

# Dragonzine

Issue 1



A SUPPLEMENT FOR  
**DRAGONBANE**

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**Submissions welcome:** Submissions can be sent to [info@dragoncultgames.com](mailto:info@dragoncultgames.com). Submissions which have not been previously published elsewhere are preferred. All submissions must conform to the terms of the Dragonbane Third Party License. Submissions in Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish are welcome, and will be translated into English for publication.



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# Welcome to Dragonzine!

Welcome to the very first issue of Dragonzine, packed full of content to enhance your games of Free League's Dragonbane RPG. The goal of this zine is to bring you great content from third-party creators that you can use right away in your games, as well as to keep you up to date with releases from Free League and other publishers, and with events in the wider Dragonbane community.

In this issue we bring you new monsters and NPCs – from fantasy classics like gnolls and necromancers to new creations like the Arcane Mistake. We also include three creatures that can be used both as NPCs and as playable kin – turtlekin, bearkin, and night elves.

This issue also includes four new professions. Those looking to play a character driven by religious or spiritual motivations rather than one seeking gold and glory can choose between the Monk and the Priest, whilst those who are drawn to playing a crazed monster-obsessed warrior can play a Dragonrider. If you're looking for something a bit more down to earth, why not try the Tavernkeeper?

If you're interested in equipping your characters with some powerful (and dangerous!) weapons, you can check out the rules for blackpowder weapons, and our comprehensive guide to creating magical and cursed weapons.

We also have two adventures in this issue. *Taking Sides*, which is set in the Misty Vale, can be run as a free-standing one-shot or two-shot adventure, but it can also be easily interwoven with a longer campaign set in the Misty Vale. *Revenge for the Fallen* will give you a taste of the richly detailed island setting of Windheim, which will be coming out later this year (see p.84 for more).

We are also delighted to bring you two articles from Dragonbane luminaries. In our interview with Dragonbane's lead designer, Tomas Härenstam, we talk about the origins of the new edition of Drakar och Demoner/ Dragonbane and some of the key game design choices that were made in the process of developing and playtesting the game. We also talk about the thinking behind the Dragonbane Third Party License, and about Tomas' vision for the future of the game. We also have an article from Jonathon Myhre, whose enthusiasm for the game earned him the moniker of "Mr. Dragonbane" and who in 2023 GMed over 500 hours of Dragonbane. He shares with us some top tips and advice for GMing great sessions of Dragonbane.

We also include the latest news and releases from Free League, as well as our recommendations for the best third-party products released so far, including a full-length review of *Legends of Cyr-Nul: The Dire Pack* from Polyfountain Media.

As editor, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Tomas Härenstam and Boel Bermann at Free League, and to all of the writers and artists who have contributed to this first issue and who have helped to get Dragonzine off to such a great start. We welcome submissions from the Dragonbane community, so if you are interested in becoming a contributor please get in touch at: [info@dragoncultgames.com](mailto:info@dragoncultgames.com).

If you have questions, suggestions for what you would like to see in future issues, or would just like to chat about some of the content from Dragonzine with other readers and contributors, you can join us on the [Dragon Cult Games Discord server](#).

Until the next issue, happy gaming!

Śraddhāpa Shan Welsh

Editor

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# The Holy Grail of Swedish Roleplaying

An interview with Tomas Härenstam

*Tomas Härenstam is the CEO of Free League Publishing and the lead designer of Dragonbane. In this interview he talks to Dragonzine about the process of creating a new version of a classic game and the challenges of balancing a respect for and love of the game's traditions with the need to modernise. He also talks about how the Dragonbane Third Party License came into being, and his vision for the future development of the game.*

**DZ:** You've said before that one of the challenges of making a new edition of Drakar och Demoner was finding a balance between preserving what people love about the game and at the same time wanting to modernise it. What were the key things that you wanted to preserve from earlier editions and what were some of the things that you felt needed to be fixed?

**TH:** Yes, that was one of the big things early on when we did the new version of the game. It started out as a game that was meant to be done in Swedish only. That was the original idea as we felt that this game didn't have any kind of recognition or history outside of Sweden, so it didn't quite make sense. We also felt that Drakar och Demoner is a fairly 'generic' fantasy game and there are many of those, so we felt it didn't quite have a niche internationally. Early on when we started working on the mechanics we also felt that this needed to be a new version of Drakar och Demoner, and then the question became: what does that mean? What do we keep? What do we throw away? What do we change?



I think one thing that we felt we needed to keep was the core game mechanic, which is a skill-based roll-under system. Most of the other games that we have are not like that, they're dice pool games that use the Year Zero Engine. But we felt that to remove that core mechanic, which has been fairly consistent throughout the versions of Drakar och Demoner, would be a bit too much of a change. Also, the setting of the game has never been very consistent – there have been many very wildly different settings for Drakar och Demoner throughout the years. So the setting would not be a consistent point, and if we also completely changed the game

mechanics, it would hardly be recognisable. There would be very little left to make this game Drakar och Demoner and that's why we felt we wanted to keep that core base mechanic of a roll-under system.

Drakar och Demoner started out as a translation of a small game published by Chaosium in the early 80s called Magic World, which was part of an RPG package of very generic games in typical settings – one was fantasy, there was Super World and a few others. Of course that meant that the game mechanics have their legacy from from the early Chaosium games with Basic Roleplaying, that's where the game system has its origins. Drakar och Demoner is not Basic Roleplaying anymore, not in the modern sense of the word anyway. It's quite different from what Chaosium is doing at the moment, but there is a shared history there so we felt we had to keep that.

*“I think our game is closer to the original 1980s and early 90s versions of the game. That's where our starting point was.”*

That had some challenges because there had always been some issues that a lot of Swedish roleplayers traditionally bring up as problems with previous editions of Drakar och Demoner in terms of the game mechanics. And we're mostly talking here about the editions from the 80s and early 90s because in the mid-90s and 2000s there were editions that changed a lot, and that I think most people feel are very different. They were cool games in their own right, but they were very far from the original idea of Drakar och Demoner. I think our game is closer to the original 1980s and early 90s versions of the game. That's where our starting point was, and I think that's also the reference point for most people coming into the game.

The problem is that these early editions always had lots and lots and lots of skills. It depends if you think it's a feature or a bug, but at least from our perspective it tended to kind of make the game fairly complex. If you have lots of skills, then there will be lots of skills that player characters don't have, so that can become a block in itself. If you need to have, say, Heraldry to make a particular roll and nobody has that skill you're kind of stuck. That's one typical kind of problem that would come up in those kinds of skill-based games, so that was one thing we had to handle.

There were other things as well, like the classic thing that many people used to talk about was the ping-pong effect in combat – one person rolls to hit the other one, then there's a parry, and then the other one rolls to hit, and there's another parry, and it kind of just goes on forever with attacks and parries that don't really go anywhere. That very static and non-dynamic combat was another thing that's a classic problem that we felt we needed to do something about. The skill set and how skills work and also the ping-pong element of combat are, I think, two things from Drakar och Demoner that felt we wanted to change.

*“That was also part of the early editions, that element of comedy – not total comedy, but there was a lightness to the game.”*

Of course during development this also turned into an English language game, and that meant we had to bring everyone else on board who weren't familiar with Drakar och Demoner from before. This was a challenge, but it was fun, and it forced us even more to think about: OK, so what is this game? What sets it apart from other fantasy RPGs? And that's when we kind of leaned into the mirth and mayhem style of game. We had done that already before we decided to go international with the game, but we decided to lean more into it. That was



also part of the early editions, that element of comedy – not total comedy, but there was a lightness to the game. All the anthropomorphic animals, especially the ducks, had a place from the very start and that helped to set the tone for a game that was not super serious and grimdark. So we leaned into that a bit more in our edition to make that the character of the game. That's also one thing that we changed a little bit, or at least we chose to lean into that aspect of the game a bit more.

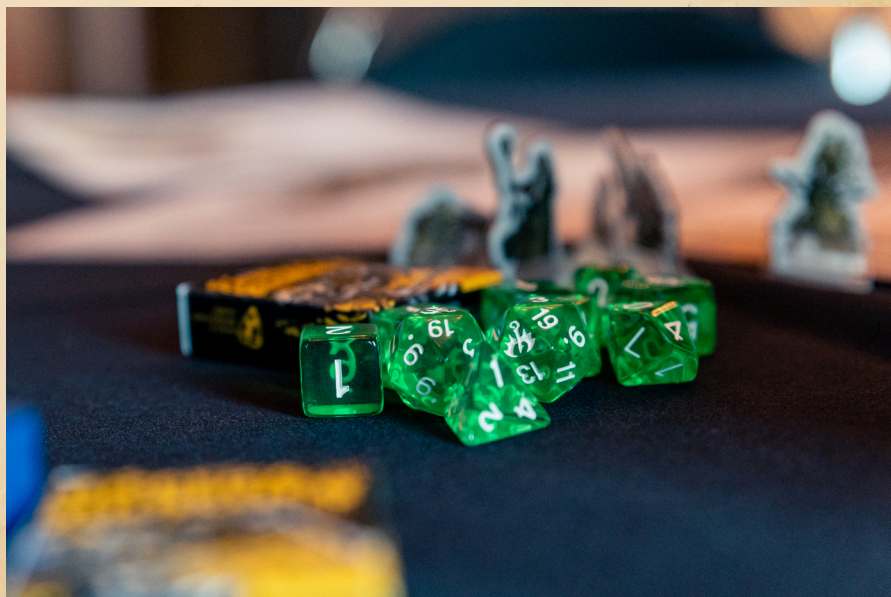
**DZ:** Did that mirth and mayhem feeling you wanted to give the game lead you towards particular design choices in terms of the mechanics, or did it mostly just affect the general tone of the writing and adventures?

**TH:** It's a bit of both. I think mostly it's a matter of the presentation, like the art style and the tone of the game, but it does influence mechanics as well. We wanted the game to be fast and quite brutal. We wanted combat to feel dangerous and not drag out, and those aspects also made the game, perhaps not comedic, but it definitely brings out the mayhem if maybe not so much of the mirth. So the fact that we wanted it to have that feeling of

danger and to be quick and brutal definitely did influence the game design and rules mechanics as well.

