

## **The World of Elda**

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This world is written for the Savage Worlds game system. Go to <http://www.peginc.com> for more information.

Inspiration comes from H.P. Lovecraft's Dreamlands and various books by Elizabeth Boyer. Find books by them at any local bookstore or library. They are both excellent writers.

Greg Stafford's Glorantha (and the source of the broo and bison riders) is another must-see world. Check out <http://www.glorantha.com> for more info.

Legion composition from "The Conquest of Gaul" by Julius Caesar.

### **Introduction**

The world of Elda is a magical land. The known world consists of a small continent and a large island. A small red moon named Lelani orbits the planet. Technology is a mix of Bronze Age and Iron Age, depending on your location. The remnants of the Empire of Kadiphon fight each other in great battles, which swallow entire legions whole. Bast roam the Great Oak Forest, hunting their prey. Irakua ride the Yen Plains on the backs of great bison. Frisians brave the cold seas in their long ships, raiding their enemies. Jakalla wander the Yen Plains with great herds of animals. Orcs mine the Black Peaks, searching for pockets of valuable minerals. Elves and other fae come from ancient stone circles to torment all they meet.

Ancient ruins from lost civilizations dot the land, open to explorers eager to find their riches. An ancient dragon plays a chess game, with the various kadi cities as his pieces. Gods roam freely, helping the devout and damning the complacent. The world is mostly wilderness, ripe for the plucking by a crew of brave young adventurers.

### **Races**

A number of races inhabit the world. The major races are all available to the players.

#### Bast

These cat-men roam the Great Oak Forest in barbaric prides. Bast start with the following abilities:

Agile: Start play with d6 Agility.

Claws: Bast have retractable claws that do Str+1 damage, and grant +2 to Climb all but completely sheer surfaces.

Low Light Vision: Bast ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

Code of Honor: Bast will not intentionally kill other bast (with the exception of the Red Eyes and Night Roamers). Those who do are exiled.

Favored Edges: *Alertness, Ambidextrous, Attractive, Berserk, Fast Healer, Luck, Quick, Block, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, First Strike, Fleet-footed, Florentine, Frenzy, Giant Killer, Hard to Kill, Marksman, Nerves of Steel, Pounce, Sweep, Two-Fisted, Command, Inspire, Natural Leader, Charismatic, Common Bond, Strong Willed, Beast Bond, Beast Master, Danger Sense, Healer, Dead Shot, and Mighty Blow.*

Bast have access to the *Pounce* ability of Rakashans in the main rulebook. It is treated as an Edge available only to the bast.

### Frisians

These tall, pale, blond men hail from the land of Frisia. All frisians receive one bonus Edge.

Favored Edges: *Alertness, Ambidextrous, Arcane Resistance, Attractive, Berserk, Brawny, Fast Healer, Luck, Quick, Block, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, First Strike, Fleet-footed, Frenzy, Giant Killer, Hard to Kill, Nerves of Steel, Quick Draw, Steady Hands, Sunder, Sweep, Trademark Weapon, Command, Fervor, Hold the Line!, Inspire, Natural Leader, Charismatic, Common Bond, Strong Willed, Danger Sense, Healer, Dead Shot, and Mighty Blow.*

### Irakua

These tall, bronze, dark-haired men roam the Yen Plains upon the backs of great bison. All Irakua receive one bonus Edge.

Favored Edges: *Alertness, Ambidextrous, Attractive, Berserk, Brawny, Fast Healer, Luck, Quick, Block, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Dirty Fighter, First Strike, Hard to Kill, Level Headed, Marksman, Nerves of Steel, Steady Hands, Command, Fervor, Inspire, Natural Leader, Charismatic, Common Bond, Strong Willed, Beast Bond, Beast Master, Danger Sense, Healer, Dead Shot, and Mighty Blow.*

### Jakalla

Jakalla are large dog-men who roam the plains in small wagon trains. All jakalla begin with the following abilities:

**Bite:** Jakalla have powerful jaws that do Str+3 damage.

**Enhanced Senses:** Jakalla can smell odors and hear sounds that no one else can notice. They receive a +2 bonus to all Notice and Tracking rolls. This does not stack with the *Alertness* Edge.

**Carnivorous:** Jakalla eat meat, which they prefer barely cooked or raw. They cannot

digest plants.

Favored Edges: *Ambidextrous, Attractive, Berserk, Brawny, Fast Healer, Luck, Quick, Block, Combat Reflexes, Dirty Fighter, Dodge, First Strike, Fleet-footed, Frenzy, Hard to Kill, Level Headed, Marksman, Nerves of Steel, Quick Draw, Steady Hands, Sunder, Sweep, Trademark Weapon, Two-Fisted, Command, Fervor, Inspire, Natural Leader, Charismatic, Common Bond, Strong Willed, Beast Bond, Beast Master, Danger Sense, Healer, Dead Shot, and Mighty Blow.*

### Kadi

These short, olive-skinned, dark-haired humans are heirs to a great empire. Kadiphon is now torn by civil wars, and many kadi have experienced it first-hand. All kadi receive one bonus Edge.

Favored Edges: *Alertness, Ambidextrous, Attractive, Luck, Noble, Quick, Rich, Block, Dirty Fighter, Dodge, First Strike, Fleet-footed, Hard to Kill, Level Headed, Marksman, Nerves of Steel, Steady Hands, Command, Fervor, Hold the Line!, Inspire, Natural Leader, Charismatic, Common Bond, Connections, Strong Willed, Healer, Dead Shot, and Mighty Blow.*

### Orcs

Orcs are short and light, but surprisingly tough. Most spend their lives in the mines, and never see the sun. All orcs begin with the following abilities:

Darkvision: Orcs can see in pitch-black darkness, and ignore all penalties from lighting.

Color Blind: All orcs are color blind, seeing the world in shades of gray.

Tough: Orcs are used to working all the time. It's what they do. All orcs start with a d6 Toughness.

Favored Edges: *Alertness, Ambidextrous, Arcane Resistance, Berserk, Brawny, Fast Healer, Luck, Quick, Block, Combat Reflexes, Dirty Fighter, Dodge, First Strike, Frenzy, Giant Killer, Hard to Kill, Level Headed, Nerves of Steel, Quick Draw, Sunder, Sweep, Trademark Weapon, Two-Fisted, Command, Fervor, Hold the Line!, Inspire, Natural Leader, Charismatic, Common Bond, Connections, Strong Willed, Danger Sense, Healer, and Mighty Blow.*

### **Available Skills**

Skills available on Elda include: Boating, Climbing, Charioteer (Driving), Fighting, Gambling, Guts, Healing, Intimidation, Investigation, Knowledge, Lockpicking, Notice, Persuasion, Repair, Riding (Irakua only), Shooting, Stealth, Streetwise, Survival, Swimming, Taunt, Throwing, and Tracking. The Arcane Skills are Faith and Rune Magic.

## **Hindrances**

I specifically left Outsider out of every race description. I prefer a slightly more egalitarian (or even pulpish) world. Feel free to add it in if you want a grittier world. If you do add it, EVERYONE is an outsider away from his homeland, even the kadi.

## **Edges and Powers**

The following Edges are not available to PC's: *Rock and Roll!* and *Soul Drain*.

The Professional Edge *Ace* applies only to boating and charioteer. The Professional Edges *Gadgeteer*, *Mentalist*, *Mr. Fix-It* and *Wizard* do not exist in this setting. The Professional Edges *Acrobat*, *Champion*, *Holy/Unholy Warrior*, *Investigator*, *Scholar*, *Thief*, and *Woodsmen* can be used as they are presented in the rulebook.

The following Backgrounds are not available to PC's: AB: Magic, AB: Psionics, AB: Super Powers, and AB: Weird Science. Players may take either AB: Miracles or AB: Rune Magic (described in the Magic section).

The following Power is not available to PC's: *Zombie*.

### New Professional Edge

#### *Rune Mage*

Requirements: Novice; AB: Rune Magic; Smarts d8+, Repair d8+, Rune Magic d8+

Once per game session, a Rune Mage may make a temporary rune item. The item functions exactly as normal runic items, and is fueled by the power of the rune. It has half the mage's Power Points, and is destroyed upon use. It takes around 15 minutes to make a temporary rune item.

### Edges from Evernight and 50 Fathoms

#### *Dirty Fighter*

Requirements: Seasoned

A Dirty Fighter adds +2 to all Trick maneuver rolls.

#### *Sunder*

Requirements: Seasoned

This Edge allows the user to ignore one point of armor (in addition to any AP the user may already have). This Edge applies against all forms of armor, whether it's natural or crafted.

#### *Improved Sunder*

Requirements: Veteran, Sunder

As above, but the user ignores 2 points of armor.

## **Kadiphon**

This land used to be a great empire, but is now riven by civil war. It consists of six city-states, including an undead city ruled by a lich. The land consists of rolling plains with some savanna in the southeast. Buffalo, lions, giraffes, elephants, deer, wild oxen, cheetahs, monkeys, and jackals live throughout the region. Lush olive and grape fields cover the western coast. Hills along the western coast provide a decent source for iron and silver.

A typical kadi stands 5'6" tall, and has brown or black hair. Short hair is popular. Their eyes are usually brown, though some have blue eyes. Their skin is fairly dark in tone, and has a slight olive tint. Kadi usually wear loose clothing. Their lands are quite warm, so they limit themselves to long tunics, which go to mid-thigh and leave the arms exposed. Belts are standard. Sandals are the footwear of choice. Women often wear long, light silk dresses. Gold and silver jewelry is common among those who can afford it. Gems are particularly valued. Thick fur cloaks are worn in Sarnath during the winter, while heavy cloth cloaks are preferred in the other cities. Most kadi will only have a dagger on them. Only soldiers carry swords and other military weapons. Many establishments will not allow weapons to be carried into them. Slaves are forbidden weapons (except in the arena), and are killed if they are found with one.

Pasta, wheat bread, various vegetables and fruits, beef, and game animals characterize Kadi food. They often spice their foods, giving each a unique flavor. Several kadi inns serve food which would be considered fit for royal blood in other cultures. There are a number of good wines made in the region. Wine is a major export for each of the cities, and is a source of much contention (who makes the best).

Kadi is the language of use in the territories of Kadiphon. It is a language of soft words and flowery description. Literacy is fairly widespread and encouraged. Books have been written on many subjects, ranging from philosophy to history to military tactics. Note that all the kadi cities have names originating from the Empire of Brystos. The kadis live in the area where Brystos once stood, and use ancient city names as a sign of their power and influence. Sarnath, Daikos, and Chalcis actually have existed since the ancient days, though only Sarnath was influential in the old Empire.

Kadi families live in villas. These one-story buildings loop around in a circle, with a garden located in the center. Windows are placed every few feet to allow air to circulate. Shutters are used in the winter to keep out the cold. The villa is divided into the main family's living quarters, the kitchen, the stable, and the slave quarters. Public baths are located in every town. People go there to relax, bathe, and talk with others. Many business and political decisions are also made there. Men often bathe with women, which is not considered taboo. A typical kadi would think that someone who preferred to bathe alone was a bit strange, in fact.

The creation of steel is well known throughout Kadiphon, and forges can be found in any decent-sized town. Old forges from the old Empire of Brystos are still used in many

areas, though most of the current forges have been built in the last few hundred years.

The cities are famed for their arenas. Men, animals, and monsters fight for large crowds of spectators. Gambling on the outcomes is a favorite pastime of citizens. Usually only captured enemies and criminals are sent to the arena anymore, as many men are needed in the wars raging throughout the land.

Slavery is common throughout the kadi lands. Captured enemies are commonly enslaved. A kadi who gets so far into debt he cannot repay it is also enslaved, along with his immediate family. Many noble families have had slave families working for them for generations. If a person is born a slave, he will stay a slave all his life. The only way to escape slavery is to become a gladiator in an arena. If a gladiator performs very well and impresses the local ruler, he is granted his freedom. Commonly only about one or two gladiators a year actually manage to do this, but it at least gives the slave a chance. Note that all kadis view slavery as a normal way of life and do not consider it to be evil or inhumane.

