one!

JOSOPHIUS STARR (aka: Hell Eyes): **Race:** Human **Rank:** Head of BLS cell of the Dreaming Isles **EL:** 13 as a priest/mage of the dread "Elder Gods" **HP:** 60 **BF:** 159 **CF:** 17 (20)

Looks: Not quite 6' tall, medium of build and coloration, it is his eyes which are awesome, for in the empty sockets where they should be, burn pale green flames!

Notes: It is said that these "eyes" can see all things, look upon all the planes, know even the truth or lies which hide inside the hearts of men. It is also said that these eyes can kill but as to how, no one knows. No one living that is. He is also an undead of the wraith kind who, through some unknown arcane means, can take on the solid human shape of his former life at will. In his wraith form, his CF increases to 20.

KHAISTRA BHANG (aka: The Seconder): **Race:** Human(oid) **Rank:** Head of the BLS cell in Tharkla **EL:** 18 as a fire and light competent magician **HP:** 105 **BF:** 150 **CF:** 18.5

Looks: A heavily muscled humanoid some 6'8" tall, 300 lbs, bald and with colorless eyes. There is also an absence of any genitalia on the body.

Notes: When his former (real) body was killed in a battle with the infamous Elf Lord Jothar (of the House Of The Rising Sun) some 80 years ago, he did not die. His soul was caught in a specially prepared gem set aside for just such a contingency. The "Dark One" brought the jewel to her secret laboratory and there transferred Khastra Bhang's soul to a body of her own creation. Neither a clone nor a flesh golem, the body is not human in the truest sense. Close but not quite human. And, of course, he now lives only for revenge.

KIKUSAI (aka: The Black Lotus): **Race:** Human **Rank:** Head of BLS espionage and spy network **EL:** 19 as a Martial Artist, 2 as an Illusionist (a recent development) **HP:** 58 **BF:** 150 **CF:** 20

Looks: Petite, strikingly beautiful, this seemingly fragile, 5' tall woman is evidently ageless as she has appeared to be in her early twenties for close to 30 years. She

has flowing, raven-colored hair down to her tiny 18" waist and her "almond" shaped dark eyes compliment her flawlessly smooth saffron complected skin.

Notes: She is a sadistic and cruel killer, well versed in hand-to-hand as well as all sorts of weaponed combat. Her mastery of toxic substances is legendary within the BLS as is her apparently insatiable sexual appetites. It is also rumored that her strength has somehow been magikally enhanced to the point that she's probably as strong as the strongest of Ogres.

LILETH (aka: The White Maiden): **Race:** Human **Rank:** Head of BLS counter-espionage and internal security **EL:** 18 as a cold competent sorceress **HP:** 83 **BF:** 169 **CF:** 19

Looks: A slender, young albino girl of perhaps 15 years of age. Willowy, tall (nearly 6') and graceful as a young gazelle, she has silvery hair like "spun moonlight" and strange pupil-less eyes of a deep violet color. Her snow-white skin, delicate features and child-like aura usually send most men head over heels in love with her immediately. She is also rumored to "sing like an angel".

Notes: She is, in fact, a 300 year old vampire and a cold, emotionless killer of fiendish ferocity and tenacity! She can psychically augment her child-like aura to the point that, versus all males, her normal 17 CIAR score jumps to an unreal 24 total! She frequently works in tandem with her lover/friend, Kikusai.

LEIBERNIORTON: **Race:** Half Elf (were-tiger) **Rank:** Head of BLS cell in Arduin **EL:** 16 as Warrior, 12 as Bard **HP:** 80 **BF:** 181 **CF:** 17.5 (20)

Looks: Blonde haired, blue eyed, devilishly handsome, 6'2" tall, a well muscled 190 lbs and a nicely tanned complexion. He is apparently in his mid-thirties but has looked that way for at least the last 125 years.

Notes: A fierce and savage were-tiger (CF increases to 20 in this form) he is nonetheless a womanizer and Lothario of the first order. He frequently travels incognito as a wandering bard just so he can meet and woo new ladies. He favors flashy, colorful clothes and the music of a lyre (with which he is a virtuoso).

LOVECRAFT POE: **Race:** Human (were-wolf) **Rank:** Head of BLS "Political Action" group **EL:** 17 as high priestess of the Red Moon Spyder cult **HP:** 85 **BF:** 157 **CF:** 16 (19.5)

Looks: A rather average looking woman in her early thirties, about 5'7" tall and perhaps 125 lbs. She has dark brown-black hair and startling blue-green eyes.

Notes: A were-wolf of the "classic" mold and, some say, a bit mad. She is at least 150 years old and has only one known weakness; blonde-haired and blue-eyed children between 3 and 4 years old. These, so the rumors go, remind her of her own children whom she slaughtered in her maddened wolf form more than 100 years ago. In wolf form, her CF becomes 19.5.

MANKHRA XALDAXUS (aka: Phraint Bane): **Race:** Human (were-mantis) **Rank:** Head of BLS cell in Bossalia **EL:** 18 as a "black" druid **HP:** 70 **BF:** 178 **CF:** 18 (23.5)

Looks: A tall (6'7") cadaverous looking man in his late forties with a dark tan, brown hair and steel grey eyes.

Notes: He hates, for no known reason, all phraint kind, slaying them whenever and wherever he can. In his 10' tall mantis form, his CF jumps to 23.5 and he apparently retains all of his druidical abilities. The magik mantis, as it were!

MORAGG SHADOWHAND (aka: The Conqueror): **Race:** Uruk Hai **Rank:** Commander of all BLS military forces and operations **EL:** 20 as a warrior **HP:** 80 **BF:** 192 **CF:** 16.5

Looks: 6'8" tall, 386 lbs of absolutely gruesome Great Orc!

Notes: An incredible tactician (on all levels of military operation), he is a master of more than 100 different weapons. His strength score is augmented by a mystik belt of red dragon hide called "Dragon's Heart" to an amazing total of 35. He simultaneously wields (one handed) a pair of magikal two-handed axes called "Fear" and "Terror". He never gives quarter and never takes prisoners.

MORDIGUS KILLRAVEN: **Race:** Human **Rank:** Second in command of BLS and its day-to-day overall "Chief of Operations" **EL:** 21 as air and wind competent mage **HP:** 75 **BF:** 173 **CF:** 21

Looks: There is no known description of this being on record.

Notes: It is known that he was born of a human mother who had been raped by "some unknown demon". It is also known that he voluntarily became a vampyr some 80 years ago to better his advancement within the BLS. Little is known of this powerful personage within the society's ranks.

NARSO LUNDLEY: **Race:** Krag Giant **Rank:** Head of the "Dark One's" personal bodyguard and her personal messenger and enforcer. **EL:** 18 as a warrior and 16 as a lightning competent mage **HP:** 135 **BF:** 164 **CF:** 18

Looks: 16' tall, fair complected, blonde hair, blue-eyed.

Notes: This being has both the Krag Giant's mind and soul and those of the mage Narso Lundley within it. The mage is always in control but it is the Giant's battle prowess that makes him/them a warrior. This, then, is another of the "Dark One's" experiments, beyond that little else is known.

OMKOLPH YRI (aka: Darkvoice): **Race:** An unknown ameboid type **Rank:** Unknown (within the BLS organization, all that's known is that it "speaks for the Dark One") **EL:** 14 as an Alchemist, 13 as a Sage **HP:** 100 **BF:** 139 **CF:** 20

Looks: A pulsing and quivering mass of translucent greenish-yellow substance of unknown type that does not leave a slime trail behind it as it moves. Its size is hard to ascertain as it constantly shifts its shape but a good guess would be in the 10 cubic foot / 800 lb range

Notes: Perhaps an alien being, lesser demon type or even one of the Dark One's infamous experiments. No one knows for sure.

PRIMUS BLOODSTONE (aka: The Mad Ghost) **Race:** Human **Rank:** Head of BLS cell in Viruelandia **EL:** 15 as a priest/mage of Cthulhulos **HP:** 80 **BF:** 140 **CF:** 18

Looks: A "wild-eyed" brown-haired fellow of nondescript looks and average build, approximately 50 years old.

Notes: He is apparently able, through some arcane means, to become either vampire or wraith-like (or both together) at will. He is renowned within the BLS for his rituals of blood sacrifice requiring the deaths of 13 virgin maidens each cycle of the moons. He is rumored to be the possessor of the mystik athame called "Moons' Gate" and of the infamous "Bloodstone of Delkhoar" (which he has apparently named himself after), both powerful "gate" devices.

(THE) RED WITCH: Race: Trelf Rank: Semi-independent ally and ruler of the "Red Horde" EL: 18 as a fire competent sorceress / 6 as a warrior. HP: 95 BF: 171 CF: 22

Looks: She is 6' tall and has waist length metallic red hair, a red complexion so dark as to be almost black, ruby-like eyes, a muscularly voluptuous body with pointed teeth and long, sharp nails of glittering silver. She never wears clothing of any kind. In battle, however, she does wear a baldric of tanned human skin that allows her to carry the awesome (and legendary) bastard sword called "Unmaker".

Notes: From some unknown corner of the multiverse where she is the absolute ruler, this being has, for reasons of her own, allied herself to the BLS cause. Unlike others of her race in that she has "become one" with an apparently "elemental force of flame", she has used the power thus gained to rule her whole plane of existence. Little else is known of her save that she is totally immune to, and can apparently control at will, all forms of fire or flame.

SAMANTHA ROSE (aka: Hell Flower): Race: Half Elf / Half Faerie Rank: Head of BLS cell in Atenveldt EL: 13 as a time/temporal competent magician HP: 65 BF: 154 CF: 21

Looks: A 4' tall, gossamer-winged beauty with snow-white complexion, "cinnamon" colored eyes and pale blue-white hair. She can not weigh more than 45 pounds and resembles nothing so much as an out-sized faerie with over-developed mammary glands. She, too, never wears clothing of any kind.

Notes: She is rumored to have all of the powers of faerie-kind as well as the prowess of her Elven heritage. She is "playfully" cruel, loves to see things squirm and suffer and is a frequent companion of both Kikusai and Lileth (her duties permitting). Together, they are known as the "Dark Triad".

SIGFRIED HELLHAMMER Race: see notes Rank: second in command of the military forces of the BLS and the leader of its secret commando group (called "Group Twelve"). EL: 17 as a Warrior HP: 100 BF: 175 CF: 15

Looks: A 10' tall, "massively humanoid" lead golem!

Notes: When slain in battle against the dread Lord Elric of the Dragon Tower, Hellhammer's soul was magically retrieved from the etherial plane by The Dark One and put into the golem she had constructed. The general's only comment on the whole matter seems to have been: "Better lead than dead!"

SSITH-LAAR: Race: Half Desert Saurig / Half Troll Rank: Head of BLS training academy EL: 17 as a Warrior, 12 as a Sage HP: 88 BF: 159 CF: 17.5

Looks: All that's the worst of both Troll and Saurig. It's all teeth, claws, scaled skin and all ugly! Perhaps 8' tall (it walks about hunched over so it could be taller), a dusky grey-black with huge eyes like "glowing moon-stones".

Notes: As punishment for some past failures, the Dark One "melded" both a Troll and Saurig into one hideous being, utterly changing its mind as well as its body. All else that is known about it is its intense loyalty to its "Dark Mistress".

T'KREEG: Race: An alien from some unknown quadrant of the galaxy Rank: Head of BLS research and development laboratories EL: 85 as a Techno Scientist HP: 69 BF: 141 CF: 19.5

Looks: Kind of like a 7' tall lavender Elf with amber colored eyes

Notes: Apparently familiar with the race of star slavers called Thaelastra, he uses much of their equipment and dresses in their style (i.e. one-piece, multi-zippered jump suit). Little else is known of this being save for the fact that he and he alone can apparently contact the "Dark One" whenever he wants to, with no fear of her anger.

VOSTER GANDOMYL: Race: Great White Ape Rank: Head of BLS cell in Vargalla EL: 13 as a high priest of the war goddess Lyra HP: 88 BF: 158 CF: 16.5

Looks: A hulking, brutish, 550 lb, 5'10" tall great white ape.

Notes: Another of the "Dark One's" punishments upon a follower who "erred" once too often. However, in this case, it seems to have back-fired as Voster Gandomyl is enjoying his powerful new body immensely. Especially when he gets to rend people limb from limb with his bare hands! He loves it!

XUNDARTH TMYLKYTH (aka: Death Eagle): Race: Human (were-eagle) Rank: Head of all "wild lands" operations EL: 18 as a Beast Master HP: 72 BF: 147 CF: 17 (20)

Looks: Average in every way from brown hair and eyes to his medium build and 5'10" height. In eagle form, he has an 18' wingspan.

Notes: A shape changer who becomes a bright green eagle (with a CF of 20). He is always surrounded by his "brothers of the feather", a whole passel of hawks, falcons and such like. A real loner, he hates all people in general but Elves in particular and has been known to torture one for weeks before letting him die.

YURI TASS (aka: The Shadow): Race: see notes Rank: Head of Khorsar BLS cell and sometimes "trouble shooter" for the Dark One. EL: 18 as a darkness competent wizard HP: 99 BF: 166 CF: 25

Looks: A man-shaped being composed entirely of "shadow".

Notes: Apparently the end result of an experiment of the Dark One which resulted in the corporeal parts of Yuri Tass becoming "of shadow". All else that is known of him is that he can instantaneously travel from any shadow or area of darkness to any other at will and with no apparent regard for the distance between. Rumor also has it that there are few in the BLS who do not fear him, though for no stated reason.

ZELAKIAH JHONES: Race: Human Rank: Head of BLS communications EL: 24 as a Psychic HP: 56 BF: 120 CF: 15

Looks: An old, frail, white-haired man in his "sixties" with watery blue eyes.

Notes: He has mastered an ability known as the "Mind Net" which allows him to remain in contact with up to 30 psychics simultaneously, regardless of the distance involved. No other psychic can perform such a task. He is also a master of all "mind killing" techniques and can self-teleport.

ZITHROGG P'BIHASTARK: Race: Half Orc Rank: Lord of the Slaves EL: 19 as a Slaver HP: 64 BF: 149 CF: 16.5

Looks: 5'9" tall, 220 lbs, greasy ringletted hair and beard, sallow-complected and very unclean/uncouth in his habits. He has blood-shot yellow eyes, badly stained teeth and, as legend has it, hasn't changed his clothes in 30 years!

Notes: Though gross and stinking, he is highly proficient in his trade, fearless and has magically augmented strength (to a reputed STR 28). He is the wielder of an 18' long arcane bull whip called "Soul Flayer" that has been seen to cut metal as a knife cuts cheese! He is also reportedly a cannibal.

ZYRA KAMARGEN: Race: Half Amazon, Half Elf Rank: Admiral of BLS Fleet EL: 20 as Corsair/Warrior HP: 62 BF: 163 CF: 18

Looks: A bit more than 6' tall, deeply tanned and muscular with golden-blond hair (in one waist-length braid) and sea-green eyes. Although at least 50 years old, she has the look of someone half that age.

Notes: A savage pirate known for her sea raiding exploits and her expertise with the matched pair of magik cutlasses (she wields in either hand) called "Yin" and "Yang". A former compatriot of Shandra the Castrator and one-time vice-admiral of the Vargallan fleet, she has now given herself body and soul to the BLS. When at sea, it is usually aboard her black sailed galley "Witch Bitch" with a crew of 170 of the most blood-thirsty cutthroats as ever sailed the oceans!

End Notes: Unless otherwise noted, all listed BFs are in their "were" or most powerful form. Got it? Good!!! Now run! They're after you for being so nosey! All kidding aside, these foul terrors have put a bounty of 100,000 GS on "the head of any being who attempts to spread/release this information into Arduin." So, BEWARE! I certainly do!

New Characters For Use In Your Own World

The following section will provide gamers with several pre-rolled characters with which to adventure/game. They are loosely based on characters who have passed through Arduin over the years. Most of the names are also "real".

These are offered in the hopes that those of you who have a difficult time "creating" characters for game play will be better able to see how such is done. And, of course, those "experts" amongst you can use them for variety and a change of pace or even as "non-player character encounters".

So, to you all, I offer these "lives". Please treat them as carefully as you would your very own creations. After all, once in play, **they are yours.** Enjoy!

NAME: Ganelon of Falquarn			CLASS: Warrior	RACE: Human
EL: 3	DEX: 13	AGIL: 15	CF: 14-9.34-4.68 (10-5 in armour)	
STR: 16	CON: 16	INT: 12	EGO: 12	WIS: 10
AC: 4	HP: 38	AF: +1	DF: +2 (0 in armour)	CIAR: 11

Description: 6'1 1/2" tall, 183 lbs, brown hair, grey eyes with a muscular and well-tanned body. There is a 3" zig-zag sword cut scar on his left cheek.

Personal History: Born twenty-two years ago in the barony of Falquarn to freeholder parents, he was accepted into service for training as a "man at arms" at age twelve. After nine years service to the Baron (including three major battles in the "wars of succession" and several minor border clashes), he was released from duty a year before his contract expired for "meritorious service". He has been a "sell sword" ever since.

Personal Gear: Iron helmet, broadsword with scabbard, round shield, brigantine armour, knee high boots, leather pants and jerkin, wineskin, leather baldric, belt pouch, rucksack, flint and steel, whetstone, dagger with scabbard, two boot knives with sheaths, 1 week's iron rations and 8GS, 2SP and 10CP in a cloth "wallet" hidden under his armour. He rides a coal-black medium warhorse (saddle, saddle bags, blanket roll) named "Night Eyes".

NAME: Khara-La of the Misty Asiles			CLASS: Warrior	RACE: Amazon
EL: 3	DEX: 13	AGIL: 14	CF: 13.5-9-4.5 (8.5-4.25 in armour)	
STR: 17	CON: 18	INT: 13	EGO: 14	WIS: 8
AC: 3	HP: 40	AF: +2	DF: +2 (0 in armour)	CIAR: 10

Description: 6' tall, 160 lbs, blond hair (in a single, waist-length braid), green eyes with a well-tanned and lithe muscular body. She has two gold front teeth.

Personal History: From across the "Southern Sea", she is a sea-going warrior from a long line of such. While only 19 years old, she has been in over a dozen sea fights aboard her mother's war galley, "The Crimson Kiss". She left the ship six months ago to "find out for myself just who and what I am". She loves to drink almost as much as she loves to fight and there is no man she feels inferior to!