**DZ:** The fast and exciting combat is something a lot of people who play the game for the first time really notice and comment on. How long did it take to develop the combat system through the design and playtesting of the game, and how much experimentation did it take to get to a point where you were happy with it?

**TH:** Yeah, we did a lot of playtesting! I think we played our way through designing the game. We worked on the game for about two years, and I think playtesting started after just a few months. We playtested it all the way through to get that feeling, that tone right. And that was difficult sometimes, especially since we still had that element of this being a new edition of a classic RPG. For Swedish fans, this came with a lot of expectations, and that made things a bit more tricky for us because we had to manage what we wanted to do with the game, but also be aware of and manage the expectations that would come along with the new edition of *Drakar och Demoner* and try to find a balance there.



Playtesting-wise, one thing that I think surprised quite a few people is the harsh action economy, that you can only attack or defend (parry or dodge). You can't do both unless you have special abilities, you always have the choice of whether to attack or defend. In many other games you get some automatic defence, or it's a bit more forgiving. But that's one thing that we playtested a lot, and we felt it brought something to the game because it always puts the choice on the player of whether to attack or defend. I mean there are other choices, but that's kind of the key choice that comes up all the time. That makes it quite interesting, because that choice means a lot. If you choose to attack you will open yourself up to be attacked yourself, and if you choose to defend, you will lose that offensive ability. So that's what we were going for the whole time, to give players meaningful choices that will have an impact on what happens next, all the time. That was definitely one of the things we had to playtest quite a bit.

***"That's what we were going for the whole time, to give players meaningful choices that will have an impact on what happens next."***

**DZ:** One of the most noticeable differences between the various beta versions of the rules was the changes that were made to the skill list. It seemed like that was something that took quite a while to get right, finding the optimum number of skills.

**TH:** We wanted to reduce the number of skills from some of the early editions. In the first alpha or beta version that we did, I think maybe we went a bit too far. We had, I think, 16 or 20 skills, which worked fine, but through our own playtesting and also feedback from backers, we felt that when you have a game that is still at its core skill-based we probably needed to expand that list somewhat. So we ended up with around 30 skills, which

is a little bit more to keep track of, but it's still fairly manageable and it does give some more variety to characters, some more choices when designing your character without having an overwhelming number of skills that will paralyse the game, which is something we really wanted to avoid. It was a matter of finding the sweet spot, and I think we felt that the second time when we modified it, we landed in a better place.

We have worked a lot with the Year Zero Engine games where we have 4 attributes and 12 skills, or perhaps 16. That's where we came from mechanics-wise, but here you have more attributes, so in the end having those 16 skills just felt a bit too limited. So we ended up with 30 core skills plus the option to add more skills, secondary skills, that can be added in certain settings. Perhaps you have a setting for the game that will be on water for example – you could have secondary skills that would expand the list a bit further to give some variety when it comes to specific things that might be important in that specific setting. The skill list was definitely something that we worked on and changed during development.

**DZ:** You mentioned the Year Zero Engine, and that's clearly had an influence on Dragonbane, in terms of the pushing mechanic for example. Were there other games that had a particular influence on the design process and that influenced particular mechanics?

**TH:** Yeah, there were definitely other games that had an influence, lots of them really. The One Ring is one that came up. We did play that quite a bit during development as well because we are publishing that game, so we playtested adventures and things. So that had some influence. Even though those games are tonally different, there's definitely some things in there. And we've all played a bit of D&D, so there's definitely some inspiration from there as well. I mean, we're not trying to recreate anything, this is a different game, very much so, and very intentionally so, but there are definitely things there to be influenced



and inspired by. We were influenced by Mörk Borg, which is another game that we published but didn't design in-house – it's designed by an external team. Specifically the dungeon design and the dungeon presentation was very much inspired by Mörk Borg. I'm sure there are many more games that we were inspired by, but those are the three that come to mind, apart from, obviously, our own other Year Zero Engine games. Like you mentioned, the push mechanic is very much a Year Zero Engine feature that we felt actually brought something interesting to Dragonbane and allowed for some new dynamics. The conditions are also part of that – pushing and the conditions were not part of previous editions of Drakar och Demoner so I think those were the main influences from Year Zero.

*“Forbidden Lands and Symbaroum were both, in a way, interpretations of Drakar och Demoner.”*

I think it's interesting that Forbidden Lands, which is a Year Zero Engine game, and Symbaroum were both, in a way, interpretations of Drakar och Demoner, because they were designed at a time when the when the brand was not in our hands. Symbaroum was designed by Järnringen at a time when they were not part of Free League – we joined forces with them a few years after. The original Symbaroum was their take on Drakar och Demoner and Forbidden Lands was Free League's take on Drakar och Demoner as well. Actually a lot of the art in Forbidden Lands is from old 80s Drakar och Demoner modules and games. But there are also major differences between Forbidden Lands and Drakar och Demoner. Forbidden Lands is much more of a retro-style and a harsher more survival-style game, but there's definitely things from there that we brought into Drakar och Demoner as well, like some of the talents, which are called heroic abilities in Drakar och Demoner, but they are kind of similar. And there's a lot of other stuff

there in the combat and magic from Forbidden Lands as well. So lots of games inspired the design of the new edition of Drakar och Demoner.

*“Free League started in 2011 and one of the very first things that we wanted to do was to make a new version of Drakar och Demoner because that's kind of the Holy Grail of Swedish roleplaying.”*

**DZ:** I wanted to ask about the decision to make an English version of the game, because when you originally announced the project you said that this was going to be a Swedish-only game. Given that you already publish several fantasy games, there was obviously a need to make Drakar och Demoner distinctive – particularly from Forbidden Lands and Symbaroum which, as you said, are directly inspired by Drakar och Demoner. How did that influence the development of the game?

**TH:** Yeah, that was definitely a question. First it was a question when we got the chance to acquire the Drakar och Demoner brand. We wanted to do Drakar och Demoner very early on. Free League started in 2011 and one of the very first things that we wanted to do was to make a new version of Drakar och Demoner because that's kind of the Holy Grail of Swedish roleplaying – it's the biggest RPG. So of course taking over that game was like the grand prize. So it's something we really wanted to do early on, but at that time it was in the hands of another publisher so it was not possible. We did actually talk to them very early on about licensing that brand from them to make a new Drakar och Demoner – that would have been in 2012 or something – but that didn't work out. I know that Järnringen and the Symbaroum team were doing the same – they also inquired about it a few years later.

That didn't happen, and that's kind of how Symbaroum came to be. And then we had another discussion a few years later around the time we were making Forbidden Lands, and it didn't work out then. When it actually happened in 2021, it was them reaching out to us asking whether we were still interested – and we were. So the timing of making Drakar och Demoner or Dragonbane was really not decided by us, it was because they were ready to let go of the game and wanted to see if we were still interested, and if we could finally reach an agreement. That meant that we were not in charge of the timing, but we still felt when this opportunity came – we just have to do this. I think part of it was definitely just the pure gaming passion of doing another version of this game that we all grew up with and loved. So I think that we felt, 'We just have to do this!'

I think the timing was fairly good for a number of reasons, but one of the main challenges was obviously that we already had four other fantasy titles in development: Forbidden Lands and Symbaroum which were the closest to Drakar och Demoner, but then also The One Ring and Mörk Borg. So we had a bit of a full plate already, and we

felt that Drakar och Demoner needs a different tone. That's one of the reasons why we went for the lighter tone because one thing that all of the other fantasy games had in common is that they were all fairly grimdark or fairly serious games. Forbidden Lands has a bit of humour, and I guess Symbaroum too, but at their core they're still fairly serious games. We wanted to try for something different, and we felt that Drakar och Demoner actually lends itself really well to something with a lighter tone.

That's also why we went with the art style that we did, with Johan Egerkrans' art which is, I think, amazing in itself. Most of that art in the core game is actually from the previous edition of Drakar och Demoner that came out in 2016 by Riotminds. We felt that his art style was really perfect for the game and for that tone. We felt that this was something we wanted to continue with and build on even further. That's where we leaned into the lighter tone even more because we felt it really could be something with a completely different tone from Symbaroum and Forbidden Lands.





We also felt that Drakar och Demoner could fill the niche of being an answer to: 'Where do we start?' That's a question we get at conventions – people come up who are not hardcore fans who already know everything who might say, 'Oh, I heard about this thing called roleplaying' or 'Someone told me about your company' or something like that. 'Where do I start?' We never felt we really had that perfect starting point. I think Tales from the Loop was a fairly good starting game, but it's kind of a niche thing in itself. We felt that we needed a game that could really be the perfect place to start if you're new to RPGs or new to Free League and just want to try something out, something where we can say 'start here' and then you can go from there to explore all of the other games. That also made perfect sense when we started doing the English edition, and we felt that it could really have that function as well, to be a great game to put into the hands of someone who is new – new to gaming, new to Free League games or just roleplaying in general. So in that sense, we felt that this game really had a function to fill, despite the other fantasy titles that we already had.

*“We felt that we needed a game that could really be the perfect place to start if you're new to RPGs or new to Free League and just want to try something out, something where we can say: start here.”*

**DZ:** What has surprised you most about the international reactions to the game?

**TH:** I think overall that it's been received really well, and been doing really well. As I mentioned, we weren't sure if there would be room for this game internationally, or if that niche for fairly classic traditional fantasy RPGs is so filled with games already that nobody would be interested, but

that was not the case it seemed. It's been received really well and people seem to be enjoying it, so just to see that happen has been fantastic and a little bit surprising maybe.

In terms of something more specific, I think one thing that's not completely surprising, but maybe a little bit, is that a lot of players seem to find it very deadly. It is kind of deadly, but I don't think it's *that* deadly. That's definitely been a recurring thing. There is the starting scene in the adventure book in the core set where it's a fight against some goblins (spoiler!) and that one is perhaps a little bit too tough to be the first encounter of the game. There have been some TPK reports in the very first combat encounter, and that perhaps might not be ideal.