When a kadi male reaches the age of 15, he is considered an adult. At this time, he must join the military and serve in a legion for a period of 2 years. During times of war (such as now), this service can be extended indefinitely.

Throughout the region, the death practices are ancient. The corpse is placed on a pyre, which is lit on fire. The man's spirit then goes to the heavens, where he can roam in endless olive groves, never having to work or fight again. A wild party usually follows, as his family and friends celebrate his life. With the coming of the undead in Lisht, this practice has become even more significant. A priest of the man's favored religion presides.

Kadiphon is still the greatest city known on Elda. It is located at the mouth of the mighty Tiberian River. Its legions and chariots are constantly skirmishing with Sarnath, Daikos, Byblos, and Chalcis. Recently, Lisht has stopped its assaults, which has allowed Kadiphon to move more troops to the other fronts. Regius, the current Emperor, is determined to re-establish the old Empire, against the wishes of his neighbors. His wishes may come true, as Kadiphon has recently won a string of battles against Chalcis, and is pushing into that city-state's territory. Much of this is due to the assignment of a new consul, Antillus. He has pulled Chalcis' troops into a number of traps, cutting off their chariots from the center of their army and then decimating them. Kadiphon has a decent-sized navy. Unfortunately, it is usually spread out as Kadiphon controls both a large coastline and miles of river. Its location near Frisia contributes to the need for naval forces. Naval biremes are known for 'pressing', taking unwary people from the dock districts and forcing them to work on the ships.

Chalcis is a prairie city, with large herds of cattle. It has a prime location on the Tiberian River. North of this city, the river becomes too shallow for most ships. Senator Publius Democraticus is the city's current leader. Its chariots are the pride of its army. Chalcis' main army is located along the Kadiphon border, where constant fighting keeps them

quite busy. It maintains good relations with Sarnath, only engaging them in occasional skirmishes. Recently, it has lost three battles in a row, and is looking for a way to stop Kadiphon's legions.

Sarnath is a powerful city, and is famed for its bast allies. It is located at the mouth of the Aurelan River. Most of the lands around it are heavily forested. The current ruler, Titus Aurelus, has assumed the old title of King. Sarnath's legions have built a string of forts along its southern border to defend against Kadiphon's assaults. Sarnath hires bast from the Great Oak Forest to fight in its armies. It only occasionally skirmishes with Chalcis, as the majority of its worries come from Kadiphon. Sarnath was the last city to fall to Kadiphon's legions, and the first to rebel when the Emperor was killed. They strongly dislike the southern cities, and are determined to remain independent. Sarnath maintains no navy. Instead, they have a series of watchtowers lining the coast. If raiders are spotted, the guards light a prepared bonfire. All soldiers in the area immediately respond. A small number of troops are stationed at each tower to aid in local defense. Sarnath often trades steel weapons and tools to the neighboring bast tribes, using the goods to pay for bast mercenaries.

Lisht is the City of the Dead. An undead necromancer named Marcus has made his home here, and only the undead are found within the city walls. Ediphon corrupted Marcus, teaching him powerful magic. When Marcus became old, the dragon taught him the secret of lichdom. Marcus then set about converting the population into his undead slaves. The city is quite beautiful, but nothing living disturbs it. Marcus appears happy with his current borders, and his armies do not venture out of them. Biremes crewed by skeletons occasionally attack ships passing by the area during the night. Many sailors talk of seeing old ships with rotten keels and tattered sails appearing from the dark to slaughter unwary crews.

Daikos is a trade port, with travelers from Frisia, the Yen Plains, and the Great Oak Forest often visiting. A council of Senators, led by Quintus Scipio, runs the city. There are a large number of frisians in its legions. Daikos is involved in some skirmishes with Kadiphon, but has so far stopped short of full war. The city is currently waging a full-scale war against Byblos. Daikos hires frisians to patrol its coast, though rumors of some of these "naval" vessels raiding nearby coastal villages are quite true.

Byblos is a frontier city. Its current ruler is Consul Lucius Angellus, a brilliant general. He is a strong supporter of the temple of Leonidus, so much so that Leonidus is the city's principal god. Byblos' legions are currently fighting Daikos, along with beginning exploratory missions into the Yen Plains. Byblos has had no serious problems with Kadiphon, largely because it is in such a "backwater" area. The city has a small fleet of veteran biremes, which often clash with the frisian long ships of Daikos.

### Legions

A cohort consists of 480 infantry; a legion consists of 10 cohorts. There are 6 centurions to each cohort, each in charge of one century (80 men). Each century is divided into 10

contubernia, or mess-units, of 8 men. Two centuries often work together as a single maniple. Usually, one cohort in each legion consists of chariots instead of infantry. Each legion has 6 military tribunes, who are employed in general staff duties. The commander of a legion is known as a legate. Usually one consul (general) is then assigned for each battlefield. The consul will command all legions in that area.

### Money

There is a standard coinage system used in Kadiphon. Only the richest of people will have access to any coins more valuable than silver. There are no electrum coins minted on Elda.

Platinum = Imperial (very rare - only used in large transactions)

Gold = Crown

Silver = Shield

Copper = Common

### Equipment

leather armor, lorica segmentata, medium and large shield, helmet  
falcata, pilum, gladius (short sword), cestus, dagger, knife, short bow, staff, sling, trident, whip, club

### **Frisia**

This frozen island is populated by the Frisians. Frist, the goddess of winter, has made this island her domain. As such, the land is much colder than its position would indicate. Shrines and temples to her dot the island, and many Frisians worship her exclusively. Tall firs and pines dominate the island. Giants and trolls inhabit the inner island, while the Frisians live along the coast. Bear, wolves, bobcats, rabbit, deer, and other animals live here.

Frist has also blessed the Frisians in a unique way. No ship from another land may find the island. If one does try, a giant whirlpool will form and suck them down to the bottom of the sea. There are tales of Frist besting a sea-giant in a sailing contest, so that he now serves her by creating the whirlpool to drown the enemies of her favored people. This allows the Frisians to raid without fearing any strong reprisals.

Frisia herself has a giant castle made completely of ice, which sets upon the peak of Erenbad. Her form can be seen walking within its chambers by those who seek her out. A person that makes it to her chambers is granted a boon. Rare are her visitors, as they have many a test to complete before they can set eyes upon her home. Hungry trolls will weed out all but the strongest petitioners. But this is how Frist wills it, as the boon of a god is powerful indeed. Only those that truly desire her aid have any hope of success.

A typical Frisian male stands six feet tall, and has red or blond hair. Both men and women wear their hair long. Blue or green eyes are the norm. Their skin is pale, and burns easily in the southern lands. Warriors grow beards, often braiding them. Frisian clothing is usually made from wool taken from sheep herds kept on the island. Fur cloaks are common. Heavy leather boots are worn, with many having a fur lining on the inside. Jewelry is very common, as it is the main form of wealth on the island. Weapons are commonly carried everywhere.

Frisian food is rather plain, but served in large portions. They prefer beef and mutton, with sides of potatoes. Rye bread is the norm, though wheat is served. Frisians specialize in honey mead, a strong but excellent drink.

Frisians put to sea in long ships and drakkars, raiding the coastal villages of all the other peoples. Their victims often do not know they are in the area until the sun rises on a drakkar pulling up to the beach.

Frisians have their own tongue, and use a runic alphabet which is quite similar to that used by rune mages. All their priests and rune mages can read, as well as many of their merchants and nobles. Frisian skalds are considered the master of the language. They wander the island, telling tales of great warriors. They also act as messengers, and provide news of the neighboring lands to villages. All skalds are literate, and many spend the winters writing long poems, which they recite to audiences in the spring. Some skalds also master a musical instrument, usually a harp. A harpist and a storyteller will sometimes join together, giving performances. Skalds are greatly respected by Frisians and often act as diplomats between rival holds.

Frisians live in great halls, surrounded by wooden palisades. The hall has a great fireplace in front of the chieftain's seat. All the cooking and entertainment is held here. Great tables run the length of the building, where the men can sit and feast. The shields and weapons of the clan's ancestors and slain enemies are hung from the walls. Beneath them are piles of furs, where the Frisians sleep. Frisians spend all the daylight hours outside, usually working or training in weapon use. They only come into the hall at night, where they celebrate the fact that they are the strongest of men, else Fris would not tolerate them.

Forges can be found in every Frisian town, and all are fairly recent in manufacture. Frisian raiders used to obtain steel by raiding the lands of Kadiphon. Eventually, they captured a few smiths and brought them back to the island. These smiths were given full citizenship if they agreed to build forges and teach the ability to make steel to the Frisians. All of them accepted the offer in order to keep from being sacrificed to Fris. Since then, the smiths have become quite powerful in local politics. They have even designed new equipment for the use of the raiders (such as the seax and chain mail).

Frisian prisoners are made into thralls. A thrall is very similar to a slave, except that he is given a bit more freedom in his daily activities. A thrall can earn yeoman status if he joins a viking expedition and proves himself in battle. The decision to raise him from thrallhood is left to a vote among the men who were on the viking trip with the thrall.

When a frisian reaches the age of 14 or 15, he is considered an adult. At this time, the man must go upon a viking raid in order to prove his manhood. Young men from Eyjadalir may serve in the troops working for Daikos, in place of this. Young men from Myrkdhal may either go viking or join the men fighting along the Orlo River.

When a frisian dies, he expects to be put to sea in a small boat, clad in his best armor and holding his favorite weapon. The boat is lit on fire as it is pushed into the waves. He goes to frozen lands of Hel, where he will live in the steads of Frist, fighting by day and carousing by night. Frisian death ceremonies are quite somber, with little talk and no celebration. A priest of Frist presides over the ceremony, ensuring she accepts the man's soul.

There are tales of a tribe of barbaric frisians who dwell in the northern reaches of the island. This tribe is composed entirely of werebears. They wander a set area, avoiding contact with the other frisians. The werebears have been known to go hunting for trolls and giants.

The Frisians have established four large towns, all good ports. They are, in order of power: Svartafell, Eyjadalir, Raudborg, and Myrkdhal. Each town consists of a number of lodges surrounded by a wooden palisade. Guards patrol the walls constantly, always on the lookout for raiders.

Jarl Haldane, a brute of a man, rules Svartafell. He personally goes on viking raids, even when it might not be prudent. His thegns are among the greatest warriors of Frisia.

Eyjadalir is not nearly as warlike. Jarl Rolfr actually has an agreement with Daikos, supplying them with warriors for a very hefty fee. His ships are generally merchants, though they occasionally do a bit of pirating when the opportunity presents itself. Rolfr is a priest of Frist, and holds ceremonies to her on a regular basis.

Jarl Lief runs Raudborg. His ships raid the mainland every year. He also has a powerful runemage named Vigbodr as an advisor.

Myrkdhal was completely destroyed but twenty years ago by a large band of giants and trolls, and many people were slain. The town has been rebuilt since then, but the only original inhabitants who survived were at sea when the attack occurred. Jarl Sigurd now runs the town, and he has raised a formidable fighting force. He sends a few ships to raid every year, but his main interest is strengthening his holdings on the island. His men are currently fighting along the Orlo River, killing trolls and giants.

### Money

The frisians mint only silver and copper pieces. Most frisians prefer to keep their wealth in the form of jewelry and fine weapons and armor.

Silver = Krone (pl. Kroner)

Copper = Ore

### Equipment

leather armor, studded leather, hide armor, padded armor, chain mail (preferred), small or medium shield, helmet

battle axe, short bow, club, dagger, mace, knife, staff, spear, hand axe, seax (treat as broadsword), gladius (short sword)

### **Great Oak Forest**

This large forest is home to wandering prides of lynx bast. The weather is temperate, with warm summers and relatively mild winters. Oaks, elms, maples, and walnuts dominate the forest. Bear, wolves, coyotes, deer, lynx, foxes, gophers, foxes, and rabbits predominate.