Personal Gear: Bronze plumed helmet, bracers, greaves, leather cuirasse with petrules, round shield, scimitar with scabbard, 8' iron-headed spear, dagger with sheath, cloth tote sack, baldric, wineskin, knee-high sandals, whetstone, flint and steel, 1 week's iron rations, one hour candle and 50' of cat gut fishing line with three steel hooks. She also has a hidden leather wallet containing 5GS, 10SP and 5CP.

NAME: **Brandon of the Winds** CLASS: Mage RACE: Human
EL: 5 DEX: 17 AGIL: 13 CP: 15-10-5
STR: 10 CON: 14 INT: 16 EGO: 14 WIS: 8 CHAR: 14
AC: 9 HP: 38 AP: +1 DF: +3 MANA: 35

Description: 5'10" tall, 148 lbs, brown shoulder-length hair and brown eyes. He has a barely noticeable limp (left leg) from a birth defect.

Personal History: Apprenticed to the old mage "Hadroon the Storm Cloud" at the age of nine, he learned his master's ways well. Now 25 years old, he is a "power" of no small renown in the land. But, because of his youth, he is not taken as seriously as he feels his due. So he has decided to "do some great deed or other so that all will know my true power!" Celibate by training (and by natural predilection), he does not care overly much for "silly women".

Personal Gear: Hooded, ankle-length blue robes, sandals, leather rucksack, wineskin, one week's iron rations, 30 waterproof matches, seven 1 hour black candles, a 4" diameter mirror, a silver-bladed althamé, a 12" steel wand (3 uses of "Mystik Dart") and his 7' oak "Staff of Power" (10 uses of "Mystik Chains"). He rides a VG-rated, cream-colored mare (saddle, etc) named "Dawnfog". His pouch contains 18GS and 12CP.

Known Spells: Mystik Dark; Magik Detection; Swift Sleep; Quick Flame; Tangle Trap; Hot Flames; Multiple Image; Flash Point; Ghost Wind; Mystik Chains. He prefers to use his "wind" spell first.

NAME: **Khuzdan Shield Splitter** CLASS: Warrior RACE: Dwarf
EL: 16 DEX: 15 AGIL: 15 CP: 15-10-5 (12-6 in armour)
STR: 17 CON: 18 INT: 12 EGO: 15 WIS: 9 CHAR: 9
AC: 9 HP: 34 AP: +1 DF: +3 (in armour)

Personal History: Raised from birth (she was an orphan) by the priests and priestesses of the Temple of the Silver Moon, she is now, at age 20, ready to venture forth "in the cause of Light". A gentle soul, she nonetheless has a will of iron and an undying hatred of those things Evil or of the Dark. A studious and quiet person, she is well read and speaks Elven and Dwarven as well as the more normal tongues.

Personal Gear: Hooded ankle-length white robes, calf-length sandals, cloth tote bag, lantern, six pints of lantern oil, one week's iron rations, 10 quill pens, 2 pints of ink, 30 sheets (10"x6") of vellum, a net bag with ten apples, 3 1/2" bladed "eating knife" and 4" diameter magnifying glass. Her 6' tall, iron-ended, walnut "Staff of Power" has 10 uses of "Glory Glow" in it. Her leather pouch contains 30SP and 20CP -- her whole worldly wealth.

Known Spells: Glory Glow; Basic Healing; Priestly Magik Detection; Holy Bless; Dispell; Holy Cure. She prefers to use her healing magik.

NAME: **Sacha Cloudfoot** CLASS: Thief RACE: Hobbit
EL: 3 DEX: 16 AGIL: 18 CP: 17-8.5-4.25
STR: 10 CON: 14 INT: 12 EGO: 11 WIS: 8 CHAR: 15
AC: 9 HP: 36 AP: +2 DF: +5

Description: 3'6" tall, 69 lbs with light brown hair, blue eyes and a wiry, tough build.

Personal History: Born 24 years ago in the capital city to a family of silver smiths, he fretted and chafed at learning this trade. So, ten years ago, he ran away and joined the Thieves' Guild. He has had many "ups and downs" along the way since then but has become a proficient thief if somewhat soft-hearted (he won't steal from "poor folks", only from the "rich"). He loves to drink but simply cannot hold his liquor, getting falling-down drunk on but a single mug of ale!

Personal Gear: 100' silk rope with folding steel grapnel, silk shirt, linen pants, wool cloak, light doe-skin gloves, six small linen bags, 1 large canvas sack, leather belt, two steel daggers with sheaths, 2 "sleeve knives" in strap-on sheaths, small whetstone, 2" mirror in brass frame, box of 50 brass tacks, 30 matches in a small tin box, twelve-piece steel lock-pick set disguised as a small music box and a hidden leather "wallet" with 8 GC and 22SP in it.

NAME: **Jaosarn Wanderleaf** CLASS: Wizard/Warrior RACE: High Elf
EL: 8 (wizard) / 14 (warrior) DEX: 18 AGIL: 16
CP: 17-12.75-8.5-4.25 (12-6 adjusted)

STR: 15 CON: 20 INT: 18 EGO: 15 WIS: 12 CHAR: 14
AC: 3 HP: 50 AP: +3 DF: +5 (0 in armour) MANA: 44

Description: 6'3 1/2" tall, 155 lbs, silver hair, violet eyes with pointed ears and a very slender build. He has no little finger on his left hand.

Personal History: This 350 year old Elf is one of the warleaders from the "Orc Wars" some 200 years ago. Since then, he has wandered the world "to see what I can see, to learn what I can learn." His family was murdered in the Orc Wars, so now he hunts our Evil wherever it hides that he may destroy it. He has returned to the lands hereabouts because "I have heard the ancient battle cry once again". He is here to lead.

Personal Gear: Silver-washed scale mail, winged helm, triangular shield, lance, bastard sword with scabbard, dagger with sheath, composite bow (of Uruk Hai make!), quiver of 30 silver-tipped arrows, blue velvet jerkin and pants, knee-high black boots, baldric, whetstone, fletching kit with 21 arrowheads, 1 pint of honing oil, red silk hooded cloak, a wineskin, 4 week's iron rations in two leather sacks. His horse is a beautiful white stallion (saddle, etc), rated "Ex", and he has a velvet pouch with 10RS, 7GS and 13SP inside. He also has an 11" silver wand with three uses of the spell "Fire Wall" in it.

Known Spells: Mystik Dart; Magik Detection; Swift Sleep; Hypnos; Mystik Shield; Wizard Eyes; Firewall; Lightning Strike. He prefers his Lightning Strike spell over all others.

NAME: Daladahr Tanelorn CLASS: Paladin (of the Silver Moon Goddess)
 RACE: Half-Elf, Half-Human
 EL: 4 DEX: 15 AGIL: 13 CF: 14-9.34-4.68 (8 adjusted)
 STR: 16 CON: 16 INT: 14 EGO: 16 WIS: 13 CHAR: 13
 AC: 2 HP: 39 AF: +1 DF: +2

Description: 6' tall, 180 lbs, short black hair, amber eyes with a muscular physique.

Personal History: Born of a Human mother and Elven father, he spent the first third of this 24 years with the Elves in the "Great Glitterwood". When his father died in a freak accident, his mother took him to the Temple of the Silver Moon to further his education. She died two years later and he became dedicated to the cause of Light. However, as he was of a more militant mind, he was taught the ways of war as well as of the Goddess. He ventures forth now for what he considers a "Holy Quest". As a "paladin", he is very religious in his orientation and training. He even has the ability to do the ritual of "Basic Healing" three times per day and the "Holy Bless" once per day. He is, in a way, like a militant or fighting priest.

Personal Gear: Half-plate armour, helm, round shield, lance, mace, two-handed sword with a scabbard, dagger with scabbard, leather backpack, whetstone, 1/2 pint of honing oil, 2 week's iron rations in a burlap sack, knee-high boots, baldric, leather jerkin and pants, wineskin and silver chain with a silver crescent moon amulet suspended from it. He rides a chestnut mare called "Blunder" (saddle, barding, etc) that is rated VG, and has a leather "wallet" containing 36SP and 14CP.

Special Note: He has, apparently, acquired an intense dislike for all Orc-kind somewhere along the way, and now seems intent on "killing as many as possible, as fast as possible." This single-minded attitude is now beginning to get him "in trouble" with the temple.

MORE NOBLE HOUSES OF ARDUIN

The House Of Iskander

This baronial house is one of the oldest "human" noble families in Arduin. They are also one of the few "always loyal" to the king in the large city of Nythaarna. Young Baron Toryas (age 25) runs the house, but his elder (age 29) half brother, Joram, who is a Senior Captain in the king's Royal Border Guards (stationed at Easterly) also has a lot of influence in its day-to-day affairs. All of the other family members, save for a few distant cousins, were killed some six years ago during a family outing on the Misty Sea when their pleasure boat sank in an unexpected spring squall. The house sigel is a blue heater (shield) with three silver lightning bolts superimposed over each other at its center.

The House Of Borthos

Another of the human "old families" in Nythaarna, but this one has been a constant supporter of the infamous "Mad Queen's" family line. thus they have been a thorn in the side of the King and his supporters for, literally, centuries. The house is currently under "royal Edict" and consequently has most of its "Noble Privileges" curtailed. The head of the house is Baron Kuthpert, also known as "Kuthpert The Proud". This 87-year-old nobleman is still quite active and constantly meddling and conniving in political affairs and intrigues. His long-suffering wife, Hanna (age 75), is a near recluse, but the only two children (Dordern, age 50; and Hardwond, age 44) are both very much in evidence in the "political life" of their city. Their house sigel is: a golden bull, rampant, upon a green square.

The House Of Gelsoe

A "Hobbitt" house located amidst the "Plains Of Plenty", and essentially a rural and agricultural barony. They are staunch King's supporters and have always had funds (or food) aplenty to support royal causes. Baron Donwiddy Gelsoe (age 60) heads the house, but his wife Naretta (age 50) is the one who runs most of the daily routine there. They have three children; Bandlew (age 37) and his brother Bandway (age 33) who are both junior officers in the local militia infantry. The single girl, Wendetha (age 28) is still at the household assisting her mother. Their house sigel is: A golden cartwheel super-imposed by a yellow sheaf of grain, both on a circular azure background.

The House Of Lazirur

Count Tewasta Lazirur (age 128), a half elf, is the head of this "Mad Queen" faction noble house. He is extremely outspoken about his anti-human and anti-King beliefs. As a consequence he is constantly in trouble with the authorities. There is strong pressure on the King from many members of the royal court to either censure him or to put him "under edict". The house is also well-known for the high quality of the weapons/armor it produces for sale throughout the land. There are no children and his only wife, Chewella, died of "a fever" some seven years ago. It is situated in

the city of Vorlnyaas, and its sigel is: A white oak tree wreathed in red flames on a triangular (point down) black field.

(The House Of The) Four Roses

Another "Hobbitt house", and another staunch supporter of the King. They are located in the large university town of Leiberton, where the head of the house (Count Jockmar Umbaast, age 67) is one of the three college regents. His wife died five years ago from "moon fever" and ever since the Count has had little "zest" or interest in life. Both of his sons were killed by rogue orcs while serving in the army some eleven years ago. Thus the sole heir to the house is his unmarried daughter (age 24) Kelzi. But as she is currently in her last year of apprenticeship at the College of Magik in Talismonde, it seems that this old house may pass into history someday soon. Its sigel is: Four lavender roses set as a cross (+) on a pale yellow circular field.

The House Of The Wasp

This is another anti-human and anti-King "half elven" household, and another that is so outspoken as to be perilously close to royal censure or edict. Count Ghen Elkermion (age 145) is the head of this house but his lady, the Countess Roweena (age 111) is also a fiery and outspoken woman who puts herself right in the middle of everything that is happening. Their two children, Brehn (age 45) and Brandhon (age 41) are both well-known trouble-makers, gamblers and general ne'er-do-wells in the town of Mistwood (their household is there). Their sigel is: A flying cobalt blue wasp in "stinging position" on a red, square background.

The House Of Naskillion

A "high elven" barony (and incidentally the "oldest" elven line in all the land) and probably the staunchest supporters of the King and his policies. Located in Mistwood, their leader, the Arch Duke Corden (age 935) is renowned as a just but "hard" man. His wife, the Duchess Ruenthaella, is a respected and high level (EL 23) Mage. The Duke is, of course, one of the best generals (now retired) in the Arduinian army. They have several children (7), but the two most notable are: Daerian-dahr (male, age 235) and Shahallaine (female, age 479). Daerian-dahr is currently living in Ithalos and working as the "Champion Of The King" of that nation. He is a "wizard warrior" second to none. Shahallaine is currently the actual head of the College of Magik in the nation of Tharkhalla. This household is also renowned for its longbowmen and fine, fine white destriers. Its sigel is: A pentagram formed of silver arrows, on a pentagonal-shaped cyan field.

The House Of The Black Unicorn

The Marquis Camber Varlusian (age 78) heads this half-elven house located in Talismonde. It is supposedly a "Third Party" (ie, neutral) house, but has recently backed several "Queen's faction" political maneuvers, so this neutrality is now coming into question. His wife of just five years, Lyrinda (age 25) is human and one of the three daughters of the Wanderhouse (see below) clan. They have no children. The house is well-known for its very well-made silver work, jewelry, etc. Its sigel is: A black unicorn, rampant, upon a diamond-shaped scarlet field.

Wanderhouse

Another loyal supporter of the King, and a human house that also has close and friendly connections with "Four Roses" (see above). Count Turlocke Wanderling (age 55) and his wife of nearly 40 years, Diandomira (age 54) head this happy and prolific household. They have five daughters, those still living on the estate being: Junella (age 36) and her husband, Sir Rodney (age 39, a Knight serving as a Senior Captain in the local militia cavalry contingent); Borwenda (age 33) and her husband Larcheros (age 35, a very prosperous gem cutter and jeweler); Tanetha (age 28) and her husband Marko (age 27, an EL 7 Martial Artist who is the assistant director of a local martial arts school). There are also four sons, and they are: Doren (age 15) who is still under-going his military training at the estate; Kalph (age 18) who has recently left to serve an enlisted soldier in a cavalry unit posted on the north-western border of Arduin; Rhando (age 31) who is a full partner in the semi-famous "Ghandalorken Trading Company", and who is usually away heading up a trading ship or caravan someplace interesting; and, finally, Dhulza (age 36) who is the head (and "Captain") of the City Militia in Rookly, where the family estate is located. The family sigel is: 4 steel-colored armored legs (with feet) in a reversed swastika shape. Oh, and local rumor has it that at a much younger age, the Count had operated as an undercover spy for the King, etc, etc.

The House Of The Rising Sun

A fully elven household, and one of the most (in)famous in all of Arduin. Formerly headed by the king's half brother, Jothar De Linden, it was under "Royal Ban" for nearly 25 years, then under "edict" for another 75 years. For treason and high crimes against the crown. Only in the past couple of years has the edict been lifted, and all restrictions removed. All past ties with the family formerly heading this noble household, have been utterly and irrevocably severed and destroyed. The new family heading this house is of the elven "Dawnstar" line. The current head is the Marquis Quacron Dawnstar (age 125). He is unmarried, but his three brothers all aid him in running the household: Laeras (age 107); Hacleon (age 91) and Faerondir (age 125). They just this year took possession of the famous "Adamantine Castle" that had formerly housed the De Linden family. It is perhaps the most famous of all Arduin's keeps and castles (also just about the most difficult to attack). A picture of the Marquis Quacron can be seen on the front cover of Volume VI of the ARDUIN GRIMOIRE. The house sigel is: A crimson "rising" sun (with "rays") on a sky-blue oval field. The house is now firmly back in the ranks of "King's supporters". As a side note, there have recently been rumors that "Lord" Jothar has been seen in Arduin once again. If true, it could be the opening of another of Arduin's "more interesting" chapters....

Hawkhouse

Sir Dorian Hawkmoon (age 25) and his younger brother Kerin (age 20) head this newly refounded human house. Supposedly wiped out during an earthquake (that leveled the old keep) 13 years ago, the two aforementioned brothers were finally located living in the faraway land of Chardos. As nephews of the deceased line they were allowed to assume the family name and entitlements. The elder was knighted,

and financial aid given by the Council Of Noble Houses to help them rebuild the keep and grounds. This work will probably require another 3-7 years to finish. They are theoretically a "Third Party" house, but tend to lean heavily towards the King's faction in actuality. The new keep is located deep in grim and foreboding Bonewood, and they are still having a lot of difficulty finding peasants etc to come and work the newly-cleared lands. The sigel is: A silver, soaring hawk on blue "moon disc".

Hearthhouse

A human household that is firmly in the long-dead "Mad Queen's" faction, headed by the dowager Duchess Khoryalla Harkness (age 48), this Melkalund-based noble family is well-known for their outspoken involvement in politics and for their truly superior brewery (it is the maker of the justly-famous "White Heart Beer"). Their sigel is: A pink heart with white wings and a golden crown atop itself.

House Of The (Black) Hydra

Headed by Baronet Barden Darkoth (age 47), this human noble house is another that supports the politics of the long ago "Mad Queen". Well known for their coach works and fleet of small fishing boats, they are also seen to be the leading proponents of the anti-King elements in Melkalund. The Baronet has remained unwed, though he has "several bastard children" by various of his seemingly ever-changing consorts and mistresses. His sister Lady Wonellia (age 44), a spinster, does the actual day-to-day running of the various interests of the household. Their sigel is: A coal black hydra with thirteen heads, each wearing a crown of crimson flames, all on a square golden field. Rumors abound of an impending royal edict against this troublesome house.

The House Of The Silver Spyder

A relatively new human household located in the small town of Spyder Hill, and headed by Count Penryn Flymyng (age 27). The Count, an EL 12 Sage specializing in insect studies, is married to the Lady Laurynda (age 25), a Captain in the Arduinian army's famed "Pegasus Cavalry Troop". There are two children (from a previous, annulled marriage): Morrigan and Raven, girls aged 6 and 2 respectively. Though still a new noble house, it has already become renowned for its policy of "open to all who come to learn, or to share learning" and the consequent nearly-continuous "full house" of visiting Sages and academicians of all types. The sigel is: A silver tarantula on a red field.