The game is kind of deadly – you can go down on even a single hit. I think that if you come from D&D then that's a game that can be deadly at level one, but then it's not really that deadly any more after that. Here, you're never advancing beyond being vulnerable. Even if you're a fairly skilled character with a number of sessions under your belt, a goblin with a sword is still dangerous, and your average orc can still kill you, which I think is what we wanted. The world is a little bit less heroic, maybe it's more a little bit more grounded than your typical D&D game. We wanted it to be that way – that every time someone raises a sword against you and tries to stab you with it, that should feel dangerous. You should never feel, 'Oh, that's no problem. I just don't even care'. We wanted to have every situation feel dangerous.

What we have done though is to have a system where you can fairly easily go down to zero hit points and you're incapacitated, but for your character to actually die is less likely. Most likely you'll have a chance to fight another day. You might get captured, or you'll be knocked out, but then you actually have a chance to come back. That's something we've been trying to do in some other games as well – to avoid combat being drawn out and slow and uninteresting. You can get knocked

out of combat fairly quickly, but then you have a fairly decent chance of surviving, and you can actually recover. It's more interesting for the story and the game than someone just dying.

*"You're never advancing beyond being vulnerable. Even if you're a fairly skilled character with a number of sessions under your belt, a goblin with a sword is still dangerous, and your average orc can still kill you."*

**DZ:** I'd like to ask about the third party license because that represents quite a significant break from the approach that you've taken with other games, with the Free League Workshop. Did you always plan to have this kind of third party license, or did the discussion around the D&D OGL influence your thinking?

**TH:** It was always planned, but it was quite interesting how the timing worked out. We have two licenses: there is the Dragonbane license and then there is the Year Zero Engine license or the Free Tabletop License as we call it. The Year Zero Engine license already existed, we actually published it in 2019. That was part of the development of Forbidden Lands, and the idea there was that you could take the core of the Year Zero Engine and use it for your own games using the system reference document: a core rules document that could be used by anyone. But then we decided to do something specific for Dragonbane where you would be able to release and publish modules and expansions for that game in print and in any way you wanted to.

We were inspired by two things. One was of course that we already had the Free League Workshop, a community content programme on DriveThruRPG for most of our other games, but in

that case it's only possible to publish on DriveThruRPG as PDFs. So we were already doing that, and for Dragonbane we thought we could take it one step further. One big inspiration for that was the Mörk Borg third party license, which is very open and had led to a massive range of third party stuff for Mörk Borg that's still going like crazy. I mean, there must be hundreds or thousands of things out there. And we felt that it would be cool to do something similar for Dragonbane as well, to allow people to publish expansions for the game, not only on DriveThruRPG but also in any other way, even in print form or doing Kickstarters, whatever they want. And we felt that Dragonbane would be a good candidate for this, mostly perhaps because on the Swedish side Drakar och Demoner has such recognition, there is so much interest in it that we felt there will be an interest for Swedish gamers at least to do third party stuff. But then it turned out actually that quite a few people wanted to do English-language stuff as well, which is very cool.

*"One big inspiration was the Mörk Borg third party license, which is very open and had led to a massive range of third party stuff."*

Basically all of this was already happening when the discussions around Wizards' OGL happened about a year ago, but by then we were already planning this and working on it. The only effect it had was that we felt it was probably a good time to speed things up a little bit, so I think we accelerated the work on those licenses and got them out last spring. In that sense there was some effect, but the core idea was already in the works before.

**DZ:** Looking to the future, how do you hope to see Dragonbane develop, both in terms of Free League's own plans and in terms of the third party market?





Playing Drakar och Demoner at Spelkongress 23 in Stockholm

**TH:** It's definitely one of the games that we are most focused on at the moment, and we want to have an active line of supplements and expansions. I think there's been a criticism of Free League, and I think fairly so, for the most part, that we enjoy making games and playing games and have ideas for new games, so we have quite a wide range of titles, but we have perhaps not been the best at supporting each title, at least in terms of the number of expansions. We've tried to make every expansion count, but perhaps we don't have the largest number of expansions per game per year. We have been trying to improve on that front generally, to make sure every title gets ideally maybe two expansions per year, but at least one, so that we really support each line.

Dragonbane is definitely one of our highest priorities right now because there is a demand for it, and we have lots of ideas for it. We're doing mostly new stuff, but we're also doing some completely new interpretations of some classic old campaigns for Drakar och Demoner, which is a lot of fun. So there's definitely lots of official stuff

coming. We're releasing the Bestiary now along with a stand-alone Rulebook and some cardboard standee figures. Next up we have a new campaign book called Path of Glory, which is a remake of a classic campaign from the early 80s. That's coming next. And then after that, we have more things on the way.

*“We have quite a wide range of titles, but we have perhaps not been the best at supporting each title.”*

There are also lots of third party things happening already. Lots of it is in Swedish, but not all of it. There was a pretty big Kickstarter for a campaign setting last year, which is coming out (**DZ:** see p.84 for more on this) and there is definitely more coming. There is another setting called Ereb Altor which was the first campaign world that was created for Drakar och Demoner in the 80s, and which has a lot of nostalgia but also a legacy among Swedish Drakar och Demoner



Announcing the Bestiary at Spelkongress 23 in Stockholm

players. That was the campaign world that they associate strongly with the game. We wanted the game to be fairly setting-agnostic: there is a world there, but it's kind of an implied world rather than a big world map or anything. So Ereb Altor is actually being done by another Swedish publisher, Helmgast. They had a Kickstarter which was only for a Swedish edition, but they have said that they might do it in English, which we'd be happy to see. In general it's just a lot of fun to see more third party things overall. There's definitely more stuff coming, and that's what we hope to see.

**DZ:** In another interview you did a couple of months ago, you also mentioned the possibility of a magic book and a new edition of the classic campaign Svavelvinter. Without giving away too many secrets, can you say a little about those?

**TH:** Yeah, both of those are definitely ideas that we have on the horizon. A magic book, I think, makes sense. Even though the core set is not a starter set,

it's actually a core game, and the magic chapter has what you need to play the game, there's definitely room for more. Just like with the Bestiary section, which has a fair share of monsters, but there was an opportunity to do more. So I think the magic book makes a lot of sense to do. That's definitely something that is on the horizon, something we're looking at. We don't know for sure when or even if it will happen, but most likely that's something we will be doing at some point. We have started some work on it, but it's a bit too soon to give specifics because it's still early.

*“The text will be updated and the art is new, the maps are new, so it's going to feel like a new product, even though it's still based on the same core.”*

Svavelvinter is another one of those classic Drakar och Demoner campaigns from the mid-80s. Path of



Glory was a bit earlier and Svavelvinter came a bit later – both great campaigns that have great flavour and both of which actually hold up really well, even though they came out almost 4 decades ago. We're keeping the core of them, but the text will be updated and the art is new, the maps are new, so it's going to feel like a new product, even though it's still based on the same core. We haven't started any work on Svavelvinter yet, but it's definitely something we'd like to do.

We're talking to the original author, which is a lot of fun. We're working with the original authors of both Path of Glory and Svavelvinter; they're both involved and working with us. The author of Svavelvinter is Erik Granström who did the setting work for Forbidden Lands, so we have already been working with him for years. That would be a lot of fun to do, so that's probably also in the reasonably near future, something that will be coming up.

**DZ:** Some people have talked about the possibility of an 'Expert' set. Thinking about what you were saying before about Dragonbane being designed to be a good gateway for people who haven't played roleplaying games before, would an Expert set be something that you would be interested in or does that not really fit with your vision of what you want Dragonbane to be?

*"We know that some some gamers definitely want Dragonbane to be a bigger game with more options, more things to dig into."*

**TH:** Yeah, it's something we have discussed – perhaps an Expert book or something. Of course, this goes back to the fact that there was a Drakar och Demoner Expert boxed set from the mid-80s and, for many Swedish fans, that has a special place in their hearts. But it was also made at a time in the mid to late 80s when realism and lots of detail was kind of

the fashion in roleplaying – the more detail, the more realism you could put into a game, the better. That boxed set was designed under that kind of paradigm. It was very good, but it's not the game we wanted to make now as the core game. It was not the core game back then either, it was always an expansion, but I think for some Swedish gamers the Expert box is Drakar och Demoner.

What we have been discussing doing is an Expert book, but the difference that we would like to make from the 80s version is that the Expert set replaced a lot of the rules of the core game. You still needed the core game, but the Expert set replaced large parts of the game. We'd rather add things and give a set of additional rules, additional skills, secondary skills, more heroic abilities, more weapons rules for, say, large-scale combat – offer lots and lots more tools for expanding the game, for giving more character development options, more things that you can add to your game if you like.

It would be like a menu of things to pick from. It would not be: 'OK, so now we're playing the Expert Version' which is quite different from the normal basic version. We wouldn't do that. It's rather that it would be a book of rules and other resources that you can bring into the game to add more detail, depth, and complexity if you want the game to go in that direction. That's what we're looking at because we know that some gamers definitely want Dragonbane to be a bigger game with more options, more things to dig into and so on.

We do think that it does make sense down the line. It's something that's also still very much at the idea stage; we haven't started working on it, but it's something we're discussing. So it's entirely possible we might do that at some point.

**DZ:** Well, thank you for giving such fascinating and detailed answers, and for helping us to get the first issue of Dragonzine off to such a great start!

# Beyond the Rules

## Mr. Dragonbane's Tips and Tricks

First, let me explain who I am... Mr. Dragonbane. I'm sure a lot of you see this name come across Facebook, Instagram or Discord and think to yourself, "Who is this person boldly adopting the game's name?" Well, it happened by complete accident, but I'm glad it did. Last year, at the beginning of 2023, I was looking for a new system to run. I wasn't happy with the system that I had been playing and running for years as a Dungeon Master (DM). My friend Matthew McCloud nudged me towards Dragonbane from Free League Publishing. I had initially seen it on Facebook and Kickstarter and was captivated by the artwork (the artwork is what originally drew me in, Johan Egerkrans is a master of his craft) but ultimately, I regret to say that I didn't back it on Kickstarter. When I did take a look at the Quickstart rules in February of 2023, I realised I had been completely mad for passing it up! I quickly backed it on BackerKit, and I started running it... and I mean running it.