### **Bast**

Bast are furred, catlike humanoids. They have sharp claws on each hand, which can be used for combat. They have slitted eyes set above feline muzzles. Tufts of hair spring out from the muzzle similar to the lynx. Their narrow mouths are filled with sharp teeth and they have two extended canines. They average 5'6" in height, and weigh about 120 lbs. Their ears sit atop their heads and give them heightened hearing. Eye color tends towards green or blue. Their body is covered in soft tawny fur, which is covered with black spots. All bast are born with a tail, though most prides bob them during the cub's youth. Bast who have tails tend them quite well, and are very proud of them.

Bast are generally a quiet race. They are slow to make friends, but once they do, are loyal unto death. Bast prides tend to live away from civilized lands, though there are some exceptions. They usually maintain good trade relations with their neighbors. Prides often only number around 50 individuals, with marked territories. Large meetings are held with groups of prides several times per year in order to celebrate holy days and allow the new adults to select mates from other prides. Prides mark their territories using elaborate bone arrangements, which are hung from trees along the paths entering their area.

Many prides have certain tribal identities. They ally with some of their neighbors, and similarities in coloration and dress have emerged due to much inter-marriage. The largest "tribes" of related prides are: Swiftfoot, Sharpclaw, Mountain Tamer, Bloodfang, Long Tail, Black Ears, Red Eyes, Manfriend, Trollkiller, Softpaw, and Night Roamer.

Bast do not recognize slavery, and consider the idea to be quite horrible. Independence is very important among them and they would not take it away from even their worst enemies. They consider it more humane to kill a non-bast prisoner than to enslave him.

Bast build tepees to live in. These rugged tents are quite cozy in winter, and a pride can be up and moving within an hour during the summer. Bast often paint designs on their

tents, displaying the deeds of the residents and their ancestors.

A number of ancient forges are located in the bast lands, left over from the Empire of Brystos. The bast use these forges to make bronze weapons and tools. They are more than willing to trade or take steel weapons from merchants.

When a bast reaches the age of 14, he is considered an adult. At this time, he must journey into the forests alone and kill some dangerous game. The prey can range from a bear to the fae, with the greatest of the bast killing a troll (usually by tricking them into walking into sunlight). Lately, broo have become the prey of choice among the southeastern tribes. A young bast is considered dead to the pride until he brings proof of his kill back to the elders. All bast on their journey paint their faces green, signifying that they are dead until proven. Bast who meet him will ignore him, no matter what straits the youth is in.

Bast bury their dead, often leaving a small pile of the dead bast's possessions laying on top of his cairn. The bast's spirit returns to the earth, to be reborn at a later time. Their ceremonies emphasize the bast returning to Elda, and one of Elda's shamans presides over the occasion.

A bast's fur provides good protection against cold, and they can live in temperatures near freezing without the benefit of clothing if necessary. Many bast wear very little clothing (loincloths and vests). Bast often pant in hot weather, as this is how they lose excess body heat. Bast have no objection to water, and bathe in a fashion similar to humans.

Bast usually will only wear ring mail in combat, and then usually only soldiers have this. One noted difference in bast is that there are often just as many females as males in any prides' soldiers. Bast view each other as equals in all ways, which can confuse humans. Many bast fight unarmed, specializing in brawling to take advantage of their claws.

Bast are omnivorous, existing primarily as carnivores but also eating fruits and vegetables. They sometimes eat meat raw, and will only cook it rare in any case, a habit that can offend others. Almost all of them restrict their prey to animals, but cases of prides eating slain enemies after battle are quite true. Bast do not farm or herd animals. All their food is either killed or picked at random from plants. They do maintain patches of wild corn that they find, setting out younger cubs to keep deer from eating it. Bast elders have become quite skilled at making corn whiskey, and drink it on a regular basis. This whiskey is the strongest drink found on Elda, and other peoples are often surprised by how quickly they become drunk when drinking it.

Bast do not like the fae. They often make a sport of hunting fae, waiting about stone circles for the creatures to appear, then stalking them. The fae are considered very dangerous game, and only the bravest warriors attempt this. They respect the kadi, though they will fight them if the kadi encroach on their lands. Some bast prides fight for Sarnath, receiving weapons and treasure in return. They fear the trolls, as a single troll can kill many bast by itself.

Bast are sterile outside their race, so no half-bast will ever be encountered. Bast characters begin play speaking Bast. Their language is completely oral, and writing is unfamiliar to many. Rune mages are only found among the prides along the border with Kadiphon.

Many bast warriors have the ability to go berserk, and are viewed as elite warriors by their prides. In fact, many barbarian prides actually train their young to be berserkers, and thus attackers can end up fighting an entire pride of berserkers if they aren't cautious.

### The Tribes

The Black Ears tribe lives in the heavily forested northern Great Oak Forest. They gained their name because all of them have pure black ears. They are quite barbaric, and almost all of them are berserkers. They commonly fight both spiders and orcs.

The Bloodfang tribe is a central tribe that is fiercely independent. They have cool trading relationships with all their neighbors. They raid the Kadi ships that dare to beach, but fear that the Kadis will one day attempt to conquer the Forest.

The Long Tails are so named because they do not bob their tails. Many of them actually decorate their tails, dying them various colors. Long Tails are very barbaric, with many berserkers in their prides. They often hunt down spiders. They hate the fae, and will hunt down any they know about. No one is sure why, though there are rumors of secret tales passed on in the tribe relating some great evil done to the bast by the ancient fae. Long Tails have been known to use canoes to attack ships that come too close to their shore.

The Manfriends are the prides allied with Sarnath. Many of them spend a season or two fighting in a special Sarnath legion. The legion usually does night raids into Kadiphon. Due to their special status with Sarnath, they have excellent trade connections. Many Manfriends are quite wealthy when compared to the other bast, and they also tend to be more civilized. The Manfriends have a number of working bronze smithies, but a lack of metal keeps them from producing large quantities of armor.

The Mountain Tamers live in the eastern hills, and are barbarians. Their warriors are all berserkers. They are quite tall, often reaching six feet in height. They also tend to have few or no spots. Other bast have remarked that they may have origins among the puma, instead of the lynx. Mountain Tamers make a living of fighting orcs, trolls, and giants. They have a large smithy in the middle of their territories that produces a large quantity of steel weapons and ring mail. Captured orcs work the forges, in exchange for a fairly decent life among the pride.

The Night Roamers live in the darkest section of the Great Oak Forest. The other bast prides avoid them. Night Roamers often work with spiders, and rumor has it that they even worship one. Night Roamers have a running war with the Red Eyes. They will kill any Red Eyes they meet without question. They also expect no mercy from their bast foe. They wage normal bast warfare with any other tribe. Night Roamers have quite a few beastlords, and even a few rune mages, making them stand out even more from other

bast.

Red Eyes are barbaric bast, many of whom are berserkers. They have red eyes, which appear to glow at night. They hate spiders, hunting them on a regular basis. They also hate Night Roamers, and will kill them on sight. Sometimes Red Eyes raid into the Night Roamers territory, taking prisoners. They then take their prisoners back to their camps where they torture them. When the prisoners die, they are thrown into a great pot in the center of the camp and a feast is held. Red Eyes wage normal bast warfare against their other neighbors, and will not break that tradition. Anyone else is fair game. More than one Kadi merchant has met his end in a Red Eye cooking pot.

The Sharpclaw tribe resides in the northern Forest. They have developed small ships, which they use to raid southward. Sharpclaw ships are no match for a kadi or frisian ship, but can easily overpower a fishing boat. Sharpclaws also have good relations with the Frisians. Frisian ships often stop at the shore and conduct trade with the coastal prides. Sharpclaws often have to fight spiders, as the creatures continually attempt to move into the area.

The Softpaw live in the far northeastern part of the Great Oak Forest. Their isolated position has made them quite barbaric, and many of them are berserkers. They often have to fight trolls and orcs, and are strong allies of the Mountain Tamers. They use bone or stone weapons, having little access to metals, and no inclination to learn how to forge.

The Swiftfoot live in the southern Great Oak Forest. The original bast prides make up this tribe, which gives the Swiftfoot a high place of honor. Many of the greatest bast heroes come from the Swiftfoot prides. There are several working smithies controlled by the tribe, which produce bronze weapons and tools. The Swiftfoot often fight spiders that encroach on their lands.

The Trollkiller tribe lives on the slopes of the Black Peaks. It is barbaric, with most of the bast being berserkers. They hate trolls, and often hunt them. The Trollkillers often fight with orcs and giants, though they do have trade arrangements with a few select neighbors. They eat fallen foes, though never bast. They engage in typical bast warfare with the other prides. They use bone or stone weapons, with metal being a treasured resource reserved for chieftains and heroes.

### Equipment

ring mail (rare), small shield

short bow, dagger, hand axe, knife, sling, spear, long knife, war club

### **Yen Plains**

These plains are home to tribes of jakalla. The land consists of rolling plains, with some savannah near the southwest corner of the Plains. Buffalo, wild oxen, wild horses, wild dogs, deer, rabbit, gophers, and some lions are found here.

## **Jakalla**

Jakalla are large, dog-like humanoids that roam about in loosely organized packs. They stand erect on two legs. They have brown or tan fur, which is darker near the muzzle. Jakalla average six feet tall, and weigh around 170 lbs. They have powerful jaws, which are useful in combat.

They range their lands in wagons pulled by oxen, trading with or raiding each other, depending upon the situation. Jakalla wear brightly colored pants and shirts, acquired by trade. Males almost always have armor on. Both males and females commonly carry weapons. Jakalla typically go barefoot, as their paws can easily withstand travel.

Jakalla are carnivorous and maintain herds of animals to ensure a steady food supply. They also hunt regularly. They cook their food, but only enough to very lightly brown it. Some tribes have been known to eat defeated enemies, but most avoid this. Jakalla rarely take prisoners, and those that they do are used as slaves until they are killed out-of-hand or eaten. Cats are considered a delicacy, while dogs are never eaten. There are rumors of jakalla making great feasts from captured bast, but these have never been proven. Jakalla like alcohol, but do not know how to make it. Many trading deals are made just to acquire some beer, wine, or whiskey.

Jakalla learned the secret of steel-making many years ago. They tore up old forges, leaving only the forges found in the foothills of the Black Peaks untouched. The Ferroki live in these hills, maintaining a fairly static location. They have become skilled miners, trading ore for their other needs. The other packs put their forges in special metal-lined wagons, which are fairly mobile. Jakalla have specialized in a number of large weapons and jakalla-sized chainmail. The jakalla also trade regularly with the local orc tribes, offering food for iron ore.

The Sangiri and Rappari have made semi-permanent homes where they grow cotton. They are masters of applying dyes to clothing, and trade with the other packs for steel weapons and armor. These eastern packs have forged alliances with most of the packs on the Plains, and never raid each other. If there is a serious dispute between clans, they will send out a champion, who will engage the champion of the rival pack. Their single combat will decide the matter. Some of the wilder packs view the eastern packs as cowardly, but maintain their silence, else they would lose access to the fine clothes they favor.

When a jakalla reaches the age of 13, he must go on a yearlong journey throughout the Yen Plains, never staying in the same place or with the same comrades for more than one night. At the end of the year, he comes back to his pack an adult. In this way, relations between the various packs are maintained and news is spread, as many of the packs will pass news along using the youths as messengers.

When a jakalla dies, he is fed to the camp's dogs. This is a way for the jakalla to venerate

their distant ancestors and to recognize that Drister raised them from canines. The ceremony can be quite grisly to other cultures, but the return to nature is significant among the jakalla. Wild drumming and ecstatic dancing around a great bonfire are hallmarks of the funeral. The jakalla do not believe in an afterlife, believing that they are given only one chance to make their mark on the world.