The following is a listing of the "House Sigels" of the noble families listed in the previous volume of the ARDUIN GRIMOIRE, THE HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN (Vol. VI).

The House Of The Storm Crow: A black crow standing upon a broken silver crown, all upon a field of dove grey.

The House Of The Silver Mountain: A silver mountain on a black, star-studded field.

The House Of The Burning Rose: A white rose engulfed by black flames, on a crimson field.

The House Of The Breaking Wave: A silvery-blue "breaking wave" (right to left) on a deep purple field.

The House Of The Golden Lion: A golden lion, rampant, silver-crowned and on a field of sapphire blue.

The House Of The Black Lily: A midnight black lily on a round white field.

The House Of The Red Dragon: A sleeping "red" dragon, tail curled to mouth, atop a golden pile of coins, all upon a snow-white rectangular field.

The House Of The Crescent Moon: A white crescent moon upon a field of midnight blue.

The House Of The Star Bear: A "bear" outlined in shape by 31 seven-pointed stars of bright silver, upon a field of velvet-black.

The House Of The Golden Gauntlet: A golden, clench-fisted gauntlet (facing straight up) on a field of aqua blue.

The House Of The Crown of Thorns: A "Christian Cross" of purest white, with a "crown" of blood red "thorns" just above it, on a field of "cloth of gold".

The House Of The Black Sun: A large flaming sun disc, ebon in color, upon a scarlet field.

The House Of The Seven Arrows: A "sheaf" of seven golden arrows, bound by a silver chain, upon a field of verdant green.

The House Of The Silver Sword: A silver "bastard sword", upright beneath a golden crown, and inscribed with the words (in jet) "King's Edge". All upon a field of snow white.

More Major/Important Landed Siege Lords Of Arduin

Fort Firestair: An important border fortress commanded by Sir Danathorn Lioneyes. It is well-known for its large contingent of Amazonian heavy infantry.

High Iron Keep: Another border fortress, commanded by Sir Wyllum Moonbane. Renowned for the range and accuracy of its dart-throwing, steam powered(!) catapults.

Blackshield Castle: Home of the (in)famous necromancer Galahad Darkstorm and his many gruesome and horrific "guardians".

Grey Krag Keep: Commanded by the semi-retired Uruk general, Gahrkhor Deathhammer and justly renowned for the fierceness and tactical acumen of his all-Uruk heavy infantry guards. And, oddly enough, also very well-known for the quality of the bitter mountain grape wine (called "Krag's Blood Wine") made there.

Scatterfire Castle: The home of Harrekk Fartraveller and his friends the notorious "blood and thunder band", heroes and adventurers all (and all pretty much now retired). It's a well-known gathering place for adventurers, old and new,

from the far corners of the world. It's also a definite "must stop at" for any Bard worth their salt.

Hellbinder: A grim, black basalt blockhouse-like fortress that sits directly atop a known gateway into the 18th plane of hell. It is a volunteer post where only the toughest and bravest are allowed to serve. The current commander is Count Lockely Gryffin, the recent hero of The Battle Of Wolfblood Ford.

Silverstar Spire: A beautiful, silver-sheathed tower more than 300' tall, and the home of the legendary David Crossworlder (see entry in the Dream Weaver's section concerning his probable fate). It is currently rumored that Shanga Grimsword has just arrived here to begin her search for her friend Calamity Cat (see Dream Weaver's section). It is also rumored to house the (in)famous "Tome Of The Timelords".

Castle Falling Star: Renowned for its fine "Fallingstar Ale" and for its master, the well-known retired Bard, Silkenhair Fire-Eyes and her magikal harp called "Starvoice". Another "must visit" for all gifted bards.

Runkir Keep: Sir Aloxalun Runkir's small border keep that is very well-known to all entering Arduin via the north-western caravan routes. The caravansary there is justly famed for its good accommodations, crystal-clear artesian wells and many bountiful fruit orchards.

Woodhaven: An elven log-blockhouse-type "citadel" of immense proportions that is located deep in Elfwood. It is renowned for the accuracy and numbers of its guardian longbowmen.

Karakrong: The great orc fortress in the Glimmerdim Mountains. It is best known for its pair of "life sized" black iron "dragon's heads" that not only flank the massive entry gateway, but which also "breathe" a naphtha-based "dragon's fire".

Angel's Perch: A snow-white tower (visible for many miles) sitting atop the perennial show-capped peak called "Snowhair". Best known for its resident priests who have all been of the "Christian" variety in one unbroken line going back more than three hundred years. It is this religion's main monastery and school in Arduin.

Windkill: The highest situated citadel/fortress in all of Arduin, being situated some 22,800' up the sheer slopes of 28,980' tall Storm King Mountain. It is currently manned by a small garrison of mountain dwarf light-heavy infantry, commanded by Senior Captain Rockheart Ironeye.

Nitewatch: Actually a fortified "manor house" of heroic proportions (it is said that it contains more than 3,000 separate rooms within its huge expanse). Located just outside of Leiberton, it is the longtime homebase of the famous "Knights Of Kelidore", a sort of equivalent to our own world's "Templars", but based on the worship of Skirin. The current commander is one Harrow Skybow, a half elf from Askalonia.

That's it for this installment, please write and let me know if you've any questions and/or suggestions concerning Arduin's history, major edifices and/or notable personalities.

THE GODS OF ARDUIN THE TRINE MOON CULTS

In the beginning, before the time of the ten thousand gods, there were but three true gods (and one great "demon") in all of the world. These three had, as far as anyone can ever know, always existed. Each was a "face" or avatar of some facet of "what is". Each had its abode upon/within one of the three moons circling the world upon which Arduin would, in time, come to be. Each of them had powers and abilities unique unto itself and which was not duplicated by any of the others.

The first of these three, and physically the smallest (as gods go) is The Red Moon Spyder – called by some, "Shagrath". It was he (so speak the time-hoary myths) who wove the very stuff of the world into existence. Because this was so, there is always very much of this god in everything. This is very unfortunate as Shagrath is the epitome of all that is evil and dark. This god is also "Lord" to all of the spyders and their kin as well as a constant dabbler into the affairs of all beings of any sentience. He loves nothing more than to corrupt and turn to evil ways all things bright and good. (Although called "he", Shagrath is actually hermaphroditic and fully capable of impregnating him/herself and bearing "his" own children!)

The second of these three (and physically the largest) is The Great Night Hawk – called by some, "Skirin, The Lord Of The Night". His abode is the brilliant blue moon (which, it is said, but reflects this god's own glow). To him all things are of equal weight: light and dark, good and evil. He is ever the final arbiter in the affairs betwixt all things opposite.

The misty legends tell us that it was Skirin's "breath" that brought forth the air and clouds (and eventually the rain therefrom), so that each living thing does pay him homage with each breath that they take.

The last of the original three gods is The Lady Of The Silver Moon, sometimes called "The Lady Of Light". Her abode is that largest and brightest of the three moons, the moon of silver. She it was who created all things that grow and live upon the lands, in the seas and in the air, so that each and every one of us is one of "her children". She is also, occasionally, referred to as "The Shepards" (and we, of course, are her flock). It is she who is in constant contention with Shagrath and all that he may wreak upon the world.

The enmity between Shagrath and The Lady Of Light is primeval and without any chance of rectification. The Spyder god considers the world and all within it to be his to do with as he desires. After all, he built the world, didn't he? The Lady, on the other hand, feels the pain and tears of each and every one of her creations, and knows that she must not allow the complete and utter corruption of that which was intended for good.

This contention has, at times, taken on the proportions of a literal "war" with each side creating (or twisting) beings to do their bidding; usually something contrary to what their opponent would wish. This and the tremendous out-pouring of forces that this has involved, has caused all of the races and many of the "new" gods to come into being. But so old is this happening, that few (even among the "created" gods)

remember their origins or their connections to either of the three original gods of the world.

Those few gods not directly or indirectly created in this most ancient of conflicts, were allowed entry to this multiverse (from "elsewhen") by the gaps and rifts torn into the very fabric of time and space over the aeons. Most of these tears eventually "healed" of their own accord or were repaired by the "Silver Lady" (another of her names). Those that have not been repaired, are what is now known as "Nexus Gates".

Before going to current times and the various worshipping rites of these three gods, there is one other being that enters into the three-sided equation: the one known as "The Demon Of The Dark" and "The Ever Wanderer". This being is of no discernable size, shape or color, yet is fearsome and terrible beyond any normal means of description. It is the epitome of utter entropic destruction and annihilation. Nothing and no one is its friend and all things living or inanimate are its enemies. It exists only to cause all other things to cease to exist.

The appearance of this demon instigated the only joint venture that the three primal gods ever undertook together. For they understood full well that only as a united group would they have even a small chance of defeating this "sentient destruction".

As it turned out, the triad could not destroy something that was destruction itself, and could not slay something that was anti-life to begin with. All they could do was to trap it. This they did, within the fourth moon of Arduin, the dread "Black Moon", also called "The Wandering Moon".

They flung the prisoning moon away from the world, hoping to send it so far beyond themselves in both space and time that even should the demon break free somehow, it could never find its way back.

But such was the sheer "will to destroy" of the prisoned demon that its very desire managed to swing the cbon moon back towards the world as a hurtling missile of destruction! It took one thousand of our current years for the moon to return, and the now-separate triad of gods were sore surprised to see it once again.

Trying to form their united power once more, to deal again with the moon, the Silver Lady found that evil Shagrath refused to lend his help this time! Without the added power that he wielded, the remaining two gods could but deflect the moon back outward once more, into a never-ending cycle of one-thousand-year-duration returns. And Shagrath was mightily pleased for it afforded him great pleasure in seeing his foes having to strive mightily each thousand years to divert sure disaster. And thus have matters stood for untold millennia.

The legends of the black or wandering moon have been all but forgotten by the vast majority of sentient beings upon the world (assuming that their kind had known of it to begin with). The moon is very small, dark and next to impossible to see unless it passes across the face of the sun. Even then it would take an extra-ordinary eyesight to see it. Out of sight, out of mind as it were, and probably better for the sleep of the unknowing masses it passes by each thousand years!

To come forward into more modern times, we first discuss the Spyder god and his minions. This one is worshipped by all manner of goblin, troll, orc, were-creatures

and other such unsavory kind. The worship is most often manifested in orgiastic frenzies of blood sacrifice (of sentient beings), self-flagellation and self-mutilation. It is not a religion that cultivates death by old age for its followers!

Many of the new (and "outsider") gods have allied themselves with Shagrath. Tanabras (Lord Of The Dead), Set, The Great Scorpion God, Loki, Cthulhulos and Baron Samedi to name but a very few. At many of their rites you will also find icons to Shagrath and hear prayers and incantations to "The Great Many-Legged God", or to "Nite Legs" and other such epithets.

Skirin is "Lord" of all hawks, eagles and such kindred feathered creatures, and is most often followed by hunters, Foresters, Woods Rangers and even Thieves (he "rules the night", you know!) Those other gods allied to him include: Xuanth (The Hand Of Fate), Horus, Pegonus (God Of The Pegasi), Thor, and Boreas, Lord Of The Winds, to name but a very few.

The prayers to Skirin are usually quite personal, and do not require the intervention of some priest or other. This is probably why it is a very popular form of religion among "loners" and other solitary types. But a priesthood does, in fact, exist and is fairly popular anyway. Skirin never imposes anything of his upon any rites or worship of any of his allied gods, so such things will vary from place to place.

The Silver Lady, the last of the three primal gods, is, perhaps, the most popular and revered of all deities in the Arduinian mythos. She has many of the prototype aspects of some of her more "developed" allied gods, and is the true progenitor of all life upon the world. This is something still very well known by all. Her rites involve the rising and the setting, as well as the phases of the "Silver Moon", and the large priesthood is made up of mostly females. Some of her better-known allies are: The Great Earth Mother, Athena, Saren (The Sun God, and sometimes "consort"), Megalon (The God Of War, and her continual "suitor"). There are many, many more in this pantheon of allied gods and goddesses, but almost all of them have one thing in common: their abiding commitment to life, light and "Law" (or part of this anyway).

Each of these deities will occasionally manifest themselves upon the surface of the world in some physical form or another. The Lady is always in one of her feminine guises, from "glowing and god-like beauties of ethereal splendor" to common, everyday women (usually garbed according to location and situation in the most appropriate manner).

Shagrath almost always manifests himself as a huge, thirteen-legged spyder of blood-red coloration or in some other arachnid form equally horrid.

The Great Night Lord is never seen except in his form of a great winged hawk of sapphire blue. We're talking 1,000' wingspan here!

The "mother" is best known for her compassion, love and her indomitable will that contests for every soul with even the least bit of "good" within it. Her evil opponent is known for his savage and wanton killings of foe and follower alike, as well as the greedy devouring of any soul he can reach.

Skirin is renowned for his ability to stay out of the battles between the other two primal gods. However he has, upon occasion, taken sides over some issues, and each time it has been with the "Lady" and against the spyder god. This has earned him a general "enemy status" from the bloody god and is the frequent reason behind the

battles fought between these two gods. Skirin neither knows nor cares why he must fight the spyder god, he just does so as and when necessary.

As an ending commentary upon these three religions it must be noted that the spyder god's worshippers are not well-liked by most, and are frequently banned or proscribed, so they are, in general, a very secretive bunch.

The worshippers of Skirin do not proselytize and do not make a "big thing" out of their beliefs. Conversion comes on its own and in its own time.

The followers of the Lady Of Light, however, actively seek new conversions and are world travellers in their "crusade to destroy the darkness and all of its minions"! They are very active politically and will, upon occasion, try to be the "powers behind the throne". They do all this with, usually, the full and complete blessing of their deity who likes as many believers as possible in the hope that through sheer numbers, light and good will prevail.

All of these three gods and their concomitant religions are powerful and real "movers" within the world and game of Arduin. Their followers have been involved in just about every major undertaking (usually as player characters) of the last one hundred and fifty years (game time already played out).

If anyone should wish to know more about each of them, I suggest that you pick one of the appropriate analogues from fact or fiction (ie The Earth Mother, etc) to use as a basic idea starter.



The Principal Major and Minor Religions, Cults and Sects of the Arduin Cycle

Due to the large number and great complexity of the religious beliefs in the Arduin cycle, this is mainly just a list of the same with the bare basic minimum of information and historical background (where known). It is intended mostly as a "trigger" for the reader that will, hopefully, let them "fill in the blanks" as it were, for their own world's religions.

Each listing begins with the name of the religion, followed by a [LETTER CODE] showing which racial types tend to be its majority of adherents. That is followed by a second [LETTER CODE] indicating its "alignment" vis-a-vis other Gods and/or its general "attitudes". If more than one such alignment code is listed, this indicates a major schism within the ranks of the followers of the religion.

The listing will finish with *generalized* locale for its majority of followers and then a note or two about its tenets, etc.

As an example: Abbraxadon**: [SS-H-O | CE] is shown as a religion that practices blood sacrifices of *sentient* beings (**); is generally subscribed to by Swamp Saurigs (SS), humans (H) and Orcs (O); and is chaotic evil (CE) in nature.

Listing Codes

Racial Abbreviations	Alignment Abbreviations
A = Amazon	A = Amoral
C = Centaur	C = Chaotic
D = Dwarf	E = Evil
DD = Deodanth	L = Lawful
E = Elven	M = Marginally
G = Goblin kind	N = Neutral
GN = Gnome	T = True
H = Human	
HB = Hobbit	
KS = Khai-Shang	
KZ = Khai-Zirin	
O = Orc Kind	
SD = Desert Saurig	
SS = Swamp Saurig	
U = Uruk Kind	
W = Wolfing	
OR = (All) Other races not previous mentioned	

For example, TC = True Chaotic,
LG = Lawful Good, etc

An asterisk (*) after the name of the religion means that it practices blood sacrifices as part of their ritual observances. A double asterisk (**) indicated that the blood sacrifices are the kind that usually use sentient beings (ie people) as the sacrificial object. These religions tend to be banned in most "civilized" nations.

Here then are the religions of the Arduinian cycle.

ABBRAHADON:** | SS-H-O | CE | The 'Father Of All Demons', also known as the "Demon Sire Cult", now a nearly forgotten cult centered mostly in the border areas around the jungles of Green Hell. Once an extremely powerful/worldwide religion, it is probably doomed to extinction in the next century or two due to a steadily decreasing membership.

AMARYDION*: | H-D-OR | LG | The quintessential "Earth Mother / Goddess" religion, also known as the "Our Mother" cult. Though centered in Falohyr, it is of world-wide scope and importance, and packs considerable political punch.

(The) AEGYPTIAN PANtheon:** | H-OR | from TL and LG right through CE and AE | The entire "earthly" bunch of Egyptian Gods/Goddesses with all of their differences and attributes. Not very numerous or powerful but fairly wide-spread and usually having a "high profile".

BOREAS: | H-A-C-OR | TC | Also called the "Borean Cycle" and/or the "Borean Brethren". A world-wide religion that began (and has its greatest number of adherents) in the cold, northern wastelands. It is an extremely popular religion for "barbarians" and the like.

BORSALA: | H-A-OR | TL | Also called "The Temple of The Sea King" or "The Sea Lord" cult. World-wide but extremely strong in the maritime nations (in particular: the Rainbow Isles and the Misty Isles).

BLACK PANtheon:** | O-U-H-D-G-DD-OR | CF/AE | Also called "The Elder Cycle" and "Those Before". The oldest *organized* religion in the world and, perhaps, the most horrific and terrifying. It is world-wide in scope but officially banned just about everywhere except in the dread nation of Marmachand (where it is the state religion). Its horrendous deities are probably the most feared anywhere and include such awesomely evil deities as Cthulhulos; Hastara and Nyarlythaghar.

BRABNALDA*: | H-E-C-OR | ML | Also called "She Who Is" and "The Four-Faced Goddess". An extremely ancient religion thought by some to be the predecessor of Amarydion. Now is a nearly forgotten cult mainly relegated to "wilderness areas and wildlands" of the world.