When the Origins 2023 convention rolled around, I had already amassed 150 hours of Dragonbane in less than 5 months. At Origins, I was the sole GM running Dragonbane for 10 sessions: 40 hours out of several hundred sessions being ran over a 5-day period. On the second day is when it happened. I was on my way to the vendor hall, coming from the game room where I was running my sessions when someone stopped me, asking if I was Mr. Dragonbane, the guy running all of the Dragonbane sessions. I smiled, laughed and said, "Yep, that's me!" I happened to tell Doug Shute about my encounter, and he laughed as well, but told me to run with it. It was wild when I had met both Tomas Härenstam and Mattias Johnsson Haake (at different conventions) and



GenCon, Indianapolis

they both addressed me as Jonathon first but then as Mr. Dragonbane. Needless to say, since then, I've run with it, and I've taken the title as a proud accomplishment in my gaming career.

In 2023, I officially ran over 503 hours of Dragonbane in 163 sessions. You can certainly say I'm a huge fan of Dragonbane, but I hope this shows you my dedication to this system. I've been a DM for a decade, and Dragonbane has made me a better GM. I would like to share some thoughts and ideas about how I run the game at my table.



## 1. Know the rules, but don't fear improvisation: embrace the freedom of Dragonbane's rules-lite system

In Dragonbane, as you are probably already aware, the rules are designed to be lightweight, rules-lite, or as some of my players have called it, 5e lite. This gives enough of a framework for the GM but pushes creativity and storytelling. While it's always important for a GM to have an understanding of the rules, I've come to find that it's equally important to recognize that Dragonbane thrives on improvisation. Players don't follow the path that a GM leads them down! Players fall out of a tree and hit every branch on their way down but that's actually not a bad thing by any means.

GMs can run Dragonbane Rules as Written (RAW), but I believe that Dragonbane's rules are intentionally flexible, allowing the GM (i.e. you, the reader) to adapt and tailor the game to the unique choices and actions of the players. Have you heard of the rule of cool? Encourage your players to face situations in ways that seem unconventional. Unlike more rigid systems, Dragonbane encourages a mirth and mayhem approach to gameplay, where the narrative takes precedence over strict adherence to mechanics. Allow your players to roll Acrobatics instead of Evade if they are attempting to dodge out of the way of something. Let them use Performance instead of Persuasion when they are attempting to sway an NPC in a particular way.

## 2. From an avenger to mirth and mayhem... What could go wrong?

If you play Dragonbane or run Dragonbane, you quickly find out how lethal the system is. This is especially noticeable when "Old School" gamers find themselves more comfortable with this system than those who've mostly played newer systems. I've had a lot of "grogards" (their label, not mine) sit at my table at different conventions to see what all the hype around this "Dark Age Duck" game is,

and trust me, they find out quickly. They end up leaving the table with smiles on their faces as it brought a little bit of their childhood back to them. At the heart of Dragonbane is the fact that survival is not guaranteed and most of the time, it's because players bring a 5e mentality into Dragonbane. I stress this a lot when players sit at my table, either virtual or in-person.

*"You can't bring concepts from other TTRPGs into Dragonbane: you'll set yourself (and the adventuring party you are with) up for failure."*

Out of the 163 sessions I mentioned earlier in this article, 26 of them turned into TPKs (Total Party Kills). That means that during these sessions, there was a 16% chance of your party ending up with no survivors. Out of the other 137 sessions, every 4 sessions, 1-2 player characters would meet their end. That's still quite a few player character deaths!

I have anywhere from 4 to 7 players at a time in my games, but we'll say the average at my table is 5 players per session. So let's talk numbers.

- 163 total sessions x (4-7 players) 5 players ≈ 815 player characters
- 26 TPKs x 5 players = 130 player character deaths
- 815 player characters - 130 player characters = 685 player characters remaining
- 163 total sessions - 26 TPK sessions = 137 non-TPK sessions

My one tip for character deaths is to let your players narrate how their character dies. If they happen to be fighting some random NPC or monster, and they want to deal a killing blow as their character dies, let them. This creates a memory for that player – a memory of when their character defied death for a single moment to do something really cool.

### 3. Navigating the Misty Vale for Long-term Campaign Play

With all the mirth and mayhem from the previous section, how does the campaign play out? I've run hundreds of scenarios and adventures within the Misty Vale. One-shots are easy: the players should use everything they have to accomplish the goal at hand. Although, on the other side of the coin, in a long-term campaign, after you... SPOILER... successfully close the portal in the Temple of the Purple Flame, you still have to get back to Outskirt, the town that your group of adventurers will hail from. The travel mechanics are no joke but they're enjoyable and fun to use. There are several excellent random tables for you as the GM to use for your players. Travel in the Misty Vale should take several days, depending on where you are going, and several more days to get back to Outskirt. I always explain travel as "You will walk the grasslands and you may encounter a bird, a fox, a deer, a bear, or a manticore." It's all just a matter of how the dice come up.

I am currently on my fourth campaign for Dragonbane. Three have expired but I have an ongoing group that wants to experience more of the Misty Vale. The players in this current campaign are a group of old-school players and when we started Session Zero, the group of adventurers looked at the make-up of their party so they could specifically choose skills that would benefit their characters, but also find opportunities to act as backup for their fellow party members. I've run other games for this group prior to running the Dragonbane campaign for them and I love that they are using the rules to their advantage – crafting a party that complements each other and picks up where the others fall short. And this would be my tip for campaigns: make sure that the group of adventurers is mindful about what kind of characters they are selecting. If you have a mashup of random kins, professions and skills... yes your group can survive but they will have better odds if they think strategically.



Running Dragonbane at GameholeCon, Madison



#### 4. Rolling the Dice of Fate for your Players

Death saves are an important part of any TTRPG, everyone can agree upon that. Death saves are a little different in Dragonbane where, just like with any skill roll, you have to roll under your Constitution attribute score. Honestly, this should be pretty easy. Most CON scores that I have rolled for pregens and those that I've seen my players roll have been good. But that's the best part about dice: are the odds in your favour?

It should be clear after reading this article so far that death saves happen in my games, but for death saves I like to change it up. Instead of letting the player roll against their Constitution as an open roll for everyone else to see, I will ask my player what their CON score is and roll it for them behind the screen. I'm sure everyone has been at a table where the death saves have felt easy. There's not the same sense of dread to the rolls when each player knows that they just rolled their second success on a death roll. Where's the urgency? This is one of the most important parts of the GM's job, to create a setting where the players feel something. And let me tell you, when neither the player whose character is on the brink of death, nor any of the other players know if the death saves are succeeding or failing, it will create a tenser, more engaging atmosphere.

#### 5. Beyond the Mist, the Journey Continues

So what is there to do now that I've run over 500 hours of Dragonbane? That's easy – continue running Dragonbane! Not for one second have I got tired of Dragonbane. I can't begin to go into detail about how many hours I've spent talking about Dragonbane – the countless hours spent creating pregens, homebrew professions, homebrew monsters, homebrew kins, homebrew heroic abilities, adventures, scenarios, etc. At this point, I eat, drink and sleep Dragonbane.

I'm always looking for more games to run, if anyone is interested. Not to put an ad at the end of this article, but I truly enjoy running Dragonbane, and I would love to run a game for you, the reader. Find me on all the different socials as Mr. Dragonbane. Actually, do you want to know a fun fact about me? I haven't played one second of this game. Yes, I've run session after session after session of Dragonbane but I've never been a player – and I'm fine with that. (Unless someone from Free League Publishing wants to run a game for me... cough cough... Tomas... cough cough...)

Here's to another 500 hours in 2024!!!



Meeting Tomas Härenstam at GenCon, Indianapolis



# Turtlekin

## NPCs and Playable Kin

Anyone who thinks that turtlekin are slow at everything is wrong. They may move slowly, but a turtlekin is not in a hurry because they know that they are likely to live for a long time. Age has no significance for them. At the same time, they may seem peaceable, but appearances can be deceiving.

**Tiny Item:** A little bell that rings when it's time to eat or sleep.

**Movement:** 6

D6	First Name
1	Nohrla
2	Dorelle
3	Eonat
4	Dellton
5	Phare
6	Elaphar





## Ability

### PROTECTIVE SHELL

#### Willpower Points: 3

A turtlekin has a natural AR of 2 and can retract one or more body parts into their shell, providing an additional +3 AR protection. Activating this additional +3 AR does not count as an action, but the turtlekin cannot move whilst using this ability. The extra +3 AR is maintained for as long as the turtlekin remains in the same place without moving.

**Non-monster:** Turtlekin are treated as NPCs for combat purposes.

**Player character:** If the GM and the other players in your group agree, you can create a turtlekin PC. In that case they will have the innate ability Protective Shell (see above).

## Turtlekin Priest (see p.36)

**Movement** 6      **HP** 12      **WP** 16

**Dmg.** STR +D4      **Armour** 2

**Skills:** Prayer 14, Awareness 12, Healing 12, Evade 10, Swimming 12

**Abilities:** Protective Shell, Divine Connection

**Blessings:** Gods of Life and Healing, Gods of Civilisation and Knowledge, Gods of Law and Justice

**Typical Gear:** Mace 12 (2D4), Small shield, Reliquary

## Turtlekin Mariner

**Movement** 8      **HP** 14      **WP** 9

**Dmg.** AGL +D4      **Armour** 2

**Skills:** Awareness 12, Evade 10, Seamanship 14, Swimming 13

**Abilities:** Sea Legs

**Typical Gear:** Scimitar 13 (2D6), Spyglass

## Adventure Seed

In the course of their travels, the adventurers come to an isolated and rather run-down small town situated on a windswept but ruggedly beautiful stretch of coastline, looking out over the great ocean.