The war chief and the oldest female run a jakalla pack. The war chief plans the hunting and raids. The elder female is in charge of trade and all other pack decisions. The war chief position is determined by non-lethal combat amongst the pack's warriors. Usually the war chief and the elder work together, but cases where one or the other dominates the pack are not uncommon.

Jakalla are very musical. Every night they gather around a fire, where chanting and dancing pass the time. Tambourines and drums are typically used. Finger cymbals have been growing in popularity ever since a mountain pack invented them and started trading them to the plains packs. Jakalla have dances for most every occasion, from weddings to funerals. Their war dances appear quite savage, as the warriors become possessed with the spirit of Drister, and leap through the flames of a large bonfire.

A jakalla fur provides good protection against the cold, and they can live in temperatures near freezing without clothing if necessary. Of course, the Yen Plains are quite hot most of the time, so this is rarely an issue. Jakalla pant in order to lose body heat, not having sweat glands.

Jakalla have their own language. The language is a written one, consisting of pictographs. The wise women of each tribe know how to read, as do the shamans and chiefs. Jakalla worship Drister and Lelani, and their shamans venerate both gods.

Jakalla do not care for the fae. They also do not fear them. They are strong enough to overwhelm most enemies, and would only be threatened by large numbers of fae. They rarely encounter the Irakua, and then it is usually to trade. The occasional raid does occur, but it is usually a small affair. Kadi from Byblos are beginning to encroach on Sadisi lands, which is causing some problems. The jakalla do not have tactics to counter the Kadi legions, and have lost several battles. The packs are currently trying to get organized to face this new foe, but they are unused to mass warfare.

Drister often roams the Plains in the form of a tornado. Jakalla seem to be protected, as the great winds never appear when a jakalla wagon is nearby. Jakalla shamans have recently begun praying to Drister, hoping that he will sweep through the Byblos legions. So far, their prayers have not been answered.

There is a large mesa in the northern Plains, haunted by the ghost of an old jakalla shaman. A Brystosian city was founded on the mesa, despite the local shaman's warnings that the land was sacred. Soldiers from Brystos killed the shaman for his troubles. The night after his death, the shaman's spirit swept through the city and slew everyone except the local jakalla. The jakalla immediately made a number of offerings to the spirit, and then left the plateau. The mesa has been taboo ever since, though rumors of great treasure

hidden among the ruins of the city still lure adventurers to the area. Most everyone calls it the Haunted Mesa now, and only scholars know the name of the original city.

### Equipment

chainmail, small or medium shield  
battle axe, longbow, club, dagger, flail, mace, hand axe, knife, sickle, sling, spear, falx, yataghan

### **Irakua**

Irakua men stand around 5'8" tall, and have black hair. Their eyes are brown, while their skin has a reddish-brown tint. Warriors ("braves") shave the sides of their heads, leaving a distinctive mohawk. Non-warriors leave their hair grow long. Irakua clothing is made from deerskins. Leggings and loincloths are popular among men, while women wear full dresses. Mocassins made from deerskin are the footwear of choice. Men don heavy shirts in the coldest winter months. Irakua usually have a dagger on them at all times, with some men carrying around heavier weapons as they feel the need.

The Irakua are famed for riding buffalo into battle. Their totem animal is the Bison, and all of their warriors bond with one. The Irakua tribes make up a truly fearsome cavalry, capable of crushing any enemy they meet. Their tribe lands cover the corner of the Yen Plains where it meets with Kadiphon and the Black Peaks.

Jakalla trade sporadically with the Irakua. They learned long ago that they could not stand against a bison charge. The Irakua still have to fight off jakalla raids, but only about one a year. Young braves out to prove themselves have been known to raid jakalla packs.

Irakua worship Cirdaan and Drister, with shamans of both gods found in every camp. Men control hunting and warfare, while women run the day-to-day affairs. When a man marries a woman, he makes a new tepee for them to live in. A typical bridal gift would be several ponies, or a bison for a chieftain's daughter.

Irakua roam throughout their territory, moving with the buffalo herds. A typical Irakua camp can be torn down and on the move in two hours.

When an irakua boy reaches the age of 15, he is considered to be an adult. On the first day of the first moon of summer, all the young men are taken into a great tepee. Bone spikes are pushed through their chest muscles, after which a leather tether is attached to them. The tethers are suspended from a tall pole in the center of the tepee. The men must hang from their tethers until they can pull free. All irakua men have two large scars on their chest, showing that they have completed the ritual.

When an irakua dies, his corpse is taken out into the plains. A small sling is built between two between two sets of stakes, and the corpse is placed into it. The weapons of the deceased are placed with him. The irakua believe they are giving the man back to nature,

where his spirit can roam free forever. A shaman of Cirdaan will direct the freeing of the man's spirit.

Irakua are known to take the scalps of their enemies, keeping them as war trophies. Braves also are allowed to wear one eagle feather for every enemy they slay. Irakua use war paint, which gives them a +1 to Spirit for the purposes of resisting Shaken status. They believe it gives them spiritual protection. Braves are also known for their war-chants and death songs, which they use to accept the possibility of dying in battle and to unnerve the enemy.

Sometimes a brave will seek an exceptionally honorable death in order to save his tribe members. He will tie himself to a stake with a fairly short rope. He then challenges his enemies to combat. His death is almost assured, but he can buy time for his friends to escape.

### Equipment

small shield

long bow, club, dagger, tomahawk (hand axe), javelin, staff, sling, spear

### **Black Peaks**

Here lives Ediphon the dragon. Giants can be found throughout the mountains. Trolls are found in great numbers in the northern reaches of the chain. Orcs live beneath the surface, ruling vast kingdoms undiscovered by man.

### **Ediphon the Dragon**

Ediphon is an ancient, immortal silver dragon. He knows the languages of all the races of Elda. He has access to every edge and power, including legendary ones. He lairs in the highest peak of the mountain chain, Mount Aran, which is located between the Yen Plains and Kadiphon. He often interacts with mortals, and recently caused the downfall of the Empire of Kadiphon.

He can assume the shape of every race at will, and occasionally passes himself off as a mortal if it will further his plans. He is the only dragon on the planet. He has little to fear, being nigh indestructible. He has a neutral outlook on life, sometimes helping lost travelers, while other times killing shepherds and their flocks. Encounters with Ediphon should consist of rumors of his doings. A personal encounter should be extremely rare, and occurs in one of two ways:

- 1: He is in disguise as a human, and the party does not realize who he is.
- 2: A Legendary party may seek him out for help with some major problem. He may or may not help.

Takes only half damage from all attacks.

Automatically recovers from being Shaken.

Does not age. No one is sure if he can be killed permanently.

Immune to excess heat and cold.

Knows pretty much everything important happening in Elda.

Cannot get lost, even underground.

Darkvision.

Apparently can grant mortals the ability to use any Power (as evidenced by Marcus, the lich who rules Lisht).

Radiates fear during combat.

Breath Weapon: Cone of Cold (uses Cone Template, Dmg 3d10, can still attack with his tail)

## **Orcs**

The orcs of this world are slightly more civilized than in other worlds, but they are still quite warlike. They average 4 feet in height, and weigh about 90 pounds. They have black hair, with reddish-brown eyes. Their skin is dull green, gray, or black. They do not like sunlight, and avoid being exposed to it. They have infravision, and can see in total darkness. They are also color-blind, seeing the world in shades of black, gray, and white. Orcs keep herds of cattle in their upper caves, and use their skins for clothing. Typically, they wear thick leathers. Armor is almost a must. Weapons are carried everywhere.

Orcs also keep large herds of sheep and cattle hidden among the mountain valleys. Each tribe has a few poorly maintained wheat fields. They defend their herds with a maniacal frenzy, as they would starve without them. A few giants and trolls find this out every year, as the orcs overwhelm them with sheer numbers. Recently, the orc shamans have discovered a large mushroom that provides a decent amount of sustenance. By growing these throughout their halls, they hope to cut down on their dependence on animal herds.

Orcs make a strong drink distilled from a small mushroom named the deathcap, which they call 'dream juice'. When drunk in small quantities, the juice relaxes the orc, causing him to fall asleep and have pleasant dreams. If too much of the juice is imbibed, the orc will actively begin hallucinating before passing out. The dream juice is very popular among the various tribes, though they have yet to trade it to any other race.

Orc males dominate their society. The chief smiths rule each clan. They elect one smith to be king, and the rest act as his advisors. Warriors are considered next in rank, after which come the priests. Everyone else is considered the lower class, and is there to follow the orders of their betters.

Orcs rarely leave their mountain strongholds, but those that do often become great heroes. Orcs are gifted strategists, and excel at warfare. They are prone to fits of berserk rage, which will occasionally disrupt their battle plans. They are also skilled miners, carving out great cities in the rock. Orcs worship Graak (Leonidus) and Vinga (Elda), and have priests of each god active in their lands.

Orcs often take slaves during raids. Slaves are all sent to the most dangerous mines, where they work until they die (either from accidents or poor treatment). All orc slaves are branded, and every tribe they meet will consider them to be a slave. If a slave escapes and returns to his original tribe, he will often be ransomed back to his masters, with the original tribe receiving a bounty for returning him.

Orcs are masters of steel making. There are numerous forges found in their tunnels. Elda taught them how to create steel, and they view this as a way of indirectly worshiping her. Any weapon made in an orc forge gets a +1 to damage. Orcish armor has a +1 bonus.

When an orc reaches the age of 15, he is considered an adult. He must then join the next raid performed by his tribe and engage in physical combat. Orcs believe that until you have been forced to fight for your life, you have not earned it.

When an orc dies, he is carried into the deepest caverns by priests of Vinga. Once there, they place him into a great underground river, which leads to the Underworld. His spirit will then live in great halls, feasting and drinking with his friends. After the priests depart, his family and friends have a great feast in his honor, where many tales of the deceased are told. Many meetings between the sexes occur at these events, so that new orcs will rise to replace the fallen. Orcs conceived at one of these events will often be named after the deceased.

Orcs only rarely encounter any fae, as they rarely come to the surface. They know of them through stories, but many do not really believe such magic exists. They would consider fae fine opponents when they do meet them. Orcs hate the broo. Several kings are attempting to gather armies in order to regain Midnight Pass. Much gold was made from the kadi caravans, and the orcs want the pass back.

The orcish language is guttural, with different accents occurring in the different kingdoms. The written language uses pictographs. Many orcs are at least moderately literate, which often surprises those they encounter.

### Equipment

studded leather, chainmail, small, medium, or large shield, helmet  
spear, hand axe, scimitar, dagger, knife, short bow, club, mace, yataghan, falcata, short sword, whip, punch-cutter, kick-slasher, falx

### **Magic**

There are only two arcane backgrounds available on Elda. Priests may take the *Arcane Background: Miracles*, as it is written in the main rulebook. Rune Mages have access to the *Arcane Background: Rune Magic*.

*Arcane Background: Rune Magic*

Arcane Skill: Rune Magic

Starting Power Points: 10 (see below)

Starting Powers: 1

Rune Magic is based on the power of the runic alphabet. These runes are the forms by which Elda created the world, and the gift which Drister and Frist gave the mortals of the world. Unlike the power of Miracles, each new power gained by a user of Rune Magic is actually a runic item. The player must write down exactly what the item is when he gains a power. For example, Hagred gains the *Bolt* power. It is ingrained in a bow which he has made, which has runes carved along its length. The only way he can use his new *Bolt* power is to fire the bow.

Each runic item comes with its own Power Points equal to the mage's Power Points. Hagred's bow therefore has 10 Power Points to fire *Bolts* with.