CHU-KHEM:** | H-G-KZ-A | LE | Also called "Chumm-nah", "A'Chuu-Kho" or "A-Cho". This is an extremely "bloody-handed" and vicious "fertility/mother" cult seen mainly in eastern areas like Pandooris and Quawlmna. Usually female dominated and harvest oriented, it is vying to become the principal religion in its area and is thus "at war" with the other religions already in dominance there.

CAT-OF-FIRE: | KZ-H-A-OR | TC | Also called "(The) Firecat Cult", "Firepaw", "Fire-Eye", "Firegiver" (or "Bringer"), "Firefur" and "Lightbringer". Though few in number, this cult is widely seen in maritime/coastal nations (particularly in the Cirthian League, Chardos and the Isles of Fire). It has political clout far exceeding what its size would indicate and is "the" up and coming religion for sailors and their kind. However, its roots are Khai-Zirin and feline oriented and that's where its main numbers still lie at this time.

DEAMONSHYRA:** | H-A-KS-W-DD-OR | AE | Also called "She Who Is The Dark" and the "Deathlust Cult" (all of the Goddess's followers are called "Children of the Deceiver"). Based mainly in the southern, warmer lands like Vargalla and Poiarra, it is a religion that glorifies deceit, treachery, lying and all things "false and

hidden". Many of the southern nations' Thieves Guilds have been virtually taken over by these types. It is reputedly the main driving force behind the infamous "Cult Of The Crimson Kiss" (see AG VII).

DIORA: | H-E-HB-A-OR | LG | Also called "The Bright One", "Her Brilliance", etc. A relatively new (about 300 years) religion based mainly in western lands such as Tharkalla and Ithalos. Still small in numbers, the followers are nonetheless enthusiastic and loud in their zeal. The Goddess is heralded as "the epitome of all that is light and good".

ERU: | E-H-OR | LG | The adherents of this deity are known as "The All Followers". An ancient and mainly Elven God, Eru is the quintessential omniscient, aloof and cool "Father God". He is also considered to be "The Whole" or "The All" of the entire multiverse! His followers are all practitioners of deep meditation/prayer and tend to be rather arrogant about their religious superiority. World-wide in scope, its "headquarters" is in Arduin itself.

(The) EMERALD STAR CULT: | H-A-E | Mostly LG to OG | Basically, the entire group of Celtic/Irish Gods and Goddesses with all of their attributes and differences. Very few followers scattered world-wide with the majority being in Arduin, Falohyr, Morvaen and Tharkalla. Many Bards and Runesingers follow these deities.

EYEGROUND:** | see text | TC | This tiny cult is followed only by three mountain nests of Gargoyles in the western reaches of the Mountains of Madness. But, as they cover a large part of the Arduinian continent in their raids and depredations, they are quite well known. Especially as they paint blood-red "eyes" upon their bellies and screech their deity's name continuously. Little else is known about this god.

FAHDE (THE FAIR): | HB-H | LG | Also called "Fairwater" and the "Tears of Life" by her few followers. A tiny cult mainly in the eastern lands such as Ghorfar and Chund. She is the "Goddess of gentle spring rains, fair weather" and is the one that "cries the tears of the world". A tiny splinter sect calls her "The Silver Lady's Daughter".

FALHAINE: | H-KS-OR | TL | Actually, this is the Kozangi way of saying "Allah" and is what the "Confederacy Of The Followers of Allah" are called in the Arduinian cycle. It embraces all of the Moslem sects and sets none apart or above any other. By far the greatest number of adherents are of the Khai-Shang race and they are its fiercest and most adamant believers. The "center" of this religion (and where its version of "Mecca" lies) is the Kozangi Dales.

GALIDOS: | E-H-A | CG | Also called "The Bright" but usually referred to as "The Gee-Cees" by outsiders. A fairly numerous (and mainly Elven) cult but widely scattered (centered mainly on the 4th continent), this God is supposedly "The Only Son of Eru" (see earlier entry). His inner circle of believers call him "Star Singer", "Everlight" and "Morningstar". This God is also the original patron deity of all Bards and Runesingers, and is thus "not too fond of" the Emerald Star Cult deities.

HIM: See special entry later.

HLALAPLOR: | G-O-U-OR | AE | Called also "Hlala", "Alaploor" and "The Grey Hunger". This is a hermaphroditic deity that is the penultimate manifestation of disease, pestilence, hunger and corruption (as in 'the corruption of the grave'). It has few followers, mainly located in/around the Great Sand Sea and the Scorpion

Mountains and other eastern "waste" areas. It is possibly a former "Greater Demon" now elevated to God-hood.

HELDORÉ: | D-H-W | TL | Known also as the "Artificer", the "Farrier" and "Forge Mistress". It is a fairly large cult, dwarven originated and thus strongest in the Mickleback Mountain dwarfholds of Arduin. She is though to be "the greatest metalsmith of the multiverse" and is worshipped in immense underground temples full of clanging iron and belching flames.

IRIDONOS: | H-A-DD-OR | AE | A variant spelling can be "Irdiondos" but he/she is usually referred to as "Glitterlord", "the Corruptor", "Haj", "Glorianus", "Iondahr", "Irdiona" (the last three in its female guise). A deity which can change its gender at will (from male to female or even to a hermaphrodite) and which is the epitome of lust, debauchery, excess and decadence. It is gleefully referred to as "The Orgamsa Cult" by its numerous followers. It is world-wide and becoming quite a nuisance due to the "loose" and unreliable habits of its followers.

JAIQUELL: | H-A-HB-KZ-OR | TN | Called also "Old Nimblequick", "No-See-Um", "Quickly-Quickly" and "Ticklepurse", it is more often called "The Thieves' Heart Cult" by its many, many followers. The "patron" deity of thieves world-wide and a very powerful and overt political force in many nations. Probably the most popular "low class" religion in Arduin, especially as it's not really "organized" like other "major" beliefs but is "run" by semi-official "cells" (i.e. groups of followers) in a rather haphazard manner.

JUSTINORN:** | H-D-W | LE | Also called: "The Divider", "Dark Judge" or "Old Split". Mostly an "eastern" religion centered around Ghorfar and Sarkesh, it is a dark and foreboding religion that is heavy on vengeance, retribution and "getting even". Its spiritual power (in its main area) far outweighs its lack of numbers.

KHRYSIERIOS: | DD-H-HB | LG to LE | Literally, the Arduinian way of saying "Jesus Christ" and is what the "League Of Faiths Of The Followers Of Christ" call him. It is basically protestant in style but does also contain Catholic and all of the other "Christian" faiths within its ranks. It is currently undergoing a fierce internal struggle between the majority "Lutheran" adherents and lesser-numbered "Catholic" members for the dominance of the "Council of Prophets of Christ" (this religion's "ruling body"). It is too early to say which will win.

KHROM: | H-A | ML | Its members are frequently referred to as "Khromites" or "Khrommies". Mainly only humans, a small cult centered around the Human and Amazon northern "blue" barbarian clans. Basically, it's a lot like Eru but with grimmer and darker overtones (i.e. closer to a "war God").

KHRONOS: | H-HB-O-U-GN | TL | Occasionally called "The Hourglass Cult", it epitomized, at one time, all of the manifestations of "time". However, this deity has pretty much been relegated to minor or demi-God status by the "greater" God called "Tarong" (see later entry). With just a few followers, mostly in the more ancient empires and nations (such as Pandooris and Quawima), it is a religion seemingly fated to disappear in the next few decades.

(The) LAST OF THREE: | H-HB-D-GN OR | LG | Also called "The Life-Bringer Cult" and (in its inner circles) "Atos, The Last of the First". Found only on the remote and seldom visited "6th" continent where its few followers mainly congregate

in the incredibly ancient fortress called "Godshammer" which is, itself, smack dab in the middle of the nearly impassable "Godslost Desert". On the other hand, as these true believers are the most accomplished and best "healers" in the entire world, many folk annually make (or die trying) the arduous trek to their gates.

LYRRA:** | H-O | AE | Also called "Tyra-een" and the "War Queen" (mainly by her followers who are called "The Brethren (or Brotherhood) Of The Spear". All races form her followers but, by far, it is human and orc-kind who make up the bulk of their numbers. Historically speaking, this Goddess is the "evil twin sister" of the beloved "Silver Moon Goddess" (see later entry) and heads a religion that is *banned in every single nation of the world* (including even the foul and evil Marmachand!) This is due to the fact that *the only followers are dead ones* that have become "living dead" or "zombies" who are totally under her control. Even her priests and priestesses have little or no free will at all. Nearly eradicated upon several occasions over the millennia, this horrid and despicable "faith" has, nonetheless, managed to "resurrect" itself time and time again, to wreak havoc on all living beings. Thank all the Gods, this religion is *currently* only in small (but slowly increasing) numbers (worldwide).

MEGALON: | GN-A-O-U-W-KS-H | TL to LE | Just about the primary "war God" in all the world for the last 200 years or so, he is also called "The Soul Of War" and his followers are referred to as "Soldiers of Megalon". World-wide in scope and with one of the numerically largest memberships of all the religions, it is a faith to be reckoned with in politics and in proselytization, this religion is in the forefront everywhere. The faith (and followers) epitomize war and battle from all of the most chivalrous and "honorable" aspects. Each temple even fields a mercenary unit for hire made up entirely of its parishioners.

MORDAKK:** | H-A-DD-OR | CE | Also called "Doomfire" and/or "Darkenfire". The larger numbers of followers of this faith are called: "The Fellowship Of The Black Flame" and are quite active both politically and in proselytizing world-wide. However, their major center seems to be amongst the many small clan holdings and city states of the 4th continent.

MARBONAS: | H-HB-D-OR | CG | Called "The Laughing One", it is a God who is a "bit mad" and who loves nothing better than to make all eternity extremely "interesting" (i.e. difficult) for all other "Gods, demi-Gods and other such worshipped being as may be in existence". If the mischievous and magikal race called "Brownies" worship any deity, it is this one and/or Puck (see later entry). A very popular faith world-wide but especially in Arduin, Morvaen, Marigore and Viruelandia. Its followers are officially called: "The Marbonian League", but usually referred to as: "Smilers".

MACCHRONDAHR*: | H-O-U-A-W | TN | It has many other names, the best known being "Macchius", "Macchus", "Macchar", "Aichos", etc. Its followers are called "The Brotherhood Of The Bloody Sand" because it is the patron deity of all gladiators and other such "swords for hire". Followers are found in *every* race and nation in the world. You can always spot one of this faith by the small trident brand over their heart (and some proudly wear these upon their foreheads).

MALKUSS: | H-D-O-G-GN-C-A | TN | Also called "Thundereye" and "Stormbringer", he is the epitome of a barbarian "storm God". Found mainly in the

"barren and waste areas" of the 3rd and 5th continents, it can still be encountered just about anywhere else. Not large in numbers, this very old faith seems to have lost its drive and will probably fade away completely over the next hundred years or so.

NOIHOQUALIA*: | H-D-HIB-C-A | LG | A southern counterpart (sister?) of "Brabnalda" (see earlier entry), also sometimes referred to as "The Corn Woman", "Lady Maize" or "Singer of the Seasons". Not numerically as strong or as politically (or otherwise) important, she is nonetheless a well loved and respected deity.

NIABUS: | DD | AE | Also called the "Black Sun/Star Cult", it is supposedly the entropic manifestation of the "end of the multiverse". Mainly deodanths follow this God but a few others do pop up from time to time. This "God" was either "brought back" or "followed back" when time-travelling deodanths "visited the end of all time, of all things". Its main aim now is thought to be much like that of "Aaos" (see earlier entry), i.e. the entropic end of everything. In short, not a "nice" deity at all.

(The) **ONE WHO WAITS:** | U-DD-KS-G-O-OR | NE | This is, perhaps, the most enigmatic deity known as there has never been any pictorial or written description of it (him?). The followers of this God are called "Those Who Also Wait" and/or "The Guardians Of The Wait". The basic tenet of this faith is quite simple: "waiting for The Ending One". It is a minuscule but wide-spread religion and is encountered in the oddest of locales. Who or what "The Ending One" is, is also a mystery.

(The) **OLYMPIAN MYSTERIES*:** | H-HIB-D-A | TL to LE | Basically just the whole pantheon of ancient Earth's "Greek Gods" with all their variables. World-wide in scope and possessed of moderately large numbers of followers, this religion has more than a modicum of political clout and general "visibility" in the world.

OUR LADY OF THE SILVER MOON: | H-E-D-HIB-KZ-A-OR | LG | Also called "The White (or Silver) Moon Sect", "White Lady", "Lady Moon" and "The Silver Savior", this is a sort of amalgam of "earth Goddesses", "Hera", "The Corn Woman" and several other similar ideas. Just about the largest and most popular religion on the entire planet, it is headquartered in Arduin. It has an amazing amount of political (and military) clout and makes no bones about using it as they see fit.

ONSHOOM THE GOLDEN*: | H-D | NE | Called variously "The Golden Avenger", "Golden One" and "Goldaxe". The followers of this smallish sect are called: "Guardians Of The Golden Axe" and they are mainly found on the eastern-most coastal cities of the 4th continent. Many of the temples field companies of mercenary axemen.

PEGUS: | H-E-HIB | LG | An extremely small sect (less than 300 members world-wide) that was begun less than 120 years ago (revived, actually). It's basically the God of Daffodils. Little is known about them save that the followers travel the world planting — you guessed it — daffodils. No wonder the world refers to them as "Daffies".

PUCK: | HIB-H-D-GN-OR | CG | This is the ultimate God of practical jokes, laughter, pranks and tricks. With followers called (semi- affectionately) "Puckies" and their only prayers being "true and hearty laughter", well, you get the idea about this wide-spread but (thankfully!) small in numbers religion. Curly, Moe and Larry would feel right at home in this religion!

P'VANZ: | H-GN-O-U-C | NE | Also called "The Perverse Ones", it is the God of contrariness, stubbornness and very nonconformist sexual practices. The followers of this strange cult are called "Perverts" and their temples are most often seen in the south-eastern coastal cities of the 5th continent.

PAX ROMANA: | H-D-A-GN-C-HIB | LE to LG | This is the earthly Roman Pantheon of deities with all their diversity. It is occasionally called the "Roman League" and is world- wide in distribution but not in any substantial numbers.

PIADAIH: | ELVES only | TC | Also called "The Horned Piper", "The Singer In The Woods" and "The Woodsong Cult", it is nothing less than the ancient elven demi-God who taught that race to sing. He is a bigoted Godlet who will not allow any non-elves to "worship" him. He also *hates* any and all non-elves Bards, Runesingers etc.

RAUSII-ABNOS: | H-E-D-SS-SD | A | Called "The Cult Of Ages". An extremely small cult with tiny congregations on both the 4th and 6th continents' wasteland areas. It is a "faith of the ages" ... whatever that may mean.

SABADARUM: | H-A-DD-OR | TC | Also known as "Subnarumi", "Subbra", "O'Subarra" and even "K'Ahar-A'Hone". This female deity is the "Goddess Of The Dances Of Life And Death". The followers of this substantially large faith are called "Star Dancers". The religion tends to be centered around the southern hemisphere's small island chains (running from the equator down to the antarctic) — places like "The Windwhistle Isles", "One Tooth Cay" and "The Tumbleblock Islands" all come to mind.

SKIRIN (The) NIGHT LORD: | H-D-E-HIB-A-OR | NG | A faith that is found in the hearts of a goodly number of Arduinian thieves. See earlier entry for all other pertinent facts.

SAREN, THE SUN GOD: | H-A-C-OR | LG | A plain and simple solar deity with followers called "Children Of The Sun" (officially) and just "Sunnies" by everyone else. A God popular on the 5th continent and in Arduin but found in lesser numbers world-wide. They are famed for their unusually high ratio of saints and healers in the ranks of their priesthood.

SET:** | O-U-G-DD-SS-SD-H-OR | LE | Also called "The World/Great/etc Serpent", "Eversnake" and so on and so forth. Its followers call themselves "The Brotherhood" and/or "The Circle of Set" or even "The Black Circle" but most common folk just call them "snakes". It is an ancient and evil God in ill repute in most nations of the world but still a religion that wields great political and other forms of power. Probably Shagrath's staunchest ally.

SHAGRATH, THE RED MOON SPIDER: | H-O-U-G-SS-SD-OR | CE | Also called "Father Many Legs", its legion of followers call themselves "Spydrons". See earlier entry for all other details. Also see the special entry concerning "Spydrons".

STAR DRAGON(S): | H-E-OR | NG | The followers call themselves "The Star Guard" and/or "Dragon Riders" and the cult is derived from the very real "Star Dragon Beings" who visit the Arduinian cycle from time to time. Not a large or wide-spread cult, they are mainly found in Arduin itself. This cult has a "special relationship" with most Dragon-kind and are frequently seen in their company.

TERRAPYNDAIR:** | OR-G-O-U-GN | TC | Also called "The Great War Turtle", "Terrapynos", "Ghamaloch" and "Gamaron". This small cult's members are called "Legionnaires Of The Armored One" and are most often found on the 6th continent quite near the "Great Ironfire Swamp" where their God supposedly lies sleeping. They are renowned for their fine stone mini-fortresses and their unfriendly habit of chopping into bloody little bits anyone who tries to enter the domain of their deity (i.e. the swamp).

TA-TARU, THE ALLFIRE: | ALL-H-E | CG | This deity is called "The Flame Eternal" and "The Light Of The Multiverse" and is actually housed in a single huge temple (a hollow mountain!) on the Dreaming Isles. No other "temples" are allowed. All races are represented within the ranks of its followers but, by far, humans and elves predominate. It is renowned for its guardians who are all "warriors of immortal fame atop great white pegasi of fierce and uncommon valor".

TARONG THE TIME KEEPER: | H-D-OR | N to NE | The "God Of Time" and the "Controller Of Reality". This "new" God has a moderate membership scattered world-wide and is noted for its many fine, large temples.

TIMAT: | O-G-DD-KS-W-S-II-OR | AE | "The Destroyer" and, ultimately, the one supposedly destined to utterly consume/destroy the entire multiverse. Also called: "Worldsbane" and "Suneater" by its followers (who are usually referred to as "Little Destroyers"). Banned in most nations, it has few surviving overt temples or followers.