The turtlekin who live here welcome the party and offer them simple but generous hospitality, consisting mainly of some excellent dried fish and malt beer. The inhabitants of the town are friendly and curious, and delight in hearing the PCs tell stories of their adventures.

There seems to be a sadness about these gentle creatures though, and they often talk about how things used to be “in the good times” or “before the trouble started”. If questioned about this, they relate that the town was once a much happier and more prosperous place. The turtlekin were renowned for their skill as both shipwrights and mariners, and their town was home to a bustling port that was a hub for trade and repairs for ships from far-flung continents.

That all ended some ten years ago with the arrival of a band of pirate mallards who established themselves on an island a few miles off the coast. At first the pirates imposed a “tax” on all ships entering or leaving the town’s port. This offended the turtlekin’s deeply held sense of natural justice, but there were few real warriors among them, and they would be no match for the mallards in a fight.

The port was able to survive even with the burden of the pirates’ taxes for a couple of years, but eventually the mallards got greedier and greedier and started confiscating entire ships along with their cargos on the flimsiest of pretexts. It wasn’t long until the trade dried up completely, but still the pirates didn’t move on. They now use their island as a base from which to conduct raids on the high seas.

One of the bolder turtlekin wonders aloud whether perhaps the gods have sent this band of heroes to their town to help rid them of the curse of the pirates once and for all?

# Bearkin

## NPCs and Playable Kin



Bearkin have a well-deserved reputation as fearsome warriors and capable hunters. However, whilst they are certainly ferocious when threatened, or when protecting their friends or family, those who are fortunate enough to count a bearkin amongst their companions will know them to be warm, playful, and deeply loyal.

**Movement:** 12

### Abilities

#### Leap

**Willpower Points:** 3

Bearkin can propel themselves forward with a powerful leap of up to 4 metres (in addition to their normal movement). This does not count as an action. If they land in a square which is occupied by a opponent (of normal size or smaller), the opponent is shoved back 2 metres, falls prone, and takes D6 damage.

#### Bite

**Willpower Points:** 1

Bearkin can bite an opponent as an unarmed attack (using the BRAWLING skill). The attack does 2D8 piercing damage.

D6	First Name
1	Arthmael
2	Bernhard
3	Berengar

D6	First Name
4	Quilla
5	Ebbe
6	Otso



**Non-monster:** Bearkin are treated as NPCs for combat purposes.

**Player character:** If the GM and the other players in your group agree, you can create a bearkin PC. In that case they will have the innate abilities Leap and Bite (see above).

## Bearkin Warrior

**Movement** 12      **HP** 15      **WP** 12

**Dmg.** STR +D6      **Armour** 4

**Skills:** Awareness 13, Evade 10, Brawling 14

**Abilities:** Leap, Bite, Veteran, Massive Blow

**Typical Gear:** Heavy warhammer 14 (2D10), Chainmail

## Bearkin Shaman

**Movement** 12      **HP** 12      **WP** 16

**Dmg.** STR +D4      **Armour** –

**Skills:** Animism 14, Awareness 14, Evade 12, Brawling 12

**Abilities:** Leap, Bite

**Spells:** Animal Whisperer, Engulfing Forest, Heal Wound, Sleep

**Typical Gear:** Herbal concoction (5 doses)

## Bearkin Chief

**Movement** 12      **HP** 21      **WP** 12

**Dmg.** STR +D6      **Armour** 4

**Skills:** Awareness 15, Evade 14, Brawling 16

**Abilities:** Leap, Bite, Battle Cry, Veteran, Massive Blow, Robust (3)

**Typical Gear:** Heavy warhammer 16 (2D10), Chainmail

## Adventure Seed

While travelling through the wilds in an unfamiliar area, the party suddenly find themselves surrounded by a troupe of bearkin warriors – twice as many as there are PCs – who demand that they lay down their weapons and surrender on pain of death.

If the PCs fight the bearkin and survive, they will be hunted by more bearkin warriors seeking revenge until they have left their territory. If they comply with the bearkin warriors' ultimatum they will be blindfolded and marched for a shift to the bearkin village. The warriors will punish any attempt to escape harshly, but will not mistreat their prisoners, allowing them to eat, drink, and rest as required.

At the village, the party is placed in a small but not uncomfortable cave with two warriors standing guard outside. After some time a message is sent to bring the prisoners before the council of elders, which is to decide their fate.

The head of the council is an old warrior, greying, grizzled and scarred, but still projecting a powerful authority with his sheer physical size and his sharp gaze. He demands that the adventurers explain why they were trespassing in bearkin territory. He will easily be able to ascertain if the PCs are lying to him, but if they answer truthfully, and if their mission aligns with the bearkin's own interests, he may offer them assistance.

If the council is not satisfied with the PCs' explanations, they may require them to complete an act of service as penance before allowing them to go free. There is a cave in the nearby mountains which is sacred to the bearkin, and which they only enter on particular days to perform certain sacred rituals. A creature has taken up residence in the cave, and the bearkin have not been able to lure it out. As the PCs are not bearkin, they may freely enter the cave, and so the council would like the PCs to chase the creature off or kill it if necessary. However, as the cave is a holy place, blood may not be shed within, and so the PCs will have to approach the problem creatively.

# Night Elves

## NPCs and Playable Kin

Night elves dwell in towering, austere fortresses built high in the mountains. They generally avoid associating with other cultures and kin, reserving a particular disdain for other elves, whom they consider to be spiritual fantasists unwilling to face the harsh realities of life.

Night elves are fearsome and merciless fighters and hard-nosed tacticians. During times of war they will not hesitate to break their isolation and enter into alliances with nightkin and humans if it will give them an advantage in battle (as long as these allies remember who is in charge). They share with nightkin a preference for operating under cover of dark, often attacking at night. It is not uncommon to see demons, summoned by night elf mages, fighting alongside them in battle.

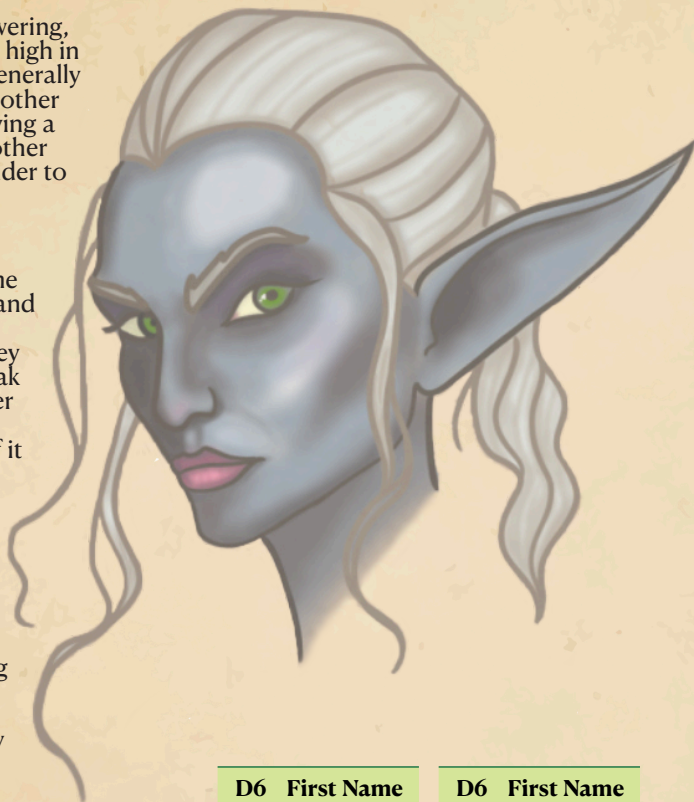
**Movement:** 10

### Ability

#### MERCILESS

**Willpower Points:** 3

Night elves are fearsome warriors who fight with a single-minded dedication to victory. You can activate this ability when attacking an opponent you have already dealt damage to, getting a boon to your attack roll.



D6	First Name	D6	First Name
1	Nyxel	4	Glydrin
2	Kerran	5	Zilkred
3	Oradel	6	Erraxia

**Non-monster:** Night elves are treated as NPCs for combat purposes.

**Player character:** If the GM and the other players in your group agree, you can create a night elf PC. In that case they will have the innate ability Merciless (see above).



## Night Elf Warrior

**Movement** 12      **HP** 12

**Dmg.** STR +D4      **Armour** 7

**Skills:** Awareness 12 (bane when wearing helmet), Evade 13

**Typical Gear:** Short sword 13 (D10), Dagger 13 (D8), Small shield, Plate armour, Open helmet

## Night Elf Spear Warrior

**Movement** 12      **HP** 12

**Dmg.** STR +D4      **Armour** 4

**Skills:** Awareness 12, Evade 13

**Typical Gear:** Long spear 13 (2D8), Short spears 13 (D10, range 26m when thrown), Dagger 13 (D8), Chainmail

## Night Elf Crossbow Archer

**Movement** 12      **HP** 12

**Dmg.** STR +D4      **Armour** 4

**Skills:** Awareness 12, Evade 13

**Typical Gear:** Light crossbow 13 (2D6), Quiver (iron head), Dagger 13 (D8), Chainmail

## Night Elf Officer

**Movement** 12      **HP** 24      **WP** 18

**Dmg.** STR +D6  
**Dmg.** AGL +D4      **Armour** 8

**Skills:** Awareness 16 (bane when wearing helmet), Evade 14

**Abilities:** Veteran, Defensive, Double Slash, Fearless, Robust (4), Focused

**Typical Gear:** Longsword 16 (2D8), Dagger 16 (D8), Hand crossbow 16 (2D6), Quiver (iron head), Large shield, Plate armour, Great helm

## Adventure Seed

The night elves of the mountain fortress of Azakred, who in normal times rarely venture beyond the walls of their stronghold, have been seen more and more frequently in the nearby countryside of late. Raiding parties have taken the working populations of whole villages captive, leaving only the sick, the elderly and the children behind.