Imperfections: Sadly, sometimes wear and tear cause a rune to become damaged. If a Rune Mage uses a runic item and rolls a 1 on his skill die (regardless of his Wild Die), the runes were smudged or scratched. The Rune Mage may not use that power again until the runic item is repaired, which requires a Repair roll and 2d6 hours worth of work.

Arcane Skill: Rune Magic is the skill a Mage uses when activating *Detect Arcana* or similar powers. If a runic item uses a different skill, the mage uses that skill to activate his power instead. For example, Hagred would use his Shooting skill to activate his *Bolt* Power.

Available Powers: Rune Mages may use the following powers: *Armor, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Fear, Light, Obscure, Quickness, Smite, Speed, and Stun*.

Using Runic Items: To activate a passive device (generally those powers which may be maintained), the character makes a Rune Magic roll. Raises may increase the effects of the power as usual. The item is then activated and can be used as normal. Powers that require an opposed roll also use the Rune Magic skill.

Active devices, such as runic bows or swords, function as they are used. The mage makes a Shooting or Fighting attack as appropriate, and marks off the number of Power Points drained. Such rolls are still subject to Imperfections on a Shooting or Fighting roll of 1, however.

New Powers: Each time a Rune Mage takes the *New Power* Edge, he has crafted a new runic item. He chooses a power and decides what type of item it is contained in. He can also repeat a power he has already taken by placing it in a different item. For example, Hagred could make a sword and axe, each with the *Smite* power.

Maintaining Powers: Because Rune Mages use runes instead of casting spells, they don't suffer penalties for maintaining powers. Their runic items pay the maintenance cost in Power Points instead.

Sharing: A Rune Mage can hand his item over to a friend to use. The device works the same for the friend as it does for the mage. If the Rune Magic skill is required, the friend

will have to make a default roll as usual. This means you are better off loaning your friends weapons than that scribed crystal that lets you detect auras.

Recharging: Runic items recharge Power Points at the rate of 1 point per hour. The Power Edges *Rapid Recharge* and *Improved Rapid Recharge* apply to the runic items instead of the mage.

More Power Points: When a mage gains more Power Points, his items also gain that same number of Power Points. What that means is that if a mage has 20 Power Points, every runic item he has also has 20 Power Points.

Losing Runic Items: If a mage's runic item is lost, he can make another in 2d6 hours as long as he has access to his tools and the proper components. This requires a Repair roll. A raise halves the time needed to create a runic item.

## **The Gods**

The gods are fairly active in the world. They disguise themselves in the form of natural occurrences or as members of the local race whenever they meddle with the world. The gods have limited the power of their priests. They have no desire for another mortal to take a place among the heavens (as Leonidus did).

Drister - Lord of the Skies

Frist - Queen of Winter, Mistress of the Sea

Cirdaan - The Hunter

Leonidus - Prince of War.....Graak, Warlord of the Orcs

Lelani - Lady of Love

Elda - Mother Earth.....Vinga, Mother of the Orcs

## **Priests**

Priests have access to different powers, depending upon which god they worship. By committing Sins, they may lose access to their powers and be cast out of the priesthood. The Sins listed below are examples of major foul-ups.

### Drister

*Armor, Barrier, Blast, Bolt, Deflection, Fly, Light, Quickness, Speed, Telekinesis*

Sins: Friendly with priests of Frist, not going outside at least once each day, wearing more clothes than absolutely necessary (including heavy armor), wishing for snow

### Frist

*Armor, Barrier, Blast, Bolt, Deflection, Fear, Obscure, Shape Change, Stun, Wave*

*Runner*

Sins: Friendly with priests of Drister, not going swimming at least once each month, not boating or sailing at least once each year, complaining about too much snow

Cirdaan

*Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Deflection, Healing, Invisibility, Obscure, Quickness, Shape Change, Smite, Speed*

Sins: Failing to hunt at least once each moon, planting crops, letting a troll live

Leonidus/Graak

*Armor, Blast, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Deflection, Dispel, Fear, Healing, Smite, Stun*

Sins: Cowardice, not fighting in battle at least once each year, turning down a fair challenge

Lelani

*Armor, Barrier, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Greater Healing, Healing, Light, Obscure, Puppet, Shape Change*

Sins: Turning down a lover, thwarting romance, staying inside on the night of the Full Moon, killing needlessly

Elda/Vinga

*Armor, Barrier, Boost/Lower Trait, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Fear, Healing, Obscure, Shape Change*

Sins: Not planting crops each year (or not mining each year for orcs), letting a lycanthrope live, needlessly cutting down forests or over-mining

**Priestly attire and areas of influence**

Kadiphon

Drister - Priests wear light blue togas. They also wear a medallion of a golden lightning bolt.

Frist - Priests wear dark blue togas. They carry a trident. She is worshiped only in ports.

Cirdaan - Priests wear green togas. They carry a short bow and quiver of arrows, as well.

Leonidus - Priests wear ornately tooled leather armor and a helmet with a golden crest. They wield a pilum, gladius, and large shield when going to battle. Major god.

Lelani - Priests wear sheer red robes. Major god.

Elda - Priests wear brown robes and carry a hoe.

Frisia

Drister - not worshiped.

Frist - Priests wear a wool cloak dyed black, as well as a ram skull on their head. Major god.

Cirdaan - Priests wear an undyed wool cloak, and carry a short bow.

Leonidus - not worshiped.

Lelani - not worshiped.

Elda - Priests wear normal clothes, and bear the symbol of a tree about their necks.

### Bast

Drister - Priests dye their faces blue. They will not wear armor.

Frist - Priests hang crow feathers off of their clothing.

Cirdaan - Priests stripe their faces with red dye, and carry short bows. Major god.

Leonidus - not worshiped.

Lelani - Priests wear red loincloths, and paint ornate designs over their bodies. They will not wear armor.

Elda - Priests wear brown vests, with the symbol of a tree painted on the back. Major god.

### Irakua

Drister - Priests wear dyed blue feathers in their hair.

Frist - Priests hang crow feathers off their clothing. They also wear a necklace of bird bones.

Cirdaan - Priests wear a shirt, which is dyed green. Major god.

Leonidus - Priests wear a shirt, which is dyed white on the right half and black on the left half. Scalps are attached to it, as well.

Lelani - Priests wear a shirt, which is dyed red.

Elda - Priests dress like normal people. They carry a staff bearing the skull of their totem animal. Major god.

### Jakalla

Drister - Priests dye blue symbols over their body. Major god.

Frist - not worshiped.

Cirdaan - Priests wear only a green loincloth, and will not wear metal armor.

Leonidus - not worshiped.

Lelani - Priests wear red loincloths, and will not wear armor. Major god.

Elda - not worshiped.

### Orcs

Graak - Priests wear black chain mail. Their helmet is designed to look like a dragon. They bear a falx into combat. Major god.

Vinga - Priests wear brown robes. They wear a red crystal around their neck. Major god.

### **Time-Keeping**

The Kadi calendar is used to describe events. The Frisians maintain a calendar as well. Bast and jakalla operate by the season. The irakua use the moon for time keeping (as in "many moons ago"). Orcs use a system of "shifts" to represent time, with one shift equal to the amount of time an orc will spend at work on an average day.

### Kadi Calendar

There are 12 months per year, with each month having 30 days. The month is divided into 5 six-day weeks. An example of what one would call a certain day is 'third Harvestday of Melting'.

### Days

Godsday, Mineday, Forgeday, Tradeday, Harvestday, Restday

### Months

Snowfall, Coldwind, Melting, Planting, Merry-moon, Fallow, Highsun, Reaping, Hunting, Baretrees, Frost, Icemoon

### **Rituals and Holy Days**

There are a number of rituals performed on Elda. These rituals are lead by village wise men, with the help of the entire tribe. They are performed on set days of the year, and are dedicated to one of the gods. Villages perform these rituals to thank the gods for granting them a good year and to continue providing for the village during the coming year. Not performing the ritual would be considered an insult to the god. The god may take offense and cause problems for the village. Elda may cause the crops to blight, Leonidus may help invaders conquer the area, and so on. If the god is not worshiped, then there is no ill effect for not performing the ritual. For example Leonidus is not worshiped by the jakalla, so he won't punish them for failing to perform rites in his honor. He won't help them, either.

## **Rituals of the Year**

Rite of Spring - Melting 1st Godsdlay.

The village prays to Drister, asking for the sun to be revealed. They also pray to Frist, asking her to leave until the next winter. Generally the rite consists of a great feast for the entire village, followed by music and dancing. Alcohol features prominently. The bonds of marriage do not hold on this day, and there is much promiscuity.

Ritual of Growing - Planting 1st Harvestday.

The village comes together to pray to Elda for good crops. The coming of age for all cultures. Young bast and jakalla begin their journeys on this day. Young kadis are enlisted in a legion on this day, as well. Elders take all the young adults and relate the area's customs and laws, as well as telling stories of when they were young.

Ritual of the Sea - Planting 3rd Tradeday.

Sailors and merchants pray to Frist, asking for her blessing as they cross the seas. Great parades are held in the dock districts of every port, with donations being given to Frist's temples. Bonfires are lit on all of Sarnath's towers, with festivals centered around each of them. This is a major holiday in Frisia, with longboats filled with loot put to sea and burned.

Ritual of Thanks - Merrymoon 1st Forgeday.

The bast prides give praise to Elda, thanking her for raising them up from the animals. Many marriages are held on this day, and each pride comes together and has a large celebration. There is no warfare among the prides during this week, for any reason.

Jakalla venerate Drister for their birth on this day. The wagons are stopped for the day, with a large bonfire built. Much music and dancing occurs. The camp dogs are given extra large portions of meat, so that they might enjoy the day. Important pack marriages are held on this day.

Rite of the Hearth - Merrymoon 3rd Godsdlay.

The village prays to Lelani to bless all the lovers and married couples so that they may stay together. A parade is held with all the couples wed that year. Following them comes the older married couples. After them come the children and the unwed. There is a festival held, with much dancing and music. Many marriages are held this night.

Dance of Rain - Highsun 1st Godsdlay.

The village prays to Drister, asking for rain for the crops. The elders come together in the center of the village and weave through the fields, dancing as they go. The affair lasts all morning, and is a somber occasion.

Fires of War - Reaping 1st Forgeday.

Soldiers pray to Leonidus, asking for his aid in battle. His temples have large bonfires stoked so that they stand tens of feet into the air. Much warlike drumming and chanting occurs. Old soldiers tell tales of battle to the youths of the village. The priests then lead these veterans into the temple where they are blessed and thanked for their services for the god of war.

Ritual of the Hunt - Hunting 1st Forgeday.

The village prays to Cirdaan to grant them good hunting throughout the year. A large hunting party leaves early in the morning, and does not return until late at night. Villages favored by Cirdaan will catch a large deer or boar, which is shared by everyone. It is a sign of Cirdaan's displeasure if nothing is caught.

Rite of Winter - Icemoon 1st Godsdag.

The village prays to Frist to spare them the worst of the storms. Large donations are given to Frist's temples this day. Frist's priests hand out cold weather gear to the needy. This holiday is celebrated in Sarnath, but not the rest of Kadiphon.

Frisians pray for strength in battle. They view this as the most sacred rite of the year. They hold meets where the warriors of the village fight each other using blunted weapons. The winner is given a large boar for his larder.

## **Timeline**

(BE = Before Empire, IA= Imperial Age)

-1000 BE Approximate date of the fall of Byblos

-235 BE Kadiphon creates the first legion

-200 BE Kadiphon captures Lisht

-187 BE Kadiphon captures Chalcis

-131 BE The first Arena is built in the city of Kadiphon

-99 BE Kadiphon captures Daikos

-1 BE Kadiphon captures Sarnath

1 IA Quintus Bellorus declares himself Emperor of Kadiphon and all its territories

127 IA Byblos founded as an imperial outpost

545 IA Marcus becomes a lich with the help of Ediphon

546 IA Lisht corrupted, becomes the City of the Dead

550 IA The Empire is ripped apart in civil war when Ediphon kills Emperor Janus. Janus' young son Regius is given the crown, despite protests from many legates. Sarnath and Daikos declare independence, saying they will not follow a mere boy.