(The) TEMPLE OF IRON: | H-D-DD-A | Mostly L-LG and LE | Essentially then entire Earthly "Norse" pantheon of deities, from Odin to Loki, et al. Its main strength is in Arduin (where its many separate facets appeal to a wide section of this nations cosmopolitan population). However, it can be found in small numbers just about world-wide. As an example, the Amazons like the Valkyrs part of the mythos, the Deodanthos appreciate old tricky Loki and the Dwarves really like Thor.

(The) TEMPLE OF THE TRUE TAROT: | H-E-A-IB-OR | TC to CG to CE | A religion sprung from the "deities" of the Tarot Cards. The followers are called "Taroteers". Small in numbers but world-wide in scope, this religion is known for its absolute refusal to build temples (calling their personal decks of Tarot cards their "temples"). Each follower chooses one "Patron Card/Deity" and takes on the attributes of said card. *Rumors* say that "advanced" believers can "hell-walk/hell-ride" at will, using their decks as foci.

ULGOTHIA*: | G-O-U | CE | Also called "Hammerhand", "Old One Eye", "Ulgore" and "Ulgos", its followers are called "Hammerites" and/or "Hammerheads". Almost exclusively a "Goblin-God" (popular with the wilder Kobbitt clans too) found in very small numbers world-wide. It is a sort of combination "All-Father" cum "Master Ferrier/Blacksmith/God" cult.

VANAAN: | ALL | LG | "The Eternal Flame" whose followers are collectively known as "The League Of Life" and individually referred to as "Lifers". A counterpart (and quite similar deity) to Ta Taru with but a single, strange temple high atop the mighty "God Tree" in the middle of the far away and many fabled "Sky Trees". This group is numerous, world-wide and their many Paladins are always in the midst of the ever-constant struggle of "chaos vs law", "light vs dark", etc.

THE VEDIC MYSTERIES:** | II-KS-DD-OR | The whole gamut from LG to CE | Basically the Hindu-Vedic religions of our own Earth, from Krishna to Shiva. There are few followers anywhere, the majority being found in Arduin, though rumors do crop up from time to time of a horrid "Shiva Death Cult" in full flower somewhere in the deadly jungles of Green Hell. One hopes it's not true.

WARALUU:** | II-O-U-G-OR | A-AE | Called the "Wailing God" by its followers (who are called "Screamers"), it is also known to others as "The Taker Of Souls" and "Screaming Death" (or "Doom"). It is mostly banned world-wide but still persists in small numbers just about everywhere. As a *Bean Sid He* (Banshee)-like deity, it comes personally to claim its dead followers, and haunts battlefields looking for "lost souls"...

XOLLONTHI:** | G-O-SS | TC to CE | Her followers are called "Snailers", "Shellheads" and "Slimeys" but they refer to the deity as "The Mother Of Millions", "Snailmother" and "The Great Shell Goddess". Found world-wide in small numbers, most often in the bogs and swampy wild lands.

XIPE:** | DD-SI-SS-KS-W-C | CE | Banned pretty much world-wide, it is also called "The Heart Eater Cult". This cannibalistic cult is known for their bringing in of "unbelievers" and feeding the hapless victims hearts to their God (i.e. they would eat the sucker). Small in number, it is still "a nuisance" in many "eastern" nations on the 5th continent.

XUANTH: | II-A-D-GN-OR | TN to NG | Also known as "The Hand (or Fingers) Of Fate" with its followers usually referred to as "Followers Of Fate" or, more popularly, "Faders". A moderately sized religion, found world-wide and known for their stoic acceptance of "fate". (i.e. "What is, is. What isn't, isn't".)

YUGORA: | II-A-W-ID-OR | TL to LE | Also called "Star Eater", "Star Mouth" or "Star Father" by its few followers (who are, themselves, usually called "Star Children" or, more popularly, "Starkies"). An austere and fanatical religion based upon an omnipotent and arrogant "All Father" deity of unforgiving and sometimes cruel ways. Found mostly in the poorer areas of the 4th and 6th continents, it is a religion actively disliked by most of the other major world cults.

ZARONTHAR | II-O-U-G-GN-OR | LE | Also called "That Which Consumes" by its followers (who are usually referred to as "Mad Mouths"), this amorphous glob of a deity is all about "consuming alternity"! And its very few followers practice a glutony of almost unbelievable proportions. Thus they are almost universally disliked (and found disgusting). Most are so obese as to be nearly unable to walk (or waddle!) more than 20' without collapsing in utter exhaustion. They can be encountered almost nowhere except in Vargalla and Ghorfar for some odd reason.

ZINBIBINDI: | A | TL to LE | Also called "Mothermouth" by her almost exclusive Amazonian following (who are always called "Zee Bees"). Found almost exclusively in Vargalla, The Misty Isles and, recently, in Arduin. The Goddess is somewhat akin to the "Martial Aspect" of the Silver Moon Goddess and is known for her almost continual "testing" of her followers through trial by combat and assorted "adversities". Oddly she is becoming quite popular among Deodanthos.

(The) ZOROASTRIAN LEAGUE: | H-IB-KZ-OR | LG | A sort of combined Sufi and Zoraster belief well known for its frantic and prolonged dancing (and whose fol-

lowers are usually called "Spin Heads" and "Whizz Dizzys"). Found in very small numbers, almost exclusively in Arduin itself.

This ends the listing of the most prominent current religions of the Arduinian mythos. When added to others previously discussed (in preceding volumes), it becomes quite an extensive group of religions.

Please note that we do not favor any one religion over any other and would never presume to profess "The One True Way". Religion, like politics, is open to a wide and diverse range of opinions. We believe in the old axiom: **Infinite Diversity In Infinite Combination** and believe that "*whatever works for you is fine by us*". Please do us the courtesy of feeling the same way towards us. And may your deity(s) bless you all your days to come.



Spotlight on an Arduinian Religion:

THE CHURCH OF "HIM"

This religion was the brainchild of a player named Jim Mathis (yes, the very same fellow who is the head of Grimoire Games) some eleven or twelve years ago. He was running a character in my campaign named "Greyloren". This character was a priest of one of the "Christian" religions and had reached a moderate level of experience and advancement. But the character was dissatisfied with his faith and thought there was "more" that needed saying. So this character decided to resign from his own religious hierarchy and form his own church. This the character did, and through much game play, he successfully acquired followers and enough money to make a real go of it. Well, this was all some 110 + "game years" ago now, and the religion this character started has become moderately large, and fairly popular, within the confines of Arduin. It is not well-known outside Arduin, but is not unknown in other nations. It just goes to show that there are not any real limits to a player character's "reach" in fantasy game play. Here then is the "story" of "The Church Of Him".

The basis of the religion was a super nova that erupted only a very few parsecs away from Khaas (the planet Arduin is upon). The terrible and complete sky-covering "blaze" of that stellar detonation reached the world about 135 years ago and was so intense that for almost half a year there was no discernable difference between night and day. Even now, more than a century later, the hot gas cloud still glows a bright violet-blue color (with a somber reddish core) and covers about 1/10th of the south-western horizon/sky.

Many of the world's more primitive cultures now call that gas cloud "The Eye of God", and with good cause, it seems. For, in the mysterious way of the cosmos, something had happened without precedent. Something that would forever change the way myriads of people would live and think.

The priest Greyloren discovered (rather inadvertently) that when the unfortunate star died, it was, in actuality, "giving birth" to a being of immense power. Born of, and consisting mainly of, torrents of radiation and raw stellar energy, it had no name or designation except "HIM". As it exists simultaneously upon many different "planes of existence", and encompasses several cubic light years in actual size, it is almost impossible to conceive of by any normally-sentient being. Yet exist it surely does.

As the newly-born being drifted outwards from the core of the explosion, it had many years to think and contemplate its existence. Many years after the initial explosion, it had drifted close to the world of Khaas and noted for the first time that there was other life in the multiverse — other than itself. Intrigued, it mentally probed the world below itself and, eventually, became attracted to a mind that seemed to be "thinking of HIM". This mind was that of a rather unprepossessing village priest named Greyloren. Said priest was absorbed in the "scientific" study of that super-nova explosion and had apparently managed to deduce that a "being/god" had more than likely been created by this event.

Unable to speak directly into this priest's mind (at first, anyway), the stellar being could and did use his considerable mental influence to push this priest into whole

new areas of thought and, eventually, provoke him into leaving his own church and founding another. The Church of HIM.

Within a few short months the new "God" had learned to "speak" directly to the mind of his first convert, and to even project a physical presence onto the planet's surface. This "presence" was a 13'-diameter ball of blue-white fire, all a'crackle with writhing "tentacles" of electrical energy. Confronted with such an apparition, any small doubts that Greylorn may have harbored, soon fled. He was thoroughly "hooked" and, not unreasonably, quite "big-headed" over the fact that a god had chosen him among all others, to be its spokesman and high priest! Needless to say that this attitude got quite a bit worse over the years.

Now Greylorn was a proud and conceited man and thus, when asked, who he was now a priest of, and because the god had no name as we know it, he always replied (finger pointing upwards into the sky): "Why, I worship the one and only true God. I worship HIM who is the ultimate, HIM who has shown himself to me and proven his divinity. Who else could it be?" With that, Greylorn would smile and walk away, sure and certain in his faith.

To be sure, this priest would have many reasons to see that faith re-affirmed over the years as he was a "militant" and "adventuresome" fellow who would travel in close company with many of the legendary folk of the era: Elric of Dragon Keep, the renegade "elf" who would, in less than fifty years time, become absolute ruler of all of Arduin; The Elf Lord Jothar, of the mighty House Of The Rising Sun, hero extraordinaire and traitor and outcast as well; Moonwolf The Fey, traveller from a far multiverse and slayer of the demon Hakkunshun; the immortal "forty-seven" Ronin of Koryu Dragon-Slayer's mythic quest (for his wife's hell-lost soul); the defenders of infamous Fort Blood and the delvers beneath the ruined abbey on horrific Spyder Isle — all felt the presence of brave Greylorn. And many owed their very lives and souls to his doughty battle ways as well as to his kind and erudite healing knowledge. Yes, Greylorn was, himself, one of those legendary folk in that glorious and dangerous age. And through his wisdom and example he spread the word of "HIM".

Then, after the rebellion of the mad queen and the rescue of the lawful King's son from imprisonment on one of the awful planes of hell, Greylorn was made the "Official Priest To The Royal Household Of Arduin". That clinched his place in the College Of Religion (and in the minds of many people). Thereafter his religion expanded fairly rapidly.

In his later years he built a mighty citadel alongside the beautiful Crystal River (high atop Tando Mountain), and amidst the strange and dangerous Great Windfall Forest. There it sits to this day, "Greylorn's Keep", the guardian of The Great Middle Road, and open hospice for any and all travellers along its way. And there the priests of HIM take their training and, eventually, return to spend their twilight years in retirement.

Because HIM is almost purely a "physical" god, and does not rely upon "how many and how fervently" his worshippers are for his power (as many, lesser, gods do), his followers and priests get several special benefits. The following text will give the GM a guideline to use for such in game play:

1. All priests of this faith are plus 10% (+10%) "competent" with the following "energies": Electricity, fire; sonics and any "radiation", to include light (but not "disintegration"). This is above and beyond any other special or extra abilities each individual may have. And if they elect to become a "Specialty Priest" (ie, like the "Specialty Mages") in any single area of expertise, then they automatically become +25% "competent". Their MRS is also adjusted (added to) accordingly when having to "save" versus those sorts of effects. Damage suffered from such effects is also accordingly reduced.
2. They are minus 10% (-10%) when using any 'entropic' force, from "Time Warps" and "anti-matter" to "Cold Magik". All other adjustments are, accordingly, made (minused) as outlined above.
3. They have the ability to use all priestly magik as well as any "magely" spell, conjuration or ritual that has to do with "energy" (see parameters above). These magiks will be, for all intents and purposes, 100% identical to any analogous "magely magik" currently known. Of course, all learning prerequisites for same prevail. However the mana cost for each will be 25% greater for the user priest than it would be for a magician.
4. All consecrated priests of EL Four (4) and greater have a sort of limited telepathic power that is usable only amongst themselves or in "speaking" to their god. This psychic ability tends to be more of an ability to "send" emotions and "feelings" rather than specific words. However, as it is one of this faith's "Great Mysteries", and is never discussed with outsiders, it has never been explored or improved upon by anyone in the position to know/help (ie, by Psychics for instance). The priesthood suspects that this "bond" between their priests is due to the effects of being constantly in "contact", or communion, with their god, HIM. The range of this ability (and accuracy) is 1 mile and 45% respectively. It increases by 1 mile and 5% each, each EL gained above EL 4. And, for some odd reason, any sort of silver "barrier", regardless of its thickness, between one priest and another, will completely disrupt and negate any communication possibility.
5. It is extremely difficult to get a priest of HIM to "convert" to another religion, no matter how it is attempted. Not arcane, chemical or other means seems to have any real chance at making a consecrated priest of HIM change his faith. For game purposes figure that all "lesser" means simply won't work and that even the greatest, most "persuasive" (ie, magik etc) means have only a 13% chance of success, minus one percent (-1%) per each EL of the priest above EL 1. Thus a Priest of EL 14 has no chance whatever of being "converted". Again, this is due to the close and continual "contact" between the priest and their god.
6. Only those "of lawful mind and mein" may become priests or followers of this deity, though it is of "any sort, from truly of Law through all the other facets therein". IE, it is not unusual to see a Lawful Evil priest of HIM.
7. As Greylorn was somewhat of a chauvinist, so too is the priestly hierarchy. Thus it is almost impossible for a female to become an ordained and consecrated priest in this religion. So much so that it has happened only twice in the last 100+ years, and both were very "mannish" in demeanor and of Amazon heritage.
8. All priest are taught to fight with mace (usually of the "flanged" sort), small shield and light soft half-leather armor (to include greaves, bracers and metal cap).

Paladins are taught to use the spiked version of mace, heater style shield and full hard leather armor etc. For game purposes figure the priest to be +1 with mace and the Paladin to be +3 (BF or otherwise). They will *never* wear/use armor and weapons of any other type (except in the *direst* emergencies).

9. This is one of the few religions which put no restrictions upon whom the priests may heal and give aid to. In fact, for this reason, they are the official "chaplains" of the Arduinian Armed Forces. Note, however, that they never charge for their services and only proselytize those who ask to learn about HIM.
10. Due to the fact that Greylorn himself was partially (and mistakenly) responsible for the "resurrection" of the horrid and terrifying death goddess "Lyrra", all priests of HIM will automatically divert from whatever it is that they are doing (regardless of its importance) and will pursue unto destruction (of themselves or their target) any minion, priest, or follower of said goddess. There is a "blood war" of the strongest order, and all Lyrra followers will respond in kind to the followers of HIM. GM's please note the near berserk quality of these two opposing force's reactions towards each other, and play it accordingly!

The sigel of this faith is as follows: A medallion, circular in shape, the outer ring of platinum, the inner "medal" of gold, all carved like unto "flames". Inset in the center is a ruby (lower echelons) or sun stone (middle echelons). The upper echelons can have any gem inset that they choose.

Thus you have the "truth" of the matter where the Church of HIM is concerned. So be sure that you play with, of, and against them as should be done. For HE has ordained it so!

Minions & Sendings Of The Gods

Most of the deities in the Arduinian mythos have "minions" and other such creatures that they use to punish transgressors with, send messages via and, in general, utilize for whatever they wish to get done but don't care to do the "work" themselves. Here then are just a very few examples of such minions. But, be warned! Dare you interfere with "Gods' works"? If so, prepare to meet the following!

Spydrons: Minions of Shagrath the Red Moon Spyder. They are created out of "primal soul stuff" derived from its devoted followers (and eaten enemies) as needed. They always travel in groups of thirteen (13) or in "mega-groups" of either seven thirteens (i.e. 91 total) or thirteen thirteens (i.e. 169 total). They are always arachnid (spider) shaped and virtually mindless things that have been "pre-programmed" for some task, killing or other such endeavor. Thus they can be fooled or "foiled" if thought is taken to combat them. They come in the following known "types":

Great Spydrons: Inky black arachnids about the size of a Volkswagen "beetle" automobile. They have seven (7) blood-red eyes in a crescent layout across their frontal chitin and very large mandibles of a "smokey-grey" and "glass-like" look. They average 88 HP / 99 BF and are AC 3. Their CF averages 18.5 and they have the disturbing propensity of becoming "non-corporeal" and slipping through walls, doors and other barriers. Only silver or magik weapons will harm them (or magik spells) and they have been seen to regenerate quite rapidly all but the most mortal of wounds (i.e. any non-RCH hit). Their powerful bite does 2D8 damage and injects a horrific poison (of 13D8 potency) which causes their victim's eyeballs to melt! This damage, in a human-sized victim, takes a mere 6-9 seconds to come to its grisly fruition. And there is no known way to regenerate/heal eyes so destroyed. Not by priestly or magikal means anyway. They "suck out" and then carry back to Shagrath the souls of those they have killed. This class of critter is, thankfully, almost never encountered except in Shagrath's own lair or in the areas most important to it. They have a 27% MRS.

Black Spydrons: The most common of the spydron types, these are about the size of a St. Bernard dog and look exactly like smaller (one quarter) versions of the "Great" ones. They're AC 4, average 20 CF / 70 BF and are about 25 HP. Their bite does 1D8 of damage and the venom, while not as horrific as the larger type, still has a 7D6 potency. It is also a paralytic that affects all victims up to 60 HP in size in one melee round (lasting 1D100 M/R). Prorate for larger victims. These things are the most often encountered minions of Shagrath and infest its temples and "holy" places in great numbers. They can leap about half of the distance of their larger brethren or about 13' horizontally and 9' vertically. They have a 13% MRS.

Web Spydrons: These are the "guardians" of the temples and holy places and are the only ones actually able to spin webs (i.e. "doors"). They never leave their webs but can "spin-cast" web line "lassos", one per M/R, up to 66'. They are about the size of a lion, have a pale violet coloration and see out of seven (7) shiny gold eyes set in a "box-pattern" along the top of their frontal chitin. They average 55 HP and 18 CF / 90 BF and have an AC of 5. Their webs and web strands are like steel cable (unbreakable by less than STR 24) and can be used as a defensive "shield" if needed

(AC 2 + 2). Their venom is of 9D8 potency and has the nasty habit of dissolving all natural bone inside the bitten victim into a sort of gooey paste! This effect will take full consequence in a human-sized creature in 7-12 seconds. Once this is done, there is **no known** magical or priestly way to reverse the effect. Thus the victims can often live many years in a completely boneless and utterly helpless state! Oh, the bite itself does 1D6 HP damage. They are never found anywhere except as a "guardian" or series of guardians to temple entrances and "doors". They have a 33% MRS.