There are rumours that these prisoners are being put to work in the fortress, digging ever deeper into the mountain in search of some treasure or source of power – although no one can agree on what this might actually be.

An NPC who has an important relationship to one or more of the party has been taken captive by one of these night elf raiding parties, which should motivate the PCs to mount a rescue mission.

As they are making plans and gathering supplies they are approached by a hooded figure who asks to speak to them in a secluded place. The PCs will likely be taken aback when this figure throws back her hood to reveal herself to be a night elf.

She introduces herself as Ozarel and informs the PCs that she has sought them out to ask for their help. (Asking for help seems to be something she is quite unused to doing, and which she finds rather awkward or even humiliating).

She makes it clear that betraying her kin is not something she does lightly, but she believes that the elves of Azakred are embarked on an enterprise of great folly which could visit ruin not only on the night elves but the whole land.

She will help you rescue your friend and the other prisoners if you will in turn help her bring her people to their senses. She knows of a secret passage into the mountain, but she will not reveal its location, and will only guide the party there if they agree to be blindfolded.

# Arcane Mistake

## Monster

Born through the foul and failed machinations of some long-dead mage, the Arcane Mistake is a creature simultaneously born of magic and diametrically opposed to it.

It is a creature of roiling, semi-liquid flesh, with a multitude of eyes and mouths appearing and disappearing all across its form.

<b>Ferocity</b> 2	<b>Size</b> Large
<b>Movement</b> 14	<b>Armour</b> – <b>HP</b> 76

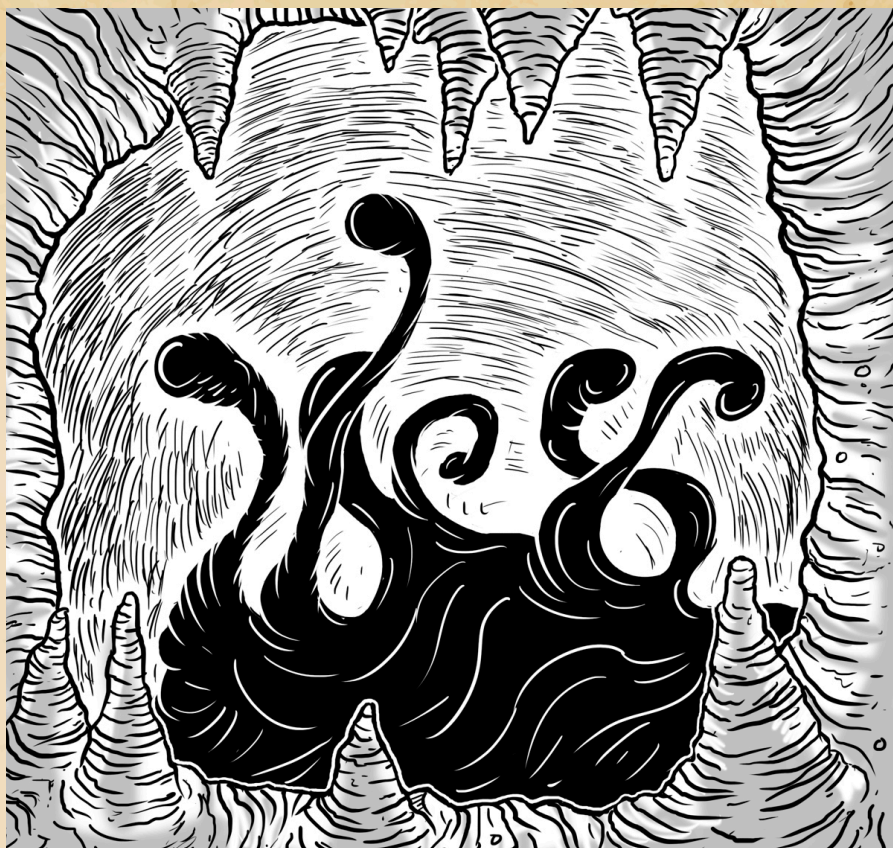
**Aura of Mercurial Magic:** When casting a spell within 14 metres of the Arcane Mistake, a result of 1–3 counts as a dragon roll, but a result of 18–20 counts as a demon roll.

**Capricious Constitution:** If the Arcane Mistake takes damage from a spell, roll a D6. On a 1–3 it resists the spell, subtracting D6 damage from the total taken. On a 4–6 the Mistake is vulnerable to the spell and takes an extra D6 damage.

## Monster Attacks

D6	Monster Attack
1	<b>Monstrous Tendrils!</b> Its fleshy tendrils lash out at three PCs within 6 metres. The attack inflicts 2D10 bludgeoning damage and the victims must make an ACROBATICS roll (not an action) or be knocked down.
2	<b>Maddening Mysteries!</b> The Arcane Mistake assaults the minds of the PCs with visions of the incomprehensible, maddening mysteries of magic. All victims within 10 metres suffer a fear attack. Non-mage characters have a bane on the WIL roll.
3	<b>Abhorrent Cackle!</b> The many foul mouths across the form of the Arcane Mistake emit a sound that's half-laugh and half-scream. All who can hear the sound must make a WIL roll or become Scared.
4	<b>Dreamer's Bite!</b> The Arcane Mistake twists and writhes, lunging at a PC within 4 metres. The attack inflicts D12 piercing damage, and a victim who sustains at least 1 point of damage is also injected with a sleeping poison with potency 14. The attack can be parried.
5	<b>Dimensional Shunt!</b> Two random PCs within 14 metres swap places. The victims are hurled through an alternate dimension, and when they reappear they must succeed on an ACROBATICS roll with a bane (not an action) or take 4D4 bludgeoning damage and be knocked down.
6	<b>Conflux of Chaos!</b> The Arcane Mistake strikes at one player character within 6 metres with its fleshy tendril, leaving the victim Exhausted as well as inflicting 2D8 bludgeoning damage, and restoring an equal amount of HP to itself and one randomly selected player character within 14 metres; this can be the victim of the attack. The attack cannot be dodged.





## Adventure Seed

In ancient days, a powerful mage made his abode in the mountains. He used his sorcery to carve himself a mighty home in a cavern, where he could set about fulfilling his life's ambition: creating life itself. After all, why should one who could bend the elements to his will not also wield the power of a god?

Protected by his army of undead, the mage spent long years at his foul experimentation, but each of his hundred attempts ended only in disappointment and failure. His last attempt had a much more catastrophic outcome, as the creature spawned from his machinations was an abomination beyond imagination. The thing, his Arcane Mistake, drove him mad and then slew him, leaving his

cavernous home empty and still, and, of course, full of treasure.

The characters can stumble upon the entrance to the wizard's cavern as they travel in the mountains, or otherwise hear rumours of it in Outskirt (or some other settlement). Perhaps a denizen of some inn, a rival adventurer, boasts loudly of having uncovered the cavern and of how they intend to go back for the valuables that undoubtedly are inside. "Those old mages were always swimming in treasure," after all.

The cavern could be guarded by undead such as skeletons (or others of your choice) as well as traps both magical and mundane. The Arcane Mistake should be the final enemy the PCs face in the cavern; it ought to make for a tough fight.

# Goatman

## Monster

Hideous servants of demonic chaos, it is rumoured that goatmen were born from the mating of demons and goats, but now are self-sustaining.

Creatures impregnated by goatmen give birth to more goatmen in an endless cycle.

<b>Ferocity</b> 1	<b>Size</b> Normal
<b>Movement</b> 12	<b>Armour</b> 2 <b>HP</b> 24
<b>Dmg.</b> STR +D6	
<b>Typical Gear:</b> Longsword/Flail 15 (2d8), Shield (parry 15)	

## Monster Attacks

D6	Attack
1–2	<b>Goat Charge!</b> The goatman lowers its head and rushes toward an adventurer, hoping to butt them with its horns. The victim suffers 2D8 bludgeoning damage and is knocked down.
3–4	<b>Cleaving Chop!</b> The goatman swings its weapon over its head and brings it down with full force. The attack inflicts weapon damage (2D8) plus an extra D6 for STR, and can be parried.
5	<b>Sweeping Attack!</b> The goatman bleats and sweeps its weapon in a wide arc, hitting everyone within 2 metres (including any allies). The attack inflicts weapon damage (2D8), and can be parried.
6	<b>Goat Leap!</b> The goatman jumps high in the air and comes crashing down on an adventurer, who suffers 2D8 bludgeoning damage and is knocked down.

## Adventure Seed

Seeking respite from a lengthy journey, the PCs arrive at a pleasant, small town that has been recommended to them as particularly welcoming to travellers. The townsfolk show them generous hospitality, some even lavishing the adventurers with gifts. Welcoming outsiders in this way is part of their culture, so any rejection from the PCs is considered highly offensive. The PCs can take time to rest and recover here, until they are the guests of honour at a festival one moonless night. During the grand feast, something seems amiss, yet it will be impossible for the PCs to discern exactly what is going on. Little by little, the night turns into a nightmare, as strange sounds are heard and demonic sets of eyes are seen. The adventurers learn that the

town is under the watchful eye of a demon cultist. This powerful NPC has threatened the townsfolk: they must either lure outsiders to be sacrificed or have their kidnapped family members sacrificed. All attempts to fight the demon cultist have proven disastrous, as the peaceful town is one of primarily farmers and artisans unused to fighting. The PCs can hastily arm and train the townspeople to fight, take on the threat directly, or devise another solution. Whatever course of action they choose, they do not fully realise the blasphemous evil that awaits them either way: the goatman army the cult leader commands. What path will the adventurers choose, and who will survive the dark, long night of loathsome terror and seemingly never-ending attacks from the goatmen?





# Bugbear

## Monster

Silently lurking in the shadows, bugbears are actually incredibly stealthy despite their size. These large, hairy, goblinoid monsters taunt their victims by intentionally making noise to stir up fear and dread. Bugbears enjoy bullying and torturing their victims. With hulking muscles, sharp teeth, and frightfully long arms, these monsters will make even the most valiant warrior proceed with caution.