553 IA Both Byblos and Chalcis declare independence when it becomes apparent that Regius lacks support in the Senate. The fact that he has not reacted to the secession of Sarnath and Daikos is a major factor in their decision.

561 IA Regius eliminates his court enemies during the "Night of Blood".

563 IA Byblos and Daikos go to war over control of naval trade.

565 IA Regius offers the city of Chalcis a pardon, which the city refuses. Kadi legions march on Chalcis.

570 IA Current year

### **Cosmology and the Planes**

There are but two planes connected to Elda, that of the Spirit and that of the Fae. Only shamans of the irakua travel the Spirit Plane. Travel to the Fae Plane is attempted only by a few powerful kadi rune mages.

The Spirit Plane is home to all the dead of Elda. It looks different to each of the races (the afterlife is described in their individual entries). Shamans of the irakua often enter trances, where they speak to the ancients and ask them for advice. All the other races pretty much leave the Spirit Plane untouched. Recently, rune mages of the Cabal have begun investigating paths to the Spirit Plane, hoping to find either the secret of life or undeath. So far their attempts have been fruitless.

The World of the Fae is a mysterious place. It can be entered only through a stone circle. Paulus of Kadiphon (a member of the Order of the Rune) has the most experience with it. He describes it as a land of great beauty, with no traces of civilization as a kadi would know it. Trees grow hundreds of feet into the air, and are often 20 feet in diameter. Great waterfalls run over cliffs almost a mile high. The weather is always fair, no matter what it is like on Elda. He cautions that it is also quite dangerous. The Fae apparently view all Eldans with hostility. Elves and goblins hunt down any Eldans they find. Paulus himself only escaped a grisly fate by pure chance, as a gang of ogres ambushed the elves that were chasing him. He notes that the Fae do not get along with each other, at least in some cases. More study would need to be done ere he can make an official report on the land.

The moon of Lelani orbits Elda. It is a dull red in color. The goddess Lelani makes her home there, watching over the world. Lelani's face is the basis for the kadi calendar. She is dark for the first week of every month, becoming full in the third week, and becoming dark at the end of each month. Her cycle never wavers. Many marriages are held on nights of the full moon, as they are considered to be blessed by the goddess of love.

## **Secret Organizations**

### Order of the Rune

This organization is composed of many of the most powerful rune mages in Kadiphon. They are dedicated to understanding the stone circles. Recently several Frisian rune mages have joined the Order's ranks. Exactly who is and is not a member is a closely held secret. Rumor states that the Order is either attempting to regain the ability to teleport through the circles or is trying to gain some influence in the Land of the Fae. Unknown to everyone, a number of the Order's mages have actually traveled to the Faerie realm and returned to share their stories with the Order.

### The Red Eagle

This military organization is made up of tribunes and legates who are determined to restore the Empire. They operate openly in Kadiphon proper, and have the full support of Regius. Members of the Red Eagle also hold rank in all the other cities' armies (with the exception of Lisht). These men operate in secret, and daily risk their lives. Many a battle has been lost to the Emperor's armies because of the actions of a few Red Eagles. Several powerful members of the Chalcis army are members of this organization, which helps to explain that city's recent problems on the field of battle.

### The Brotherhood of Merchants

This organization of kadi merchants is interested in expanding trade to the rest of the continent. They send caravans to all of the regions on the continent, trading with the natives. The Brotherhood maintains good relations with at least a few tribes in each territory, and make a tidy profit selling "barbaric relics" and slaves in the bazaars of the major kadi cities. The symbol of the brotherhood is a green banner with a heavily laden mule painted on it. All their caravans bear this symbol. The Brotherhood hires a large number of mercenaries to guard their caravans.

### The Cabal

This secret organization is headed by a few evil rune mages. They are determined to discover the secret of eternal life. Unfortunately, they view lichdom as a viable alternative. The Cabal regularly employs trusted fighters and thieves, making them junior members. Small groups are sent into the territories controlled by Lisht, bent on capturing some of the more powerful undead. The captured undead are taken to a hidden location where they are studied. So far, progress has been slow, but the Cabal is learning. The few rune mages who are inducted into this organization have access to Soul Drain and

Zombie. It is but a matter of time before the Cabal can start learning more powerful necromancy.

### The Order of Frist

Jarl Rolfr of Eyjadalir leads this order. He is a devout follower of Frist, and has determined a way to spread her religion among her enemies. The first step in his plan has been his allying with Daikos. He ships them a number of warriors for use in their legions in exchange for gold. These men are all fervent followers of the Goddess of Winter. They interact with the kadi legions, exposing the foreigners to their religion. A large number of priests mingle among the mercenaries, actively converting the locals. These priests are the only true members of the Order, dedicating their lives to their goddess. The order is not very organized, and members often act independently. Plans are passed through new priests being sent to Daikos, while priests returning to Eyjadalir make reports. The winters have already begun to get just a bit colder in Kadiphon, though the kadis think it is a natural occurrence. If enough people can be converted, true winter may yet again strike the southern edges of the continent.

### **Monsters**

Here is a list of the monsters that can be found on this world. Many are quite rare.

Dragon - Only one, Ediphon, who lives on Mount Aran.

Giants - cyclops, firbolgs, frost, stone. Found in the Black Peaks and on Frisia. Only a few of each type exist.

Undead - Found in the city of Lisht and its territories. Vampires and ghouls have since roamed out into the territories of Daikos and Kadiphon.

Trolls - Found in the northern Black Peaks and on Frisia.

Giant Spiders - Found in the Great Oak Forest.

Harpies - Found along the southern coasts of Kadiphon and the Yen Plains.

Medusa - Only one, in the hills near Chalcis.

Fae - Come from the stone circles.

Gorgon - The Bull of Byblos.

Minotaur - Only one, in Daikos. It is used in the Arena to kill criminals.

Sahuagin - Live in the oceans around Great Oak Forest.

Locathah - Live in the oceans around Kadiphon and the Yen Plains.

Merrow (aquatic ogres) - A few are found in the coastal waters of the Great Oak Forest.

Lacedon (aquatic ghouls) - Found in the coastal waters off Lisht.

Hippocampus - Roam throughout the oceans.

### **GIANTS**

Giants were formed many years ago by Elda from the mountains. There are only a few of them in the world. They appear to be quite long-lived, and have fashioned small kingdoms high in the mountains of Frisia and the Black Peaks. They seem to get along fairly well with trolls. There is one sea giant, which lives in the seas around Frisia.

## GIANT SPIDERS

These creatures were created by Elda during one of her darker moods. They live in the thickest forests they can find, feeding on animals and the occasional bast. Prides in areas near these creatures often mark the spider lairs with skulls. Occasionally the spiders remove the markings, so that unwary travelers will march right into their den.

## HARPIES

These winged monsters live in caves along the southern coast of the continent. Drister created them hundreds of years ago. He imagined them as noble creatures, but Frist discovered what he was doing and corrupted them. So harpies became scavengers, preying on wounded or weak animals. They have been known to use their songs to lure ships onto the rocks, where they dispatch the injured sailors and eat them. Kadi legions occasionally clean out the worst groups, but more harpies fly in from neighboring areas. The undead of Lisht made short work of the harpies along that cities coast. Ghouls blocked off the harpy cave entrances, then swarmed in and feasted on the bird-women. This has actually made that coast quite safe for travel, at least in the daytime.

## MEDUSA

This creature lives in the hills east of Chalcis, in the ruins of an old temple. It is apparently very long-lived, having been there for centuries. A host of statues decorate the area, as adventurers still attempt to kill her. No one is sure where this thing came from, but there is a stone circle within five miles of the temple.

## GORGON

This great bull roams the hills northeast of Byblos. It has killed numerous Kadi, but no one can kill it. The consul has offered a great reward for either it's death or taming, but so far no one has collected. Consul Angellus would love to tame the beast and use it to destroy the legions of Daikos, but the odds of this occurring seem to be dropping every year. The gorgon came from a circle of stones near Byblos. Several farmers saw great clouds of steam erupt from the circle one day, after which the bull came charging out. It has since roamed the area at will, occasionally attacking people. A century was once sent to dispatch it, but all of the men were killed. Some were turned into stone, others were trampled. After this, the bull has just been avoided by everyone, as there seems no way to defeat it.

## MINOTAUR

Ediphon cursed this creature a few years back. It had been a powerful Daikosian merchant, but the man insulted the dragon over some matter. No one is sure why, but Ediphon replaced his head with that of a bull, and took away his intelligence. Now the city council keeps the minotaur at the arena. Condemned criminals are sent to fight the beast, and so far it has never lost.

## SAHUAGIN

Many years ago, a great city named Irrinor was located in the lands of the Great Oak Forest. It was a powerful, decadent city. Its people eventually began to worship a powerful, evil god from "somewhere else". Elda and Cirdaan found out about what they were doing, and grew very angry. So great was their anger that they destroyed the city, causing it to sink beneath the waves. But before doing so, they cursed the men who lived there, turning them into fish-like monsters. Today, the sahuagin roam throughout the northern seas. Their great underwater city is hidden from men, but is said to contain great riches.

## LOCATHAH

Frist, being queen of the ocean, was growing perplexed. The sahuagin were taking over the oceans, spreading their foul religion. So she went to the coasts off of Kadiphon, to areas where the sahuagin had not yet reached. She then took up a great many ocean fish and gave them humanoid form. She spoke with Elda, so that Elda granted the locathah intelligence and wisdom. The locathah are the sworn enemies of the sahuagin, and there is constant fighting along their borders. The locathah worship both Frist and Elda.

## MERROW

A number of stone circles were located near the city of Irrinor. Some time after the city sank, the circles activated. Merrow came forth, quickly building towns around their circles. The aquatic ogres killed the sahuagin who initially investigated their towns. They then ate their captives. The sahuagin have tried a number of times to destroy the merrow, but have met with no success. The merrow towns still stand and have actually grown stronger, as more of their kind join them from the lands of the fae.

## LACEDON

The underwater ghouls are what remain of drowned sailors. The lich Marcus' magic has seeped into the nearby coastal waters, causing many of the dead to rise up. The locathah have currently set up a taboo area of several miles off the coast of Lisht. Locathan patrols engage the lacedon whenever they locate them. So far, the ghouls prey only on passing ships, coming up over the sides during the night.

## HIPPOCAMPUS

These intelligent, horse-like creatures were also created by Frist and Elda. The locathah use them as steeds. The relationship between the hippocampi and the locathah is quite good, with both races treating each other as equals. Great herds of these creatures roam the southeastern ocean.

## TROLLS

Trolls average 11 feet in height and weigh around 850 pounds. They are immensely strong. They have brown, gray, or green hides, and red eyes. Their blood is black. They

are known to live for hundreds of years. They can see in absolute darkness as if it were daylight. They only come above ground at night and on very cloudy days, as direct sunlight turns them to stone. They are quite cruel, and eat anything they can catch (humans, bast, deer, etc). They speak Trollish, though some (10%) can speak another language. They fight using large clubs and spears, which are too large for smaller races to use. They are known to be quite tough, taking only half damage from any weapon. Trolls tend to be very dirty, and can inflict disease with a bite. Shamans of the tribes near troll territory have developed a technique to cure the disease, which involves sitting in a sweatbox for several days and a eating a variety of herbs.

Trolls were created by Elda to destroy the lycanthropes of the world. They have a deep hatred for any were-creature, and will immediately know when they encounter one. They will neither ask for nor give quarter to anyone traveling with a were-creature.