Red Spydrons: As their name implies, these basketball-sized arachnids are a brilliant red in color (with five (5) shiny black eyes in a pentagram layout across their frontal chitin) and average about 13 HP. They usually have a 19 CF / 55 BF and are AC 6. They can leap up to 25' horizontally or 18' straight up and are known for their mad, mass "swarming" attacks regardless of the odds that they face. Their 1D4 HP bite injects a blinding venom of 3D6 potency. All man-sized victims thus bitten become blinded in 1D3 M/R (with a duration of 1D20 M/R). Prorate for larger victims. However, these critters are best known for their propensity to, literally, explode into a 13' diameter, 7D8 ball of liquid (napalm-like) flame when struck (for 6 HP of damage or more in any one hit)! Blammo! Instant immolation for them and their victim. Needless to say, these little suckers are greatly feared by any sane opponent! Thankfully they are seldom seen anywhere but in close proximity to Shagrath. They have a 7% MRS.

***Succudrons:** These are those very, very rare creatures that Shagrath will create and send to specifically and unerringly get his vengeance upon someone he really dislikes. They will look like an extremely beautiful male or female of whatever race is appropriate. They will seduce (using extremely powerful pheromones as an aphrodisiac) their victim and then, while the unsuspecting soul sleeps afterwards, extend a long pair of "mandibles" from their now unhinged (like a snake) jaw and inject, directly into the brain of the victim, a venom that will utterly take over and control their body processes. And, as the victim continues to sleep, they slowly metamorph (taking 1D6 hours) into a spydron! The size and type will vary according to how the horrid Shagrath feels on any given day but, whatever the choice, the hapless victim is ever after a minion of Shagrath! They have a 77% MRS.

Flame-Skulls: These are the mystikally animated skulls of sacrificial victims of the dread and foul deity known as Daemonslyra. Wreathed in pale blue flame, these "undead" fly through the air at up to 440' per M/R. Encountered singly or in packs of up to 100 (or more) in number, they attack their victims by spitting 13' jets of flame (11-20 HP potency) three times per M/R. Each skull can thus "spit" up to thirteen (13) times before it automatically returns to its mistress in a smelly puff of sulfur-smoke. Poof! Gone! Occasionally, they will also bite between fire spitting for 1D4 HP damage but this is rare. Each one is 18 CF / 77 BF (for bites) — 89% accurate for their flame spitting and has an AC of 3. They also tend to moan and gibber incoherently while attacking and can even call their victims by name! They are rarely encountered except by those they have been deliberately sent against. They have a 20% MRS.

Entropy Golem: This awful "golem" is actually a 13' tall humanoid shaped "black hole in existence" that is extremely difficult to look directly at (it hurts the "mind's eye" to do so). Thus all physical attacks against it are at -13 BF (-4 in other rules systems). These horrors are the minions of (The) One Who Waits (i.e. "The Ending

One"). As this is a small and rarely encountered cult, this "sending" is almost unheard of in all of Arduin's long history. Still, it has appeared from time to time, so beware! It appears to its victim(s) simply by "becoming" **right next to them** (taking 1-3 CF counts to fully manifest itself). Thus, it will **always** have complete surprise for the **first attack**. Said attack is by touch and will have the effect of reducing by 1-5 points *each and every physical and mental "stat" of those thus struck* (from INT to STR)! All stats thus "lost" are gone *forever* and cannot be recovered by *any known means*, arcane or natural. As it is created (?) from the "stuff of entropy itself", it has no AC or HP. It cannot be affected by any known means, physical or arcane and any magic that touches it becomes immediately and forever after "gone" and utterly useless. It simply appears, attacks at CF counts 30, 20, 10 and 1 and then simply "unbecomes" and is gone. It can move at 50' per action segment (200' per M/R) and can move through solid objects by utterly destroying said solid instantaneously and effortlessly. Thus, solid steel is like open air to it for movement purposes.

Note that anyone losing all their CON stats to their attack is dead; those losing all of their INT become "mindless vegetables" and so on and so forth. Luckily, it always appears alone and is never around for more than a single melee round. Still GMs should use this critter extremely sparingly and only in the most dire circumstances as it is undefeatable and terrible in the extreme. Some legends say that this "manifestation" is, in fact, the God itself.

Warriors Of The Great Dark: These warriors, all in black armour (of various kinds) can be of any race or nationality and can be encountered anywhere in the world. Most often in groups of seven (7), thirteen (13) or one hundred (100), "legions" of 1,000 are not unknown. These "warriors" are the fanatic minions of one or the other of the "Black Pantheon's" dark and dread gods. Sort of "paladins" and "enforcers" for these terrible old gods, they can be of any EL/proficiency, CF/BF; etc at the whim of the GM and will be as varied as the races of Arduin are. They are recognizable by the blood red symbol of "The Dark" (see appropriate illustration in this book) emblazoned upon their shields, breast plates, helms, etc. They are utterly without mercy or any of the more "civilized" traits and will always fight unto the death of the very last one of their group. They live "only to die" for the glory and greater aims of their dread lords.

The Brotherhood Of Blood

These are the worshippers of the death/awar goddess Lyrra and constitutes the only "free-willed" group amongst her minions and worshipers. All the rest are undead "zombie" (or worse) types under her direct control (usually). And, as each of the brotherhood dies, they too become such undead followers of their chosen deity.

Anyone who "has no good or goodness about them" may join the group but those who do, soon also become irrevocably evil in their ways due to the nasty and horrific rites and rituals practiced by this faith. Said rites include murder, human sacrifice and orgasmic gatherings of the most depraved and worst sort. Needless to say, this group has been banned and outlawed world wide. No sane ruler wants to have an "evil army" within the borders of their nation! And an "army" is just what this group is. They live only to bring death and destruction upon the world and their highest "honor" is for themselves to die in battle (or sacrifice) to the utterly evil Lyrra and thence become one of her "Immortal Legion" (i.e. undead soldier cum zombie). Not nice folks. Joining this group requires a "baptism in blood" (usually human, etc) and a yearly tithe of 10% of their earnings. In return for this commitment, their goddess grants them a +25% "save" versus all fear, natural or magikally induced as well as a +5 (BF and otherwise) to their combat ability. They also have a 25% resistance to all pain, hunger, exhaustion and general "unwellness".

There are "three circles" of membership within this organization; the first or "outer circle" is comprised mainly of barbarians, warriors and mercenary soldiers and are used for all of the "grunt labor" and as "cannon fodder". Those who die always become undead zombies.

The "inner circle" are those "middle-management" types and military officers who command the outer circle's rank and file. These are they who have somehow managed to survive while serving what is, essentially, a death goddess. They are required to undergo a second "Blood Rite" to enter the inner ranks. This rite normally means the killing of some family member or close friend and bathing themselves in their victim's blood. During this rite, there is always a base 20% chance that the goddess will descend upon them and, literally, "eat their soul" for being "unworthy of the honor"! These inner circle types have double the saves, etc of the outer circle and also have thirteen (13) Hit Points added to their base number as a "gift from the goddess". All of those who die automatically become semi-free-willed "Wraiths" and continue to serve the goddess in their former capacity, just non-corporeally! Perhaps 10% of this group will be wielders/users of some sort of magik.

The "heart circle" or innermost command and control group are few in number (never more than 100) and are the death goddess's "generals" and such. Most are also users or wielders of one form of potent magik or another. And all are already dead, their souls in thrall to their deity (though they are generally thought to be mostly "free-willed"). Some of them have been in existence 5,000 years and more and are thus some of the most puissant and powerful magicians the world has ever seen. They should be avoided at all costs! For game purposes, these folks have double the "saves / defenses" of the inner circle types and will always have at least one hundred (100!) or more extra HP, courtesy of Lyrra, of course.

Any inner circle member can "induct" a being into the outer circle whenever they desire. The ceremony takes about an hour and is performed at dawn for males and at dusk for females. Any outer members that reneges of their blood oaths to the brotherhood will be immediately slaughtered, if caught. However, if they successfully flee, then they are neither pursued nor persecuted as it is felt that "Lyrra didn't notice the insignificant worm so it is unworthy of further action." However, should this person later bring themselves to "unfavorable attention" from the brotherhood, then no effort shall be spared in their destruction. Once thus "targeted", the pursuit and attacks are relentless, ruthless and never stop until they have been successful (i.e. the poor sucker is killed and his/her soul given unto Lyrra).

Of course, any inner or heart circle types that try to renege on their commitment to Lyrra are immediately and utterly destroyed by the goddess herself. She seldom misses much for very long amongst her upper echelons and is not known for her sense of humor or forgiveness. Just for her "hunger".

Currently, there are approximately thirteen (13) active (but well hidden) "temples" to this horrid goddess. These are thought to be located in: Morvaen (5); Viruclandia (3); Tharkalla (1); Arduin (1); Ghorfar (1); The Rainbow Isles (1) and Vargalla (1). But, as the "temples" are all secret and very difficult to find, this information is probably obsolete and somewhat erroneous. So be warned.

Here are a few more of the "benefits" of belonging to this dread and, ultimately, self-destructive religion:

1. All "fighting men" in whatever circle, have a 35% chance of becoming berserk in any battle, this chance increasing by +5% per each M/R they fail to slay their opponent. All are +4 (BF and otherwise) with any and all weapons and can fight ambidextrously (either handed).
2. All inner circle types have a +20% to morale for any group they lead (up to 100 troops) and all heart circle have a +50% to morale for groups up to 500 or so. These are without any arcane assistance at all.
3. In any important combat, there is a 25% chance Lyrra will "resurrect" or otherwise bring back into effective combat readiness (*whatever that may take*) any slain inner circle, as often as necessary during said combat. This percentage is doubled for the heart group beings. However, she will do this *only once each year* for any of them, regardless of circle and *never* if they are in her bad graces.
4. There is a (GM controlled) chance that each follower of Lyrra, regardless of their rank, may become "beloved in her heart" through some deed or series of deeds (usually involving death and destruction) and she will "claim them unto herself". Those thus claimed immediately find themselves in her actual presence (i.e. in her version of "heaven") where they are induced into her "Immortal Champions", there to serve as her personal body guards forever and ever. These very few "lucky" folks tend to all be Vampyrlic, have lots of HP (150+) and, in general, nasty customers all round. The "Champions of Lyrra" are, perhaps, the most fell warriors in all the world and of all time.
5. All members of the brotherhood, without regard to their level, must "give of themselves" in order to *feed* their goddess. Thus each EL is 10% harder to attain than normal as their very "life essence/experience" is what she feeds on. And, if

she is *especially hungry*, she can "forget herself" (5% chance each year) and just suck everything out of a follower, leaving only a dried-up and mummy-like husk utterly devoid of soul and existence. Forever gone. Devoured by she who they worshiped. Burp.....

6. No creature, artifact (magikal or otherwise) can "eat", "take" or otherwise harm the *soul* of one of these followers of Lyrre. None. No exceptions and no arguments. This is reserved solely for the goddess herself and is something she jealously protects and guards.
7. Members may be recognised by the three sigels the different circles wear. These are:

- a. The outer circle have a silver ring inset with a green (female) or red (male) jade heart, pierced by a black arrow.
- b. The inner circle wear an amulet about their neck that consists of a silver chain and black gold heart doubly pierced by a red gold arrow and sword in an "X" pattern.
- c. The heart circle has a black diamond heart imbedded in their breast right over their own heart which pulses (in time to their own heart beat, if any) with a cold greenish-black glow.

Thus you have the minions of dread Lyrre. May you never encounter them or have to fend them from what you love.



NEW ARDUINIAN MAGIK

NEHLSOHN'S HANGFIRE RITUAL

This OP 1 ritual requires the adding of 1 mana point (per each three OP of the basic magik involved) to whatever mana cost the "held" magik has. As an example: If a mage wishes to hold up the firing of, say, a Mystik Dart spell, he does the ritual (which costs only one mana point because the Dart Magik is only OP 1), adds in the hangfire ritual at another mana point cost, for a total cost of two (2) mana points. Had the held spell been, say, the Flashpoint spell, well, the holding ritual would have cost two (2) mana points instead of one, due to that magik's higher OP. Got it? Good!

Now what this minor (?) ritual does is allow the mage to, literally, "hangfire" or "hold off" using the magik, even if it has already been "committed". He can hold it up for as long as ten minutes per each EL that he has. At the end of this time, the magik is automatically discharged in the normal manner. Of course, the holding magician can also elect to "fire at will" at any point during this time with the utterance of the simple, one syllable, "release sound". The only drawback to this magikal process is that while any magik is thus "hung up", no other spoken magik may be performed by said magician. Thus only one magik at a time may be hung up this way. This one-minute-long ritual only needs one day of moderate study and the expenditure of 55 GS to learn.

NEHLSON'S TWOFER RITUAL

This OP 2 magikal ritual takes only 90 seconds to perform, and at a mere 3 mana point cost*. What it does is to "link" any two magiks, regardless of type, OP etc, so that they will be fired *simultaneously* by a single firing phrase (of three words). Thus a magician could, say, fire a Flashpoint and a Lightning Strike, simultaneously at the same target. Note that "Redd's Rapid Fire Ritual" *cannot* be used in conjunction with this magik. This useful magik needs the expenditure of eleven days of hard study and some 145 GS in materials to properly learn.

* Of course there is *always* the mana cost of the magiks thus linked.

EZZAMUNDO'S RITUAL OF THE GENTLE RAINS OF SPRING

This OP 2 ritual requires the expenditure of 1 mana point over a one-minute time span to do correctly. Once done, a 5' diameter "rain cloud" will have formed directly over the conjurer's head (7' up) and a "gentle spring rain" will commence to fall (about one gallon per minute). It has a three (3) minute duration plus one (+1) minute per each EL of the conjurer above the EL at which it was learned. Also, the addition of an additional one (1) mana point will lengthen this time by another three minutes. The rate of "water fall" cannot be increased in any manner, though there is no limit as to the duration of the usage. It is a magik commonly used as a "shower" in which to bathe, by magicians venturing into the wilds. It needs two (2) days of moderate study and a spending of 13.5 GS in materials to learn.

BHUCKNEIL'S BOUNTEOUS BUCKET CONJURATION

This OP 2 conjuration has a mana point cost of 2, and a time to completion of 30 seconds. Once done, a "misty grey bucket" with a one (1) gallon capacity appears up to 13' distant from the conjurer and commences to empty out any liquid at that spot — one bucket at a time. It will move up to a total of 13' to get rid of it (to include the distance from the conjurer), and at a CF speed equal to that of the magician. It will hold everything from acid to booze and anything "liquid" in nature. The conjurer must totally concentrate on this for it to work. Fail to do so and the magik immediately terminates. This conjuration will extend its basic three-minute duration at the rate of two (2) additional minutes of working per each single (1) mana point expended at any time during its operation. This useful magik costs 15 GS in materials and two days of moderate study to learn.

GHITT'S CLING-ON SPELL

This OP 2 spell is a sort of "reversed anti-web aura" that causes the area/person affected to have a sort of "static charge" and, thus, have all sorts of junk stick to them like they were magnetized. Ropes, paper, cloth, even metal will stick to them like glue for the entire three (3) minute duration of this spell. The lighter stuff (paper, cloth, small wood pieces etc) will actually move towards them like filings to a magnet! Within a 3' radius, anyway. There is absolutely no "save" versus this magikal effect naturally. However, magikal defenses using artifacts will work against it. Basic mana cost is One (1), and each additional (1) mana point used during the initial spell-casting will add another two (2) minutes to the duration. The area affected can be up to 5 cubic feet, or up to about "ogre sized" for a living being. Just imagine arrows that won't leave a bow-string (or come out of a quiver!), javelins that won't leave the hand — or a coat thrown over somebody's head, being utterly irremovable! At any rate, this low power but quite useful spell needs a mere two hours of light study and an expenditure of 7.5 GS in materials to learn.

MYKE-EE'S FLASHFIRE SPELL

This OP 2 spell has a two (2) mana point cost and will, once done, cause all easily burnable material within an 18" radius of the magician to ignite and then burn outward at the rate of 7' per second. It will thus "flashburn" for a total of 7 seconds. Thus it will cover a total area of 506" around the mage. That's including the initial 16". After that, whatever is aflame will burn normally. Please remember that only such things as dry grass, paper, cloth and other such easily combustible substances will ignite. Wood will not do so, it will only char lightly. Note as well that the magician is quite susceptible to being burned by whatever fire he causes! This spell needs a three-day moderate study period and the spending of 20 GS to learn.

AJAE'S ICE BULLETS

This OP 2 spell has a mana cost of two (2) and causes a 2" long by 1" diameter "ice bullet" to zip from the pointing index finger of the magician with sufficient force to do 13-20 HP of impact damage to any target up to 33' distant. Each 6' range there-

after reduces the (rolled for) damage by 1 HP, up to its maximum range of 159', where it does only 0-1 HP of damage. The number of bullets thus fired simultaneously (up to a maximum number of four (4) may be increased simply by adding the base mana for each one into the firing spell. Thus a quadruple shot of ice bullets would have a mana cost of eight (8). Also remember that each must be rolled for separately on the attack chart as if it was a "bullet" from a gun. However the size/effect and/or range is not increasable in any known manner. The sole drawback to this magikally-created bullet is that it is totally non-magik itself, thus does not affect magikal targets such as undead, were-beasts and the like. Unless of course such simple kinetic damage naturally affects them. This spell takes only six (6) days of hard study and the spending of 100 GS in materials to learn.

AJAE'S FIREBURST SPELL

This OP 2 spell has a mana cost of three (3) and creates a 3"- diameter ball of flaming "stuff" that zips from the outstretched middle finger of the left hand. It has a range of 66', and does 11-16 HP of fire damage (less 1-3 HP worth which will "spatter" 3'-5' doing GM-adjudicated damage etc). Its basic "stuff" burns to a fine grey dust within 1 second of impact and is, like the ice bullet above, non-magikal (with all the limitations that denotes). It can only be fired singly and is not increasable in any known manner. This spell requires six (6) days of hard study and a cost of 105 GS in materials to master.