**Movement** 12    **HP** 21

**Dmg.** STR +D6    **Armour** 1

**Skills:** Awareness 10, Bushcraft 10, Stealth 16

**Typical Gear:** Morningstar 14 (2D8) / Flail 14 (2D8) / Light Warhammer 14 (3D6), Leather armour

**Non-monster** Bugbears are treated as NPCs for combat purposes.



## Adventure Seed

The PCs are hired as part of a rescue team to retrieve miners trapped deep in a set of caves known for its rich ore deposits. Once the adventurers arrive at the entrance of the cave, any form of investigation will show that this cave-in was man-made (or rather, monster-made). The rescue party will need to either locate an alternative entrance or clear the debris before moving forward. Either way, time is not on their side, as daylight is fading fast at this time of year.

In the cave the party must make wise use of their limited resources. They must also decide whether to bring up a disconcerting topic. Each PC has felt as if they are being watched, that they have seen something out of the corner of their eye. They can't be sure though, and so may just say nothing, and continue towards the miners' last known location.

Everything changes when one of the NPC rescue party members suddenly disappears. The PCs will struggle with the dilemma of whether to rescue the trapped miners or one of their own party before it is too late.

The longer they take, the worse the situation gets: the party realises they're lost, and more of the NPCs from the rescue party are picked off one by one. Any supplies those NPCs were carrying are also long gone.

Behind all of this is a bugbear, who has enjoyed taunting and teasing its prey. It may allow the PCs to retrieve the miners and complete the rescue mission. However, any attempt to save the NPC members of the party will anger the bugbear. The party are in a race against time to escape the maze of tunnels in the cave before becoming its next victim.



# Gnoll

## Monster

Treacherous. Repugnant. Violent. Gnolls are scavengers, willing even to devour their own kind. They survive by intimidating and threatening others, raiding settlements for goods, food, and humanoid to enslave. These merciless nocturnal monsters often strike while their victims sleep. Despite having thick coats of fur, gnolls prefer warmer, more temperate climates.

**Movement** 12      **HP** 14

**Dmg. STR** +D6      **Armour** 2  
**Dmg. AGL** +D6

**Skills:** Awareness 10, Bushcraft 10, Hunting & Fishing 13

**Typical Gear:** Longbow 13 (D12) / Short Spear 13 (D10) / Handaxe 13 (2D6) / Broadsword 13 (2D6), Small Shield, Studded leather armour

**Non-monster** Gnolls are treated as NPCs for combat purposes.



## Adventure Seed

The PCs hear rumours of a nearby village which is in dire straits. Shipments of necessary supplies continually disappear en route. Not only has this been costly in terms of trade, but now the villagers are starving and in desperate need of assistance. The PCs need to find out who is responsible.

An unsavoury human NPC has formed an unlikely alliance with a clan of gnolls. This heartless man gets a percentage of everything, and he seems to care nothing for his fellow humans. Gnolls are treacherous and brutal scavengers, and this particular gnoll clan has struck a lucrative deal: their human partner provides them with information; the gnolls raid, plunder, and enslave. Currently, they are profiting at the expense of the village by enslaving the stronger,

healthier residents while denying the weaker ones any nourishment or basic sustenance.

The adventurers are sought out by a wealthy lady of nobility. The village was her birthplace, and she aims to arm those willing or brave enough to take on the vicious clan of gnolls along with their ruthless human partner. With the noble lady's funding and little time to spare, the PCs can travel to the next village over, equipping themselves for a fierce battle.

(Should the adventurers try to reason with the human partner of the gnoll clan, they will quickly find themselves surrounded by the vicious humanoids, with the stronger PCs being taken away as slaves.)

Can the adventurers save not only their companions, but the entire village in time?

# Necromancer

## NPC

A Necromancer is a mage who does not allow themselves to be confined by simplistic notions of right and wrong, but commits themselves fully to mastering the power that can be achieved through knowledge of the magical arts – the power to bridge the chasm between life and death, and perhaps ultimately achieve immortality itself.

The spells given on the following pages are taken from the spell list in the *Necromancy* supplement from Dragon Cult Games, available free on [DriveThruRPG](#).





## Adventure Seed

**Movement** 12    **HP** 15    **WP** 19

**Dmg.** AGL +D4    **Armour** 1

**Skills:** Necromancy 15, Awareness 14, Evade 14, Staves 14

**Abilities:** Robust, Focused, Disguise

**Gear:** Staff (D8), Leather armour

**Spells:** Light, Dispel, Protector, The Creeps, Undead Hand, Bone Chill, Fear, Pain, Blindness, Talk to the Dead, Control Undead, Raise Undead

**Undead Servants:** D3 Skeleton archers, D3 Skeleton warriors, D3 Living dead, 1 Mummy

## Secondary Skill

### Necromancy (INT)

This secondary skill enables a character to learn spells from the Necromancy school of magic, a selection of which are included on the following pages. This skill is not restricted to characters who start as necromancers – any character who takes the Magic School heroic ability may choose to learn it.

Although the majority of mages belonging to other schools consider it unwise to dabble in the necromantic arts, there are always a few who are drawn to study necromancy as a secondary school of magic.

Some arrogantly believe that by learning the secrets of necromancy they will be better equipped to defeat its practitioners. Others come to necromancy driven by grief, and the inability to accept the finality of the death of a friend or lover. However they start their journey into necromancy, few, in the end, can resist fully embracing the power that the dark school offers.

The PCs encounter a man on their journey called Egert Quibblesworth. He is near-frantic with grief and anger, ranting about the despoiling of his wife's corpse. Talking to him, it becomes clear that after his wife's recent death he had spent many weeks embalming her body before entombing her, according to the complex rituals and traditions of the far-off land in which she was born. Unfortunately, this carefully preserved body attracted the interest of a necromancer living in a ruined tower in a nearby forest. She was able to raise Egbert's wife from the dead not as a mere skeleton or living dead, but as a mummy.

When Egert went to perform rituals at his wife's tomb he found it opened and her body gone. He is convinced that his wife's soul will not be able to move on to the next world and be at peace until she is returned to the tomb and the cycle of rituals completed. His voice shaking with desperation and indignation, he offers the PCs a handsome reward if they can save his wife and, if at all possible, exact revenge on the evil mage who despoiled her tomb.

The necromancer is a worthy adversary who will not hesitate to unleash her undead servants on the PCs in order to defend herself. But recognising their strength and skill, she would rather negotiate than fight, offering the PCs an alliance. She would even be willing to share her arcane knowledge and take on one or more of the heroes as her apprentice.



# Necromancy Spells

## The Creeps (Magic Trick)

You give a person or creature within 100 metres an uneasy feeling of dread. All WIL rolls to resist fear made within a stretch have a bane. Monsters are immune to the effects of this trick.

## Undead Hand (Magic Trick)

Requirement: Ingredient (severed hand)

You may animate a severed hand to create an undead hand under your control. The hand must be relatively freshly severed (no more than 1 day old.)

You can direct the hand to perform simple actions that require little to no intelligence (move, attack, carry a tiny object, etc.) You may not direct it to perform complex tasks such as picking a lock or foraging for food. If there is any uncertainty as to what the hand can do, it is up to the GM to decide.

**Movement** 4      **HP** 2

**Armour** –

**Skills:** Evade 18, Choke (skill level 10, D2 damage which ignores armour)



## Bone Chill

- Rank: 1
- Prerequisite: Necromancy
- Requirement: Word, gesture
- Casting time: Action
- Range: 15 metres per power level
- Duration: Instant

A ghostly hand emerges from your body and flies towards its target,

moving straight through any obstacles. It can be dodged, but not parried. The hand reaches into the body of the target, draining heat and life from its very marrow. The spell does 2D6 damage, not reduced by armour. Each power level above the first adds D6 damage.

## Talk to the Dead

- Rank: 1
- Prerequisite: Necromancy
- Requirement: Word, gesture
- Casting time: Action
- Range: 15 metres per power level
- Duration: Instant

You reanimate a dead body and are able to converse with it. The corpse can only give you information it knew when it was alive, in languages it knew. It may not move or take any actions. It is not compelled to talk to you or to tell the truth. It will likely speak in a frustratingly vague and cryptic way. If the corpse has been dead for less than 1 week, cast at power level 1; 1 week to 1 year, power level 2; more than 1 year, power level 3.

## Fear

- Rank: 1
- Prerequisite: Necromancy
- Requirement: Word, gesture
- Casting time: Action
- Range: 15 metres per power level
- Duration: Instant

You cause the target of your spell to be inexplicably overwhelmed by a sudden and primal fear. They must immediately roll against their WIL to resist fear.

If they fail they must roll on the fear table on p.53 of the Dragonbane Rules. The roll is made with a boon at power level 1, neither bane nor boon at power level 2, and a bane at power level 3.



## Blindness

- Rank: 1
- Prerequisite: Necromancy
- Requirement: Word, gesture
- Casting time: Action
- Range: 15 metres per power level
- Duration: Stretch

The target must make a successful WIL roll or immediately become blind. The WIL roll doesn't count as an action. The roll is made with a boon at power level 1, neither bane nor boon at power level 2, and a bane at power level 3.

A victim who fails the roll becomes blind and must follow the rules for being in darkness (see p.52 of the Dragonbane Rules).

## Pain

- Rank: 2
- Prerequisite: Fear or Blindness
- Requirement: Word, gesture
- Casting time: Action
- Range: 15 metres per power level
- Duration: Stretch

The target must make a successful WIL roll or suffer excruciating pain. The WIL roll doesn't count as an action. The roll is made with a boon at power level 1, neither bane nor boon at power level 2, and a bane at power level 3. Those affected by the spell are knocked prone, and they take a bane to all skill rolls and their movement is halved as long as the effects last. They can make a WIL roll every round to attempt to throw off the effects of the spell.

Any attempts to PERSUADE a character affected by this spell are made with a boon, although the victim is likely to say whatever they think the necromancer wants to hear, regardless of whether or not it is true.