## FAE

These are the faerie folk who come from the stone circles that dot all the lands. The fae races are composed of the following creatures: elves, brownies, pixies, sprites, satyrs, goblins, bugbears, hobgoblins, dopplegangers, ogres, nymphs, and unicorns. All of them are considered evil, as they view the races of this world as inferior, and mistreat anyone they encounter. Elves and brownies have been known to replace normal babies with changelings, who grow up and often kill their parents before vanishing. Nymphs seduce men, taking them away from their wives. Elves, brownies, pixies, sprites, and satyrs have been known to lead unsuspecting mortals to dance with them for a night in a hidden grove. The person leaves the next morning to find that a year has passed. Unicorns enchant young girls, offering them a ride. The girls who accept are never seen again. Fae have also been spotted leading bound men into stone circles, which causes speculations about slavery. In truth, the victims may just be taken back to fae lands in order to be sacrificed to some dark god, no one knows for sure. The fae are also quite magical, which gives them quite an edge in this world.

The stone circles are spread throughout the lands, and appear to be protected by magic. Anyone who attempts to disturb them vanishes. None of the victims have ever reappeared. Considering how the fae treat Eldans, it is believed the missing people are dead or living as slaves.

## LYCANTHROPES

There are three types of lycanthropes found on Elda: werebears, werewolves, and werebadgers. Each type bands together as a tribe in its home territory. Lycanthropy is hereditary on Elda, and cannot be passed on through a bite or other type of wound. All lycanthropes have an abiding hatred for trolls, stemming from the legend of their creation. Lycanthropes have their standard stats, except that normal weapons can hit them, but do only half damage. All lycanthropes have complete control over when and if they change, and maintain their human intelligence even after becoming an animal. The only exception to this is when the moon is full. On these nights, they all change into

animals, even in mind. They have no control over this, and will remember nothing of what they did.

## ANIMALS

### Horses

The horses found on Elda are only the size of small ponies. They come in a variety of color schemes. Those found in Kadiphon are usually bays, with white socks and a brown mane and tail. Horses in Frisia are also bays, but with black socks, mane, and tail. Horses in the Great Oak Forest are usually palominos, being a dull yellow with black socks, mane, and tail. The horses of the Yen Plains are zebras. There are no horses living in the Black Peaks, as the local trolls and giants hunted them all down.

The Kadis use their horses to pull chariots into battle, giving them a tactical advantage over their neighbors (at least on the plains). Frisians use their horses as pack animals, as well as for food in the long winter months. Bast hunt horses, considering them a fine game animal. Irakua use horses as pack animals, as well as for tilling small maize patches. Jakalla eat horses, viewing them as a prey animal. Horses have an instinctive fear of jakalla, so the jakalla can't tame them anyway.

### Dogs

Dogs come in a variety of types. The hounds of Frisia tend to be large and sport thick coats. They are famed for their ability to detect scents days after their prey has passed through. Dogs within Kadiphon come in both large and small sizes, but have short, thin coats and are often very fast. They are trained for watching sheep, racing, or war. The dogs of the Yen Plains are medium-sized, with thin coats. They are known to be intelligent (for dogs, anyway), but are often solitary, unlike other dogs. Jakalla always have a number of them domesticated and often treat them very well. There are no known dogs native to the Great Oak Forest. For some reason the bast hunt and kill any they find.

### Cats

These smaller cousins of the lynx and puma roam throughout the lands. They wander the lands in small prides, hunting small rodents and birds. Kadi often feed them, though none can claim to have domesticated one. They consider cats to be good luck. Bast prides always have a large number of cats. They treat them as valued pets. There are rumors that some of the more savage tribes can even speak with their cats. Irakua usually have a cat or two around the tribe, which is treated as a pet by the children. Jakalla eat cats, considering them a delicacy.

There are a variety of cat types. Cats in Kadiphon tend to be light tan, with dark brown legs and faces. Cats in the Great Oak Forest are generally tan, with brown spots or stripes. Cats on Frisia have long white hair covering their bodies. Cats in the Yen Plains are often white with orange spots or stripes.

## **New Equipment**

### **Lorica Segmentata**

This is banded mail, which covers the chest, back, and the tops of both arms. The armor is combined with leather bracers and metal leg greaves. Many troops do not use the leg greaves, as they are expensive. This does give them more freedom of movement but leaves their legs unprotected.

Cost 300 gp Weight 35 lb Armor +3

### **Chainmail**

This armor consists of inter-linked steel rings. It is usually made into a sleeved coat that hangs down to mid-thigh. The Frisians favor it. (Even though Rome used chainmail, and Kadiphon is loosely based on it, I thought it would promote a more solid image of the people's culture to disallow it for Kadi legionnaires.)

Cost 200 gp Weight 40 lb Armor +2

### **Falcata**

This broad-bladed slashing sword has an inverse curve the opposite of that of a scimitar. According to battle reports, it has an excellent armor-penetrating ability.

Cost 10gp Weight 7 Dmg Str+3

### **Yataghan**

A type of saber with an incurved blade, it is designed to go precisely in line with the motion the wielder's wrist makes when delivering a slashing attack, allowing all of his strength to go into the blow. Much of the blade's weight is forward.

Cost 12 gp Weight 4 Dmg Str+2

### **Falx**

This scythe-bladed sword can be used one or two-handed, and inflicts devastating damage to an opponent.

Cost 18 gp Weight 7 Dmg Str+4 Reach 1; Requires 2 hands

### **Pilum**

This is a javelin, which has the first two feet made of a soft iron. It is hurled using a thong attached to the shaft. The point will bend once the pilum has hit its target, and takes 1d6 rounds to pull out of a shield. This has the effect of keeping an opponent's shield from being used. The pilum can also not be cast back at the original hurler.

Cost 2 gp Weight 5 Dmg Str+2 Reach 1; Range 4/7/14

## War Club

The bast often use war clubs. Their clubs are carved from oak, cherry, or ironwood. They are 2.5 feet long, with a round, knob-like head off-center from the shaft. They are fairly heavy, and can easily split a man's skull. Some bast will have quartz or felsite set into the knob in order to make the weapon more deadly. Almost all of them are ornately carved, and the bast sell them to foreign traders for a good profit. Some of the finer clubs are inset with mother-of-pearl, which increases their value dramatically. Kadi traders can sell the finer clubs for up to 20 gold in the Kadi cities.

Cost 1 gp Weight 3 Dmg Str+2

## Myths and Stories

### How The Gods Came To Be

Long ago, before man walked the earth, Elda sat alone among the stars. After many years, she grew bored. She decided to create skies of air, so that creatures might breathe and grow. She then gave birth to Drister, the Lord of the Skies. Drister flew over Elda's surface, delighting in her body. Soon plants and animals grew forth from Elda, springing up wherever Drister and Elda met. Not long after, man first grew from the land. He quickly spread throughout the lands, becoming lord and master of all he saw. Seeing this, Elda was happy. The world revolved many years this way.

After some centuries a man named Cirdaan became a great hunter. So stealthy was he that no animal could hear his approach. His tribe praised his abilities. Noticing this praise, Elda grew angry. This man was gaining followers by killing the other creatures of the land. Elda decided to play a trick on the human. As he traveled the Great Oak Forest of the north, hunting the elusive lynx, Elda set her trap. She took up a small family of lynx cats and raised them up in the form of bast. She taught them the knowledge of man, and warned them of the human hunter. Not much later, Cirdaan was stalking a lone lynx when the bast came upon him. Thinking quickly, Cirdaan attempted to speak with the creatures, but was slain when one came up behind him unawares. Great was the grief of Cirdaan's tribe when they heard the news, so much so that they raised a shrine to him. Soon after, Cirdaan found himself once again roaming the lands, but this time as a god. He granted great hunting prowess to his followers from his former tribe, ensuring their survival. He also wandered to the lands of the first bast and watched them. He found them to be natural hunters, and came to admire them. Some moons later, he approached the pride in a great dream, telling them that he would gladly help them in the hunt if they would but worship him. The bast, recognizing the man and realizing that he had become a god, soon erected their own shrine to Cirdaan. Elda was a bit upset, but found that Cirdaan's blessings would aptly suit her creations, so accepted the bast's decision.

After some years, a great tremor shook the world. Cracks opened in the earth and buildings fell. The next night, a new moon orbited the world. Lelani, the goddess of love, shook free from mother Elda to take a place in the skies. Elda fumed as it became

obvious that Drister was smitten with Lelani, but she could no longer reach her daughter. Drister laughed from the skies, causing Elda to grow even more furious.

Elda then turned inward, not willing to see the pair. But her will to create was still strong, so she decided that a new race was needed to live in the great caverns of the world. The race of orcs formed from stalagmites deep within the mountains. Elda taught them great secrets of metal, releasing the secret of steel. She told them her name was Vinga, which meant "Orc-mother". The orcs quickly spread throughout the cavern chains, making their own kingdoms.

Drister and Lelani were also quite busy, not being watched by Elda. They met in the midst of the Yen Plains for a night's pleasure, when some stray dogs wandered in. Grinning at Lelani, Drister said that the dogs would be their children. He then turned the strays into the first jakalla. The jakalla quickly spread over the plains, pushing out the humans. Drister smiles upon them to this day.

Soon, Elda once again looked upon the world. Upon seeing the jakalla, she scowled. She then thought over what she should do. She decided to have another daughter, Frist. Frist came into the world in a blizzard of snow that Drister could not resist. Elda smiled with glee as her new daughter tamed the sky god. Frist looked over the world, and saw the island then known as Tanelorn. Tanelorn had been the first meeting place of Lelani and Drister, so Frist thought it appropriate that she claim the island. Soon, a deep winter settled over the land. Tanelorn's people gradually changed in demeanor, and erected shrines to Frist in an attempt to appease her. They even changed the island's name to Frisia, and no longer used the name of Tanelorn. The appeasements worked, so much so that they are now her favored people. Drister managed to have the last laugh, though. While Frist was busy on Frisia, he studied her ways and learned how to hold back the worst of her storms. When next she tried to enter the continent, her snows were lighter and the cold was held back. Sulking, she returned to her island. Every year, she still tries to come back to the mainland, never quite succeeding.

One night, Drister flew the skies with Lelani, as they often did. In a bout of inspiration, he presented men with the secrets of rune magic. This impressed Lelani, as she had never considered giving mortals such a gift. Frist glared at Drister for doing such a thing, but then immediately taught the Frisians the use of the runes. She even made it the base for their new written language, to show that she could still better the sky lord.

Seeing what the other gods had wrought, Elda grew amused. She decided that she would create something none of the others could, just to settle everything. She went deep into Mount Aran, away from all prying eyes. She blended pure silver with some of her own power, and brought forth Ediphon, the Dragon. She spent some years teaching him the ways of the world, using him as a mount to chase Drister through the skies. Soon, she released Ediphon to do as he pleased, telling him she favored him above all other creatures.

An age passed, with the races claiming their lands. The great human empire of Brystos

came to be, and a man named Leonidus was it's greatest general. He marched into all the lands, conquering the world. He sat back, proud of his achievements. But he soon faced many new problems, as he had no new lands to conquer and councilmen hounding his back. This went on for a few years before Leonidus decided to leave worldly problems behind. He marched his legions deep into the Black Peaks, clear to the gates of the Underworld, where he faced Elda. Elda was greatly angered, and hurled her orcs and the dragon Ediphon at the man. Many soldiers died, but in the end, Leonidus held Ediphon prisoner. He vowed to kill the dragon unless Elda gave him the power to do as he wished. In fear of losing her favorite creation, Elda granted him what he wanted. Leonidus then became a god, and rose to create more battles. Fearing another such occurrence, Elda granted Ediphon the gift of immortality so that he might never again be used against her. Leonidus wasted no time in fomenting rebellions everywhere so that he might enjoy more battles and gain some revenge on the councils that had harassed him so many times, and soon the Empire crumbled. The orcs who fought Leonidus held him in awe, naming him Graak, "the Warlord". They began to worship him, after praying many hours to Elda to gain her permission.