MYKE-EE'S LARIAT SPELL

This OP 3 spell has a four (4) mana point cost and cannot be improved upon in any known way. The mage casts the spell whilst making a throwing motion towards any target up to 13' in diameter and no more than 33' distant. Instantly a "ghostly rope of silvery-grey aspect" arcs toward the intended spot (at 66' per second), and loops over it. It has a base 66% chance of being on target plus one percent (+1%) per each CF point of the casting mage. As it hits, it will immediately tighten down as any real lasso would and will remain affixed to it (and to the mage's own hand!) for ten (10) MR, plus one (+1) Mr per each EL of the caster above the EL it was learned. This rope cannot be cut by any non-magikal means and will resist all strength up to and including STR 33. Any missed target or target more than the allowed diameter will cause the rope to instantly disappear. the handy spell needs but two (2) days of easy study and an expenditure of only 35 GS in materials to learn.

SARCHANDER'S MOONBURST

This OP 5 spell has a 9 mana point cost and is not increasable in any way by any known means. What it does is to instantly fill a 13' diameter area with "the blue-white radiance like unto that of the full moon". This "cold radiance" is, in fact, a sort of magikally-conjured (but in and of itself, not magikal at all) "hard radiation" of three (3) seconds duration. This radiation does 2D12 HP of damage to all within its area of effect each and every one of those three seconds. To a maximum total damage potential of 240 HP. There is absolutely no "save" versus this damage unless the one in its area of effect naturally enjoys such protection (or has an artifact or device that is designed to protect against just such damage). The damage effects are like "melting-burns", blindness, loss of memory and other such radiation-sickness symptoms.

Only of instant effect. The range that this magik may be cast is no more and non less than 33'. This means it is not a "ranged effect" magik and cannot be targeted normally. It always detonates that far away. This is utterly unchangeable. Utterly. Note also that metallic objects subjected to this radiation will, themselves, "become radioactive" for 1d100 days. GM adjudication is definitely called for here! Perhaps one of the deadliest and most horrific spells ever formulated, this awesome magik requires eleven (11) full months or arduous study and the expenditure of 1,970 GS in materials to learn. But do note the fact that there is a base 75% chance that sometime during this learning process the mage has managed to detonate it upon himself! this chance is reduced by 3% per each RF point more than 17 he has and by each EL above EL 10 that he is.

MOONWOLF'S BALL LIGHTNING

This is an OP 5 spell with a base mana cost of 7 and a range of up to 100'. When cast, it shoots 1-5 (caster's choice) "balls of lightning" from 1-5 fingers/thumb. The basic single ball is 6" in diameter, the pair would be 3" each and so on. The base damage for the single ball would be 25 HP (in a five-ball spread they'd be 5 HP each). These balls zip forward at a speed of 33' per second and will ricochet off of any non-living object they strike (losing 1 HP potency each time). They also ricochet off of living targets as well, but each time they lose half their potency (into the creature hit). The ricochet directions are always random and up to the GM. This magik can only be increased as to potency of effect (not as to range and/or speed). Each additional mana point used in the initial casting can add either one more ball (6-10 leaving from the fingers/thumb of the other hand) or add five (+ 5) HP potency to base power to be divided or not by up to five. Note that no more than ten such balls can be thus used (unless the caster has more than 8 fingers and 2 thumbs!) Such a "maxi-ball burst" would cost a total of 12 mana points and have a total damage potential of up to 50 HP. This spell requires 88 days of difficult study and the spending of 770 GS in materials to learn. There is also a base 33% chance (GM adjudicated) that sometime during that learning time the careless student will accidentally fire the damn thing off in the area he's in. This chance is reduced by 1% per each EL they are above EL 5 and by each RF point above RF 15 that they have. However there is always a base 1% chance it happens anyway.

ELRIC'S ACID SPRAY SPELL

This OP 6 spell has a mana cost of 8 and cannot be increased or improved upon in any manner. Once used, it causes a "spray" of acid to spring forth from the caster's left palm. this spray will be 45' in length and 13' in diameter at its terminus (but only the width of the caster's palm at its beginning). This spray has a total potency potential of 60 HP. All targets hit by it will be GM adjudicated as to how much hit and what areas were thus struck. Smaller targets will have large amounts miss them (over and around/past) in most normal situations, unless they were damn close when "fired upon"! The acid can and will splatter, drip and generally cause quite a bit of trouble. Especially since it keeps its potency up to 25 hours(!) if puddled (etc) upon stone or other similar surfaces. Note as well that the acid is extremely (even explosively) flammable and even a simple torch can cause ignition. The fireball thus caused will be equal in HP to the GM adjudicated amount of acid remaining, and will be 3' in diameter per each 6 HP worth of said acid. To learn this potent magik, the magician

must already know the "Acid Rain" conjuration before trying to figure this one out. Then 77 days of difficult study and an expenditure of 945 GS in materials is required to actually learn it.

MORGORN'S RITUAL OR THE HAND OF RED DEATH

This OP 8 ritual has a prerequisite that the user already know the lower OP "Spell Of Red Death" before this one may be attempted. The ritual needs an expenditure of thirteen (13) mana points over a seven (7) minute time period to complete. Once done, the conjurer's left hand turns "blood red from wrist to finger tips". This lasts for up to thirteen (13) hours or until any living thing is touched by it. That touch has exactly the same effect as the OP 6 spell has, but will effect creatures up to triple the conjurer's own HD in size. See AG I for more information on this effect. The duration can be extended at the rate of seven (7) hours per each added two (2) mana points expended during the initial conjuration. Remember also that this is a one-use magik: once the touch has fired it, the hand returns to normal immediately. Note also that while gloves etc may be worn over the hand without affecting the magik, only the hand's bare touch upon other bare, living flesh fires it. This conjuration requires 22 weeks of arduous study and the spending of 5,600 GS for research materials to learn.

NEW ILLUSION MAGIK

HANIFYN'S DOORS

This OP two (2) spell has a base mana cost of three (3) and will work in either one of two ways (at the caster's discretion). It can be made to cover any single door up to 20' by 20' in size with an illusion of a wall (to match the surrounding walls) and put an exact illusory copy of said covered door on any wall other than the one the real door is on, within the caster's own line of sight (and regardless of distance involved). Or it can cast three (3) exact illusory copies of any one real door (see above) on any wall(s) other than the one the real door is on, regardless of distance etc. This last leaves the real door exposed but confuses matters with "extra ones". The first hides the real and shows a false door elsewhere. The base mana point expenditure allows for the addition of "false doors" at a cost of one-half (1/2) mana point each if included in the initial spell casting. Or the size of the door covered by the magik can be increased by an additional 10' by 10' per each one-half mana point expended. It's the caster's choice. This handy magik requires a mere two (2) days of easy study and an expenditure of 55 GS for materials to learn.

HANIFYN'S STORYTELLER RITUAL

This OP 5 ritual is an intricate and difficult one for the Illusionist, and has a base mana cost of seven (7). This basic version will cause any 20' by 20' by 20' area to "show what has happened in its area at any time specified by the Illusionist". What this means is that the Illusionist does the required ritual (taking seven (7) minutes to do so), and then the designated area will "come alive" in illusory form, showing what

has happened therein. Sort of an illusory play or movie done by magik, but 100% accurate* in every detail and limited only by the way illusion works (see appropriate ARDUIN GRIMOIRES). This area can be up to 33' from the Illusionist, and the duration of the "play" is seven (7) minutes. Do note that the time frame requested must be quite specific in order to get what is wanted. As an example: "Ten minutes after the beginning of the hour of the dog eight days ago". The duration or "run" of the illusion can be extended at the rate of seven (7) additional minutes per each one (1) mana point used in the initial ritual.

*The 100% accuracy is for any time period up to one Arduinian year (455 days) in the past. Each additional year (or fraction thereof) reduces the accuracy (GM adjudicated as to how) by 3%. However each EL of the Illusionist above EL 9 adds two percent (+2%) to the accuracy (to a 100% maximum). This handy ritual requires 34 weeks of very difficult study and the spending of 6,500 GS to learn correctly.



NEW DRUIDICAL MAGIKS

YALYNWYN'S SPELL OF THE RAGING WINDS

This OP 5 spell has a base mana cost of six (6) and has the prerequisite that the Druid already know the OP 3 "Singing Winds" spell (see ARDUIN GRIMOIRE I) before he can use this one. The spell, when cast, causes an area 60' in diameter and up to 66' distant from the caster, to instantly fill with winds of near-cyclonic velocity and ferocity. These winds rotate in a counter-clockwise manner and have a terrible, nauseating stench somewhat akin to rotting human flesh. All within its area of effect will be hampered by both the velocity of the winds and their ungodly smell. So much so that all combat, movement and other such abilities are halved while in their area of effect (and for 1d4 CF actions thereafter). All "slow" missiles like sling stones, arrows, etc have a minus fifty percent (-50%) To Hit chance and all hand-thrown objects such as javelins and the like have their attack chances reduced by minus seventy-five percent (-75%). All small creatures (to 10 HP in size) are automatically blown over (and around and around) and all larger ones have a percentage knock-down chance based upon their HP size. IE, for each 10 HP's more than ten that they have, they have a 15% chance of not being knocked over. For example: any critter 11-20 HP in size would have an 85% chance of being blown over; one of, say, 51-60 HP in size would have only a 25% knock-down chance, and so on. The final effect of this horrible wind is that all non-sentient creatures that are in its 60'-diameter area have a 35% chance of becoming frightened and running away.* All sentient ones have only a 15% chance of thus being frightened. Note that these chances are without regard to their size, type or kind. Finally note that this magik has absolutely no effect upon non-corporeal creatures (such as certain kinds of undead).

*This fright lasts only for 1d4 MR. Note as well that no damage is done by the wind save for any that might be acquired from being tumbled around and around, thus impacting with objects in that area (GM adjudicated). This spell requires 77 days of moderate study to master at a research cost of 990 GS.

SKUELLO'S SHATTERING SPELL

This OP 9 spell has a thirteen (13) mana point cost and will, once cast, cause any single object (living or dead — so long as it has solid, material form) to literally "explode" like a bomb (1,000-10,000 fragments). A successful "save" vs this effect will still cause the target to "convulse and wrench itself terribly", causing 11-20 HP of damage. On live targets this damage is internal: ie, pulled-apart muscles, burst blood vessels, etc. Note also that all live victims (that do save successfully) are still unable to function in any manner for 1-3 seconds after the effect has passed. The range for this terrible Druidical magik is 33' plus 3' per each EL above EL 7 of the caster. The size of the target it will affect is based upon mass/weight and not upon "how tall etc". Base effect is up to 350 pounds weight, but this may be increased by one hundred (100) pounds per each additional two (2) mana points expended in the spell casting. Thus, as an example, if 33 mana points are expended, it could "explode" any target up to 1,350 pounds in weight. Please note that if "hard objects" such as stone or metal are thus "blown up" (and there is quite a loud "boom" involved), there will be "fragmen-

tation effects" that must be GM adjudicated. The major drawback to this potent magik is that if the target manages to "bounce" or otherwise ward off the spell, then it automatically rebounds full force upon the spellcaster! Thus it is sometimes just as dangerous to use as it is to have cast at you. This extremely effective Druidical magik is virtually unknown in Arduin today and its use is usually outlawed by the College Of Religion under pain of ex-communication. It requires 333 days of intense study and a research cost of 11,000 GS to master this magik. But beware of the 13% chance of causing the spell to detonate you (blam! Gotcha!) when you try to learn its intricate workings!

NEW RUNESINGER MAGIK

CAROLLA'S HARMONIC CONVERGENCE

This OP 6 "music magik" is one that any Rune Singer can do if they have the nerve and the requisite mana available. Simply put, what it does is, as the Rune Singer hums, it causes any single selected "target" to vibrate "in resonance" to that hum. When the "resonance is matched", the target simply shatters into fine powder (or goo if a living target). However it will take one (1) second per each 20 HP in size (or 100 pounds weight for non-living targets) to "match resonances". And each such second of humming has a mana cost of three (3). Range effect is up to 60'! So as an example the Rune Singer would need to expend thirty (30!) mana points over a ten-second (10) period of humming in order to pulverize a 1,000 pound (or 200 HP) sized target. Now here are the drawbacks to this powerful musical magik: First, should the singer fail to have enough mana points to reach "harmonic convergence" with the target, then the vibrations backlash back onto himself (usually with lethal results). Note also that if the singer is disturbed enough for there to be a break in the humming, the same thing occurs — backlash (and usually death). Note that if the backlash is not of sufficient force to destroy the singer's total HP's, then they suffer that amount anyway as "disruption" damage, and each 20% of their HP thus disrupted is equal to one (1) "energy-caused critical hit" (rolled for). On the other hand, the good side to this magik is that there is no limit to the weight/size of target affected, so long as there is sufficient time and mana to do the job. This awesome magik requires 100 days to learn, at a cost of 3,000 GS. However each year the Singer is required to practice it for 30 hours (in minimum two (2) hour increments) or they will lose their ability to do so. Needless to say, those who understand this magik are far and few between.

SORSAMEHL'S SONG OF ENSORCELLMENT

This OP 8 song magik needs two (2) full minutes to complete from start to finish, but once it is so, then here is what has happened: Any single living, corporeal creature of any size, type or kind (with the exception of Demonic types, which cannot be affected by this song at all), will have become "ensorcelled". Thus they will be totally under the command of the singer for as long as the singer plays or sings the "holding melody", and for 1d100 minutes thereafter. This is without regard to the "size" of the creature and is always either 100% effective or not at all (ie, if a successful "save" vs

magik (at minus 15%!) has been made). Those thus controlled will do anything that the singer commands so long as it is not obviously a "to the death command". For instance: The singer could tell them to "swim out to sea as far as you can, for as long as you can", but could not tell them to "go drown yourself". Finally, note that nothing is known that has the power to successfully "break" this ensorcellment save the termination of the singing/playing and then the subsequent time for it to naturally "wear off". After it does wear off, those formerly under its influence will have little or no memory of the time during which they were controlled, and will feel it was only a hazy dream. This song magik needs 99 days of learning and an expenditure of 5,000 GS to do correctly. Further, it requires yearly practice for at least 40 hours to maintain ones competence with it.

NEW PRIESTLY MAGIK

PUSHKYN'S CRUMBLE CLOTH SPELL

This minor OP 1 spell was one priest's practical joke, and it seems to still be a favorite as such, even these thousands of years after its invention. Simply put, this magik causes up to 3 square feet (per each one-half a mana point expended in it) of any non-magikal cloth to immediately disintegrate into a fine grey "ash". Range of this "joke" is 6' plus an additional 3' per each half mana point used. That's it. It requires only three (3) hours of light study to learn (at a mere 7 GS materials cost).

MEGALON'S CURSE

Essentially an OP 2 "opposite" of the "bless" of the same name (see ARDUIN GRIMOIRE III). It has a mana cost of two (2) per each individual targeted (man-sized) and is only done by physical touch. Thus the priest can "fire" the spell and then take up to thirteen (13) seconds to walk about touching as many targets as he can (and that he allocated mana for). All untouched/un-used mana is lost. What the spell does is to cause cowardice, craven action, fear and inability to fight or confront an adversary in any way. All weapons, shields etc are immediately thrown away and the individual will not even try to protect himself from incoming blows other than to hunker down and huddle behind raised arms. Most affected by this "curse" turn tail and run away immediately (75%). The duration of its effects are 13 MR less one (-1) MR per each four (4) EL's the victim is more than EL 3. For larger than man-sized targets, say about the size of an average Ogre, the duration is halved (but there is always at least a one (1) MR effect, regardless of EL, if they fail to "save"). Bigger targets than that tend to not be affected at all. This "curse" needs the pre-knowledge of the afore-mentioned "bless" and sixteen hard hours of study to master. There is no monetary cost.

DWORKYN'S DRUNK-AWAY SPELL

This OP 2 spell has a one (1) mana point cost and will instantly banish drunkenness with no hangover at all, in any single man-sized person. Each additional one (1) mana point expended will affect one order greater in size. IE, two (2) mana points for an Ogre, three (3) for a lesser giant and so on. Needless to say this one is perhaps

one of the most lucrative magiks a priest can know. It needs a knowledge of the basic healing ritual before it can be learned and takes only ten (10) hours of moderate study to so master. There is no monetary cost to do so.

GHERKYN'S BEAUTIFUL DREAMER SPELL

This OP 3 spell costs three (3) mana points to perform and has the effect of instantly putting to sleep any man-sized "victim" on a base 75% chance if said victim is of the very same faith as the priest. That base percentage is reduced to a mere 25% chance for all victims not of the priest's own religion. For targets up to "ogre-sized" the base chance is only 50% and 15% respectively. Larger targets (up to "giant sized") have only a base 25% and 5% chance respectively of success. This base chance increases by 3%/1% (as appropriate) per each EL of the priest above EL 6 that they become (to a maximum of 99% in either category). Mana cost for this nice bit of priestly magik is four (4) regardless of the target size. Range is always up to 45', and there is no known way to change or increase this magik in any manner. Duration of the "sleep" is 100 minutes less one (-1) per each 10 HP in size of the victim more than 25 HP. The main reason this nice bit of priestly magik is seldom used is that fact that if an intended victim manages to "save" versus its effects, then it boomerangs right back at the priest who cast it, with a plus (+20%) chance of working versus them! This magik needs for the priest to be at least EL three (3) to attempt to learn and has a "cost" of 45 days of hard study and spending of 650 GS to do so.

MATHIAS' SPELL OF SWIFT RETRIBUTION

This OP 6 spell is one of the rarest of rare priestly magiks extant today, and for exceptionally good reason. It is damn dangerous to use. What it does is quite simple: It conjures a large boulder of granite or some other similarly hard stone up to 33' distant (and 33' up in the air) from the priest. This stone has a minimum size of 3' diameter and 300 pounds weight, and will increase by 1'/150-lbs per each EL of the priest more than EL 6 that they are. Note also that the height at which it appears also increases by 1' per each EL of the priest. The kinetic smash damage is quite considerable as it falls onto whatever is under it and is always GM adjudicated as each individual situation demands. Now for the dangerous part. If the priest is, in any manner, not as pious or as "in tune" with their god as they should be, there will be a GM adjudicated chance that said boulder will appear right above the offending priest's own head! Splat! Never anger ones own god(s) and then attempt this magik! The other drawback is that during the 100 days of long and hard study (at a cost of 7,500 GS) to master this potent spell, there is always a 13% chance that it will have been conjured over the learning priest's own head — with predictable results.