### The Making of the Stone Circles

In the glory days of the Empire of Brystos, human scholars discovered stone circles in the lands of the Bast. The circles made excellent timekeepers, which the men quickly discovered. They wasted no time in placing stones throughout their empire. The circles would allow every administrator to know what the day of the year was. This was important, as the imperial scholars had written texts on the optimal times for planting and harvest. Use of the circles allowed a much greater amount of food to be collected.

Then came a day when the rune mages explored the possibility of using the gates to allow travel. They were quite powerful, having years of accumulated knowledge to work with. They set out to a number of the circles, carefully carving magical runes into them. Within several weeks, they were ready to begin their first attempt at travel. The results were outstanding. A rune mage went from the Great Oak Forest to the Yen Plains with but one step. Many men attempted the new paths, with good results. The empire became even easier to rule. Such was the utility of the circles that Brystos' trading partner, Frisia, even erected a few circles on its island. Great wealth and knowledge was traded at an astonishing rate.

But soon, disaster happened. As Leonidus raised up from the earth, becoming a god, great blasts of wind erupted from all the enchanted circles. Stepping from the whirling air came the first Fae. Many of the rune mages were killed outright, but some were taken back through the circles. No one is sure what happened, but ever since then, the stone circles lead only to the Fae, and so all smart people avoid them.

### The First Lycanthropes and Trolls

Many moons ago, Cirdaan wandered the forests. He had seen many new creatures being created by the other gods, but had never made his own. He wanted to make something

which would reflect his own nature. Sitting by a stream, he watched as several animals came to drink. First was the bear, great in its power. Next was a pack of wolves, sly hunters all. Then came a fierce badger, small but deadly. Last came a proud lion, its roar louder than all the other beasts.

Cirdaan smiled, knowing what to do. He would mix one of each of these magnificent creatures with man, to make them savage yet intelligent. He then took the badger, lion, wolf, and bear to a village of men, and performing his godly magic, making them as one. But something was wrong, for the men stayed as men while the animals disappeared. Cirdaan was confused, but decided to watch. As night fell, a strange thing happened. All the men fell to the ground, thrashing in confusion. In but moments, they rose as some form of beast-men. Cirdaan was delighted, for here was everything he was in his heart.

But Lelani had been watching, and grew jealous. She confronted Cirdaan, denouncing his work. So great was her anger that she cursed the lycanthropes. Whenever the moon shows fully in the sky, all lycanthropes will change shape and become as animals. They would have no control over the change. Cirdaan realized the power of her curse too late, but there was nothing he could do to stop it. He accepted that the curse was permanent, but made sure that the were-beasts would have complete control over all of their actions at any other time.

But then Elda saw them, and she grew angry. She saw how powerful the were-creatures were, and realized that she would have to create a race stronger than them in order to defeat them. So she went down into her deepest caves and shaped great forms from the iron found there. The creatures were so powerful that Elda grew alarmed, and changed them so that they might not grow to challenge her. Since they were designed in the darkest caverns, and were meant to hunt Cirdaan's were-creatures, she told them that if they were exposed to the rays of the sun, they would turn into stone, returning to her. This was good enough for her, but in her haste, she failed to make them as intelligent as the other races. She then named them trolls and released them into the world.

The trolls soon came upon the village of were-creatures, and attacked it in the depths of the night. Such was the ferocity of their attack that many of Cirdaan's creations were killed. In fact, all the were-lions were slain, as they held a last stand, which allowed the others to escape. Their bravery and sacrifice will always be remembered. And so, the were-beasts spread far and wide, so that they might never be killed in any one attack. The werewolves went into the depths of the Great Oak Forest, the werebadgers went to the northern coasts of the Yen Plains, while the werebears traveled to the western Great Oak Forest, and settled along the coast.

The trolls followed the werebears, as they left the biggest trail. Fearing that he would lose yet another of his creations, Cirdaan spoke with Frist, offering them to her as a gift. Frist smiled, and caused a great snowstorm to strand the trolls, and many were slain by the sun. Cirdaan then sent a vision to the werebears, saying that they would soon travel by sea to a safer haven. Several frisian ships arrived, and the werebears traveled away from the continent and became Frist's followers.

Seeing this, Elda scowled. She then took up one clan of trolls and set them in the mountains of Frisia, so that the werebears could not escape unscathed. And so the war between trolls and were-men continues to this day, and shall never end.

### The Great Hunt

On the fifth Harvestday of every Baretrees, there is always a full moon. Cirdaan roams the world, leading a pack of were-beasts. He hunts the trolls, seeking revenge for the deaths they have caused. The sounds of howling beasts can be heard on the winds throughout the lands, no matter where the Hunt is. All sane people stay at home, boarding up the windows and doors. Those forced out into the night make many sacrifices to the Hunter, lest they face his wrath. The were-creatures that hunt with Cirdaan are spirits of the dead, being the greatest of their people. Their leader was a great werelion in life, having led the last defense at the first battle. Many were-creatures hope to have the honor of joining the Hunt when they die.

### The Charioteer of the Mists

Many years ago, a great charioteer lived in Chalcis. His name was Keltorus. Such was his skill that he won every race he ever entered and killed many foes in battle. He was famed for taunting his enemies even as he beat them. One day he claimed that even Leonidus could not best him on a chariot. Leonidus heard this and grew angry. So the next day, as Keltorus rode through the fields, a stranger on a regal chariot approached him. Keltorus smiled, knowing that any man who rode such a chariot would be a skilled opponent. He approached the stranger, hailing him. The stranger looked at him, then challenged him to a race. Keltorus laughed, "Of course. But what shall be the wager? Don't make it too dear, as I shall surely win."

The stranger smiled, "If you win, I shall give you this chariot, the best chariot ever created, as I am Leonidus, and it is mine. If I win, you can never ride a chariot again."

Keltorus' jaw slackened, as he realized that his boasts had been heard. Seeing Keltorus' dumbfounded expression, Leonidus laughed, and cracked his whip. His chariot bolted forward. Keltorus quickly responded, his chariot swooping after his opponent. After a few moments, Keltorus began to catch the god. Leonidus glared at him, whipping his horses faster. But inevitably, Keltorus caught up to him. They were running neck-and-neck for several seconds before Keltorus began to pull ahead. Snarling, Leonidus reined in his chariot.

Keltorus swept his steeds about, laughing in his victory. As they stopped, Leonidus jumped from his chariot to the ground. "You have bested me. Never have I seen such a charioteer. I give you my chariot as I promised."

Gloating, Keltorus ran to his new chariot. "Wait till everyone hears of this! I have bested a god!", he yelled to Leonidus. The god smiled grimly before vanishing from sight.

Keltorus whipped the horses, sending them into a run that easily passed Leonidus' best.

As he did so, he noticed that a mist began to rise from the ground. Thinking nothing of it, he turned back to Chalcis. He had bested a god, and no man could stand before him.

That same evening, a merchant was traveling from the city in a rising mist. After a bit, he seemed to hear a hollow clapping. The sound was all that could be heard, and made him quite nervous. Suddenly, a ghostly apparition swept by him. It was formed almost as if from the mist. Quite clearly he could see the outline of a beautiful chariot. The merchant was terrified when he saw the twin tracks of blood left by the chariot wheels. But what truly shook him was the horrified expression of the ghost that drove it past. And so Keltorus rides the roads about Chalcis, appearing only when a mist forms. The only sound a witness hears is the horses' hooves, with never a word from the trapped charioteer.

### The Story of Lisht

In the year 543 IA, Ediphon the dragon walked the streets of Lisht disguised as a kadi merchant. He explored the city, curious about the kadi people. He had largely ignored the land the last few hundred years, but recent attempts by the Empire to acquire lands in the Yen Plains and the Ironwood Forest disturbed him. He feared the rise of another Brystos, remembering what Leonidus had accomplished. This visit was to determine what he should do about the kadis.

A gang of thugs attempted to enslave him. He quickly left them lying dead in an alley, and decided the fate of Kadiphon.

Taking a few weeks, he sought out a runemage named Marcus. He tested the man, and found him to be thoroughly corrupt. Satisfied, Ediphon revealed his true nature, promising Marcus untold power. Over the next two years, he taught Marcus such magic as had not been seen since the fall of Brystos. Finally, Ediphon taught his human student his most powerful spell. He insisted that Marcus not cast the spell until at least another year had passed, as he must wait for Lelani to be in a certain part of the sky. That night, the dragon flew back to Mount Aran, content with his actions.

Back in Brystos, Marcus began using his magic to force his way on others. He soon came to have a townhouse whose degeneracy matched that of the Consul. This soon caused rumors to circulate, which inevitably caused the government to inquire into Marcus' affairs. Imperial investigators began showing up in the city, causing Marcus a small amount of worry.

But the ordained night arrived, even as the investigators were marching to his townhouse to arrest him. Unaware of this, Marcus decided to cast the spell. He was sure that it would give him power to rival that of the Emperor, so that none could contest his will. On that cool winter night, he unleashed the magic of Ediphon.

Unfortunately, the spell truly was more powerful than anything Marcus had cast before. It stripped him of his soul, leaving him an undead lich. Seeing what had been done to him, Marcus slipped into insanity. He went into his household, slaying all of his concubines

and slaves. He then raised them to be his undead servants. The Imperial agents arrived only to be captured. During the rest of the night, a hellish court was held. The investigators were slain for daring to oppose Marcus' will. Their heads were stuck on stakes at his gatehouse, where they plea for mercy until this day. Marcus' zombies then dragged in his neighbors. All were found guilty of various crimes, killed, and raised as undead.

The next morning found a small army of undead roaming the city streets, dragging helpless innocents back to Marcus to be judged. It wasn't long before a maniple of troops was sent to quell the disturbance. An hour later, the soldiers had joined the undead ranks. By the next day, a small-scale war was being waged throughout the city. In but a few months, Lisht had become a haven of undead, with Marcus as it's ruler.

This situation lasted for several years, with Marcus content to rule his city. Then Ediphon returned to see what his designs had wrought. The dragon was pleased with what had happened, but he had larger plans. Speaking with his undead creation, he goaded Marcus. He told the lich that his power was but that of a lowly Consul, without even the lands outside his city walls. Marcus listened, and soon sent forth an army of skeletal warriors. The lich rode upon a rotting horse at the front of his army, determined to forge his own empire.

Word soon reached the City of Kadiphon, and the Emperor, a great general named Janus, moved south with five legions to crush this evil threat. While this was happening, Marcus spread terror throughout southwest Kadiphon. Thousands of people were slain and turned into undead. This massacre had reached horrific proportions by the time Janus finally engaged his undead enemy.

A great battle ensued, lasting over a week. Janus defended a steep hill, placing siege engines at its top. The undead warriors climbed up the slopes, uncaring if a boulder smashed them to splinters. Janus slowly began to win, but only by using cruel tactics. Anyone who was killed was immediately drug to the back of the lines, where a great bonfire roared. All the corpses were tossed on the fire, making it even larger. Marcus was gradually running out of troops.

Furious, the lich made his way to the front lines, and began blasting the legions with spells. Men began falling to unseen illnesses and a great plague of spiders swarmed up over the hill. Seeing this, Janus marched forth, determined to slay his foe. But it was not to be. Only a hundred yards from the lich, Janus stopped as a great shadow swept over him. Looking up, he barely had time to raise an arm before the dragon Ediphon swooped down and bit him in half. The kadis fell back, terror on their faces. By the end of the day, the battle had ended. Marcus was victorious. But his appetite for empire was sated. He retreated to his city, content to have his undead scour the lands already conquered.

Every few years, the lich leads an army against one of his neighbors, but never on the scale of his original assault. Also, his neighbors are well aware of his armies' weaknesses, so he has met with limited success on his later attempts at conquest.

Ediphon has not been back to Lisht since killing the Emperor. Apparently that had been his goal all along.