THE ANCIENT ARCH-PRIEST'S OWN PRISMATIC WALL

This OP 20 ritual has two basic prerequisites for usage. The first is that the priest must be of at least EL 9 to learn it, and that they have been absolutely and totally celibate all of their lives. No exceptions to these two rules allowed. Ever. It needs a ritual of thirteen (13) minutes duration and twenty-six (26) mana point expenditure to complete. Once done, the priest will have completed a red, blue and yellow-banded "wall" of prismatic energy up to 65' distant from themselves. This wall will

never vary from its 49' width and 13' height. Its duration will always be thirteen (13) hours from inception to ending. What this wall does is threefold. First: No undead may pass through it without suffering 2d20 HP worth of damage. This is without any allowable "save". All that do manage to penetrate this defense (and still have remaining HP) will engage in combat at only one-half (1/2) their normal efficiency (ie, to hit, to damage etc). Secondly: All lesser demon-kind passing through this wall will immediately suffer 1d20 HP worth of damage (no "save" allowed) and will thereafter fight at only three-quarters (3/4) of their normal capacity. Lastly: Any religious artifact or priest of any religion actively "against" the casting priest's own god/religion attempting to pass through this wall will be INSTANTLY VAPORIZED AND 100% DESTROYED. However all normal "saves" do apply here, and those that have been successful, will still suffer 1d20 + 4 HP of damage and be stunned for the next 1d4 CF action segments. This potent ritual requires 1,000 days of difficult and continuous (unbroken) study and the spending of 37,500 GS to learn.

Thus ends the new magik for this volume. Twenty-four new ones to edify and enlighten the reader in so many new and different ways. I hope they prove useful and enjoyable to you in your game play. And remember! Should you have a new and/or unique magikal spell, conjuration or other such item, please feel free to send me a complete and working version of it, in care of our good publishers. If it is viable within the context of Arduin, well, you just might see it in print (probably with an "Arduinized" version of *your* name right on it) in the next volume.

NEW MAGIK ARTIFACTS

GLITTER CLOAK:

VALUE: 25,000 GS **SIZE/WEIGHT:** Can be of any size to fit whatever creature it was created for, however "man-sized" is the most often encountered.

DESCRIPTION: A calf-length, hooded cloak that resembles velvet of the deepest, midnight blue color, almost totally covered in "tens of thousands of speckles of glittering gold dust".

EFFECTS: The wearer derives three (3) benefits from wearing it. Firstly they always appear approximately 12"-18" to the left of their actual position. Second, they will give off a nearly blinding glare (-4 to physically attack them due to this) when lit by any bright light (to include full daylight). Thirdly, their physical features, facial looks etc are always totally obscured and unseeable due to the "glitter-glare". All non-magikal sight is baffled by this and even such magikal ways of seeing as "True Seeing" still only have a 13% chance of being successful.

NOTES: These cloaks were made only by a race of now-extinct dwarves (called "The Kumorii"), and are becoming quite rare now. After all it has been more than 3,500 years since the last one was created.

FIRE FINGER:

VALUE: 10,000 GS plus 3,750 GS per loaded charge. **SIZE/WEIGHT:** Always 13" long and 13 ounces in weight.

DESCRIPTION: An ivory wand carved in the likeness of a huge finger.

EFFECTS: It can, at will, discharge one (1) of its thirteen stored "Fingers Of Fire" each and every half-MR (3 seconds). Each such discharge will be a "finger-thick jet of brilliant blue-white flame (as from a gas jet) 13' long. Said jet lasts one (1) full second (5 CF counts) and will do 1D4 HP of damage each one fifth (1/5) second (ie, each CF count), for a total of 5D4 flame damage. This flame is hot enough to ignite wood and even to melt soft metals like lead (but not iron etc).

NOTES: The wand can be reloaded by any wielder of magik simply by putting three (3) points worth of "raw" mana into it per each charge to be reloaded. Once thus "loaded" it must be set out in the sunlight for one (1) day per each of the charges loaded. This is to "soak up the sun's fire" as it were.

SPECIAL NOTES: These "wands" are only made in the Rainbow Isles by that nation's own College Of Magik. Thus they are not made in any large numbers and are hard to come by anywhere except upon that island.

WAND OF POLAR BREATH:

VALUE: 15,000 GS plus 4,500 GS per each loaded charge. **SIZE/WEIGHT:** Anywhere from 7" to 18" in length and 1" to 3" in thickness (and 10-20 ounces).

DESCRIPTION: They resemble large, pointed icicles that have a soft blue-white glow emanating from them. They also tend to have a temperature (to the touch) of anywhere from 20 degrees fahrenheit to no more than 30 degrees. Yes, you *can* "ice" your drink with them!

EFFECTS: It can, at will, discharge what appears to be a long "stream" of milky-white, opaque mist. This mist is about 3' in diameter and will extend itself from the wand tip out to approximately 33' in just one (1) single second's time. Two (2) seconds later it will have totally dissipated. Anything struck by it during its initial "streaming" (1st second) will suffer 13- 24 HP of freezing effect/damage. This up to a maximum total of 240 HP worth of targets.

NOTES: The weapon can be recharged by "loading" it with five (5) "raw" mana points per each charge (to a maximum of seven (7) charges). Once thus loaded it must be kept totally submerged in cool/cold water for one (1) day per each loaded charge. This is to "soak up the ice in the water" so to speak.

SPECIAL NOTE: As these artifacts are only made by the northern-most of the Sea Elf clans, they are extremely rare indeed. Few ever are seen in the lands of men.

WAND OF IMMOBILITY:

VALUE: 7,500 GS plus 1,500 GS per each loaded charge. **SIZE/WEIGHT:** A hollow iron tube, usually 7" long and 1" in diameter (and about 1 lb weight).

DESCRIPTION: see previous.

EFFECTS: When it is looked through (so that the user can see, with an unobstructed view, the intended target) and the firing word spoken, said target's legs (only) will become utterly and totally immobile for 1d4 minutes. Note that if the target has more than two legs, another charge will automatically fire *simultaneously* with the first one. This is for any number of legs for as long as the wand has a charge to fire. If there are not enough charges then the wand will still, 100% automatically, discharge *all the shots it does have*. The range of effect is, apparently, only limited by the wielder's ability to see the intended target's legs through the tube! There is, also, no apparent size limitation as to how big such target's legs can be.

NOTES: The wand holds up to seven (7) charges and can be reloaded by inserting "raw" mana into it at the rate of three (3) per each charge reloaded.

SPECIAL NOTES: The know-how to make these interesting wands has been lost for over 2,000 years, and very few remain even though they were, at one time, used by the hundreds by the city militia in the long-lost city of LoriKhor as "humane come-alongs / criminal arresters".

HELM OF HEROES:

VALUE: 100,000 GS **SIZE/WEIGHT:** Can be of any size but "human head sized" is the most often seen. Weight is average for metal war helmets.

DESCRIPTION: Can be plain or ornate, simple or complex, but most often it is a helm not really distinguishable from any other moderately-priced one — in short, it's "normal".

EFFECTS: This helm turns the wearer into a "real hero" in all respects. They will always be "in the lead", or "fighting a rear-guard action". They rush to "save" their comrades and damsels in distress. Defenders of the "weak and oppressed", wearers of this helm seem always to find whatever trouble there is to be had in any and all situations. If it requires a "Horatio at the bridge" sort of "last stand" (to the death) to save the helm-wearer's friends, then "Have at them!" And "I'll see you in Hell!" as they are wont to say. (Oh yes, they do speak like that. All too often!) On the other hand, the helm also grants the wearer the "wherewithall" to live up to such heroics. Here's what it can do: Add plus fifty (+50!) to the BF score (+10 in non-BF battle rules); add plus three (+3) to the wearer's STR/CON scores; add plus four (+4) to their adjudicated CF score; *double* their stamina (END score). And finally, it will instantly and completely resurrect (healing all damage, regardless of the kind or severity) the wearer from death, **THREE TIMES**. The fourth death instantly and irrevocably sends them on to their *gohl(ess)*, there to sit in "a high place reserved for heroes".

SPECIAL NOTES: Once a "hero" has been killed (the first time), he is irrevocably "geased" to *continue* wearing the helm until his "final death". He cannot willingly give it up, and if he loses it, he will go on a veritable "crusade" to regain it — nothing else matters until then. These helms were made by the elves of old (more than 30,000 years ago) to give to their human and other "less reliable" allies. Thus many were made, but many too have been lost/destroyed since that time. And, as their making is now a lost art, well, let's just say that there aren't many left, and those that are seem to be the property of some monarch or other's "champion".

HAILSTONE RING:

VALUE: 15,000 GS or more. **SIZE/WEIGHT:** Made only to fit the fingers of "Folk Of Faerie", thus most humans find them far too small to wear.

DESCRIPTION: Always carved from the clearest, most exquisite moonstone.

EFFECTS: Simply by thinking it, the wearer can cause either one of two possible effects. The first is a six-second (1 MR) duration "stream" of 1" diameter hailstones shooting from the ring (in a straight line at "the pointing" of the wearer) for a distance of up to 45'. In that space of time 1D100 + 100 hailstones will shoot out. The second effect is one that causes an area (up to 45' away) some thirteen feet (13') across to have a miniature "hail storm" for that 1 MR. In that time 2D100 + 200 hailstones will rain down from an approximate height of 13'. Not lethal, but not altogether "harmless" either. Ouch!

NOTES: Once formed and let loose (in either manner) from this ring, the hail is real and will exist as long as the weather etc would allow normal ice to do so.

SPECIAL NOTES: The velocity and impact of these hailstones, while not lethal, will cause minor damage, some bruising etc, just as any normal "hail storm" would. And said "streams or storms" may be fired from the ring up to three times a day, until all thirteen (13) of its "loaded storms" have been used up. To reload it is impossible for anyone not "of faerie", and how they manage to do it is still their well-kept secret. Needless to say, these things are practically never seen or possessed by non-faeries.

AMBER RING OF RELIABILITY:

VALUE: 13,000 GS* **SIZE/WEIGHT:** Any size is possible but those to fit human-sized fingers are the most common.

DESCRIPTION: Carved from amber (always).

EFFECTS: Any wearer is absolutely and 100% compelled (no "save" at all is ever allowed! None!) to do whatever the person who put it on them, requires of him. Exceptions: Unless the person is a real thief or murderer to begin with, then they cannot be compelled to steal or murder. On the other hand they *would* have to "pick up/deliver" items, bear messages and so on and so forth.

NOTES: The wearer is fully aware and 100% cognizant of what he/she is doing, but can neither change it nor tell anyone (by word or deed, commission or omission) what is going on. They will act normally in all respects. Also, no wearer can be thus instructed to harm themselves or commit suicide *directly*. On the other hand they *can* be sent (alone) to attack an army, dragon or some similar "no win" opponent.

SPECIAL NOTES: These rings, while not very common, are nonetheless still used by a few to have a message delivered, "spying" done (the wearer will report all heard/seen at any specified place or spoken by any specified people), even murder committed (see above). Thus, while these items are generally "outlawed" in most nations, a few are still in use. Even by the "law" itself.

FINAL NOTES: These items can only be constructed by a Rune Weaver (or Rune Priest) of at least EL 13, and who has the uninterrupted time needed (100 full, Arduinian days). Oh, and the cost to make one? It's that *13,000 GS listed above, so what the maker would charge is anyone's guess, but prices of 100,000 GS are known to have been paid.

New Monsters

RHYPLEY

TYPE: Mutant **AC:** 2+2 **CF:** 18-23 **MOVE:** 240'-720' per M/R **HP:** 88-220 **SIZE:** 9'-18' tall w/ tails triple their height in length **COLOR:** dark "gun metal" gray to ebony-black **DESCRIPTION:** see cover of this volume! **SPECIAL POWERS:** Able to add 80% of the mass of whatever organic "life" it ingests to its own size/mass (to maximum listed above). This "mass doubling" as it's called only takes 31-60 minutes to complete after it has *eaten* its victim. It also regenerates 1D6 HP per minute and is, itself, 100% resistant to all forms of acid, poison and venom. Fire does only one half (1/2) damage to it and cold does only 10 percent (10%) damage to it. It can survive in a complete vacuum for up to four hours (going dormant after that time and surviving up to 1,000 years in that state!) and is able to ingest anything even remotely organic. It has no eyes, ears or olfactory organs but has a sort of "radar" to "see" its surroundings and to track its prey. Its blood is a highly acidic liquid the color of quicksilver and can "eat through" 3" of solid steel in just 15 seconds (going inert afterwards). **ATTACKS:** Its main attack are its four (4) slicing and grasping claws that each do 1D12 HP of damage. It also uses its tail in three ways: the blade-like tip that hits as would a halberd; the segmented tail that bashes as would a long flail and the whole tail to wrap and hold (even constrict for 1D8 HP per M/R) its victims. Finally, there is its awesome jaws which are used to bite for a massive 1D30 HP of damage! **NOTES:** Named after the first adventurer to encounter one (and survive!), these extremely rare and (thank the gods!) almost never encountered things are the archetype of what we call (in Arduin) "BFAF". Translated, this means: "Big, Fast and it Ate Fred". The cover shows *me* (in much younger days) doing what I do best when such things appear ... running away! Thankfully I was much faster than I now am. Phew! Anyway, this horror tends to be found only in areas such as The Great Wurm Road and Green Hell, so never worry, the odds of encountering one are quite small.

That's it for the "new monsters" this time out. After all, you can't always get a whole new menagerie each volume! Besides, this thing is terrible enough for any ten critters anyway! Believe me, I know from experience!

More Unique Culinary Wonders From Arduin

As an ending to this volume, here are a few more "goodies" from the tummies of contented Arduinians! Enjoy!

CRUMBLIES: A biscuit-sized (and looking) small "cake" made from "blue wheat" flour, loaded with raisins and/or dates and heavily flavored with cinnamon and red chili peppers(!). These "hot and sweet" items cost 4-7 CB each and are not only a favorite but a staple for most of Arduin's street urchins. Some versions have a quarter of a sausage (usually pork) stuffed inside. These are called "Crumble Pigs" and cost 1-3 CP. Occasionally referred to as "Little Blues".

HOP-POPPERS: Essentially a thin pointed stick about 6"-8" long with 12-15 large grasshoppers skewered on it. The insects are panfried, then dipped in a honey and lemon juice concoction. Also called "Honey Sticks" and "Crunchies". Each such stick costs 2-4 CB and is a favorite snack for Kobbits, Goblins, Half-Orcs and other assorted types.

SQUELCHIES: These small (3 1/2"-5" long) pink eels are served *live* at a cost of 6-8 CB's each. With an intensely vinegar-like sour taste, they are a delicacy favored by Orc-kind, Saurigs, Goblins and, oddly enough, Khai-Shang. Urchins in cities/towns near large bodies of water make a fair amount of money digging up (literally) these "mud eels" for eateries specializing in their sale. They're also called "Pinkies" and "Wiggle-Yums".

JAW BREAKERS: These football shaped, blue-grey lizard eggs average about 3" in length. They're aged in vinegar and brine for 3-7 years and then eaten cold. When served, they are bitter tasting *at first*, then, as they soften from rock hardness to a "rubbery" consistency, they become exceedingly sweet (almost too sweet for most humans). They are a favorite of most Dwarves, some Hobbits and not a few Amazons. They cost 10-15 CP apiece (by size and age) and a few indeed can eat more than one at a time. Occasionally Amazons will call them "Dreamies". Note! Phraints become very *intoxicated* by "sucking" one of these things.

End Comments

This volume you have just finished reading is my eighth and next to last in the Triple Trilogy about Arduin. It is the result of long hours of hard work, much research (to include personal observation) and loads of love. It is for you, my fans and readers, that I go to such great lengths to bring you the knowledge and light from this great and wondrous world. I hope you will be here for my next (and last) installment called **ENDWAR**. In it will be several surprises and not a little bit of myself. It has been a long year (once again) for me as I battle ill health and other such "bad" things in my life. Coming up is heart surgery and (I hope) time to recuperate and "get well". Whatever the outcome, please know that I care for you all, and always shall. Arduin and its fans will ever be in my dreams and held close to my heart. See you in a few months!

Thank you Brigitt for marrying me! I love you! Mahal na mahal kita.

Adv 1

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by David A. Hargrave

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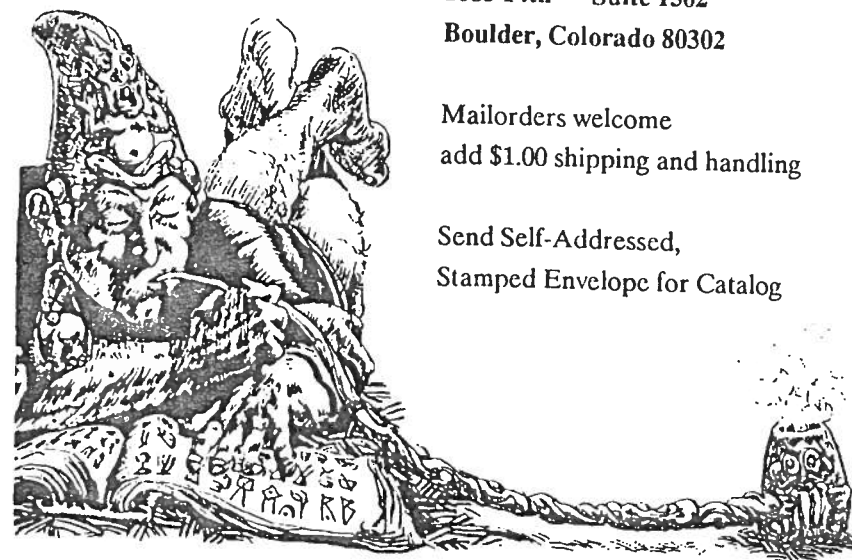
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