If you successfully cast this spell on a monster, roll a D6 at the beginning of each round that it is affected. On a 1-3 the monster howls in agony and does not attack that round. On a 4-6 the monster is driven into a frenzy and its Ferocity is increased by 1 for that round, giving it an extra attack.

## Control Undead

- Rank: 2
- Prerequisite: Talk to the Dead
- Requirement: Word, gesture
- Casting time: Action
- Range: 10 metres per power level
- Duration: Permanent

You bring 1 skeleton archer, skeleton warrior, living dead, or mummy per power level under your control. The creature shares your initiative in combat, and you direct its actions and roll for it. Note that undead servants can only perform simple actions that require little to no intelligence (move, attack, dodge, parry, etc.) You may not direct them to perform complex tasks such as picking a lock or foraging for food. If there is any uncertainty as to what your undead servants can do, it is up to the GM to decide. The spell lasts until the creature is reduced to 0 HP or another character successfully casts CONTROL UNDEAD on the same creature.

## Raise Undead

- Rank: 3
- Prerequisite: Control Undead
- Requirement: Word, gesture, ingredient (corpse)
- Casting time: Action
- Range: 10 metres per power level
- Duration: Permanent

You raise 1 corpse per power level from the dead, creating between one and three skeleton warriors, skeleton archers, living dead, or mummies which are under your control. This spell can be cast on any creature which is treated as an NPC for the purposes of combat.

If the corpse you raise has been dead for less than a year, it becomes a living dead. If it has been dead for more than a year it becomes a skeleton. If you cast it on a mummified corpse, it becomes a mummy. You control your undead servants in the same way as described in the CONTROL UNDEAD spell.

The spell lasts until the creature is reduced to 0 HP or another character successfully takes control of it.

# Monk

## Profession



There are many reasons why someone might choose to leave ordinary life behind and become a monk. Some are motivated by a hunger for spiritual truths and deep wisdom, some by compassion and a drive to help others, some by personal tragedy or heartbreak. What they have in common is their striving to avoid attachment to worldly pleasures and distractions.

Gold and glory mean little to them, so a monk who leaves their temple to become an adventurer will perhaps be inspired by a desire for knowledge and insight, a quest to regain an ancient religious artefact, or the desire to defend the weak and help the needy.

Some use *monk* as a non-gendered term, whilst some prefer to use the word *nun* for female monks.

D6	Nickname
1	the Wise
2	the Peaceful
3	the Just

**Simple Lifestyle:** Monks do not consume animal foods under any circumstances. As they are used to subsisting on a simple diet, they only need half a ration of food per day to avoid the effects of hunger. (They will choose to consume a full ration of plant food if available though.) In addition, a monk doesn't become famished until they have gone without food for three days, rather than the normal one day.

Monks do not hoard money and possessions. If a monk acquires wealth or gear beyond what they have a short-term use for, they will give the excess away to the needy.

Monks are used to discomfort and little sleep. They don't suffer a bane to rolls for making camp or resisting cold even without a blanket or sleeping fur.

**Key Attribute:** AGL

**Skills:** Acrobatics, Awareness, Evade, Healing, Myths and Legends, Spot Hidden, Staves, Kung Fu

**Heroic Ability:** Chi Blast *or* Chi Block *or* Suppress Emotion

D6	Gear
1-2	Staff, flint & tinder, D4 food rations, D4 silver
3-4	Bandages (10), D4 herbal concoctions, flint & tinder, D4 food rations, D4 silver
5-6	Book, flint & tinder, D4 food rations, D4 silver

D6	Nickname
4	the Compassionate
5	the Inscrutable
6	the Eccentric



## Secondary Skill

### Kung Fu (AGL)

This skill is used to deliver precise and graceful strikes and kicks in unarmed combat. Attacks made with this skill do 2D6 damage (+AGL damage bonus). If you are wearing armour you take a bane to all rolls with this skill.

## Heroic Abilities

### Chi Blast

Requirement: Kung Fu 12

Willpower Points: 2+

When attacking using the KUNG FU skill, the player may inflict an extra D6 damage per 2 WP spent. The player should decide whether to use this ability and how many WP to spend after rolling to hit, but before rolling for damage.

### Chi Block

Requirements: Kung Fu 12

Willpower Points: 1+

When you are hit by an attack, but before damage is rolled, you may spend as many WP as you wish to give you the same number of points of AR against that attack.

### Suppress Emotion

Requirements: Kung Fu 12

Willpower Points: 3

Once per shift, you may remove one of the conditions Scared, Angry, or Disheartened by sheer force of will

### Inner Heat

Requirements: Kung Fu 12

Willpower Points: 3

If you spend a stretch rest meditating without being disturbed, as well as gaining the normal benefits of a stretch rest, you are immune to the effects of cold for one shift.

### Spectacular Jump

Requirements: Kung Fu 12

Willpower Points: 1-3

You may spend up to 3 WP to channel your chi into a spectacular jump. For each WP spent you may jump up to 3m vertically, combined with up to 3m of horizontal movement. When describing this jump, you should include a backflip, spin etc. for added dramatic effect (although this has no mechanical effect). You suffer falling damage as normal, so it may be wise to combine this ability with Catlike.

## Adventure Seed

After many moons spent adventuring, a monk returns to their temple to pay homage to their master. As they get closer though, a haze of smoke hanging above the temple strikes dread into their heart. Quickening their steps, they soon find their worst fears realised. The temple has been attacked, and the bodies of both bandits and monks lay strewn across the courtyard.

After putting out the fires that are still smouldering here and there, the monk makes the worst discovery of all – the master lying dead on the floor of the temple hall, surrounded by the bodies of more than a dozen bandits.

The golden statues and decorations of the temple have been plundered, which matters little, but the one truly priceless item belonging to the temple is also missing – a scroll detailing the ancient secrets of the Mallard Fist style of kung fu the temple is famous for. If the thugs who attacked the temple master the techniques contained within the scroll, they will become even more dangerous.

Will the monk and their companions be able to track down the bandits and recover the scroll? And when the moment of truth arrives, will the monk give in to the desire for revenge, or master their emotions and choose forgiveness?

# Priest

## Profession

*"For the last time, I am no Animist!  
I don't meddle with dark forces, but  
with the words of the divine.  
Now scatter before I smite you down."*

**- Iosef Sunbringer**



Priests are the connection between the realm of mortals and the realm of the gods. They normally work as spiritual advisors in towns and villages, tending to temples and taking care of religious ceremonies but sometimes they serve as templars, protecting the weak with divine power and martial prowess. Travelling priests are not an uncommon sight, whether they are on a mission or pilgrimage, or simply spreading the good word of the gods. Priests have great strength of mind and body and also a close connection to the divine, allowing them to ask for help in the direst of situations.

**Key Attribute:** WIL

**Skills:** Prayer, Hammers, Persuasion, Myth & Legends, Languages, Healing, Knives, Bows

You can swap one of these skills for the skill indicated by your chosen domain.

**Heroic Ability:** Divine Connection (choose 3 blessings)

D6	Nickname
1	Lightbringer
2	Fiendbane
3	the Zealous

### D6 Gear

1-2 Broadsword/Light warhammer, Small shield, Chainmail, Prayer book, Flint & tinder, Torch, D6 field rations, D8 silver

3-4 Short spear/Mace, Small Shield, Studded leather armour, Reliquary, Flint & tinder, Torch, D6 field rations, D8 silver

5-6 Dagger, Bow, Quiver (iron head), Leather armour, Sleeping pelt, Holy symbol, Flint & tinder, Torch, D6 field rations, D8 silver

### D6 Nickname

4 Heavencleansed  
5 Evilslayer  
6 the Brilliant



## Secondary Skill

### Prayer (CHA)

When you attempt to communicate with the gods or call down their blessings you use the PRAYER skill.

## Heroic Ability

### Divine Connection

Requirement: Prayer 12

Willpower Points: 3

Intoning sacred words, you invoke the power of the gods to aid you in your mission. This is an action and requires a successful PRAYER roll. If you succeed, your prayer is heard and you receive your chosen blessing.

If you fail, your blessing isn't heard and nothing happens (but the WP is still spent).

**Dragon Roll:** If you roll a dragon on your PRAYER roll you may choose one of the following effects:

- invoke the blessing with no WP cost,
- increase the range by 10 metres, or
- roll double the number of dice to determine the damage or other relevant effect.

**Demon Roll:** If you roll a demon on your PRAYER roll, you prayer has been misspoken or heard by someone other than the god it was intended for. Roll on the table below to determine the consequences.

#### D10 Who has heard your prayer?

- 1 Nobody** Your prayer simply falls on deaf ears, leaving you wondering if the gods have abandoned you. Take the Disheartened condition.
- 2 The Gods of the Forest and Hunting** For the next shift, any animal who sees you will immediately attack you.
- 3 The Gods of Sickness and Death** You are exposed to an unholy necrotic disease with a virulence of 3D6. Anyone you come into close contact with for the next shift is also at risk of being infected.
- 4 The Gods of Law and Justice** The gods decide to rebalance the scales. In your next combat encounter, all your enemies get an extra 2D4 HP.
- 5 The Gods of War and Destruction** The gods deem you unworthy of the weapons you carry. All your weapons become broken and are used with a bane until they can be repaired.
- 6 The Gods of Life and Healing** The gods show mercy to your enemy and heal them, restoring 3D10 HP. This does not affect undead or demons.
- 7 The Gods of Light and the Sun** You are blinded by a light as brilliant as the sun, and you must act as if in darkness until you take a shift rest (see p.52 of the Dragonbane Rules).
- 8 The Gods of Night and the Moon** You develop a sudden fear of the dark and are unable to sleep. Roll a D4 every morning. If you roll a 1, you are freed from this curse. It can also be lifted by the DISPEL spell at power level 3.
- 9 The Gods of Knowledge and Civilisation** The gods judge you to have used your knowledge unwisely, and so take it from you. All rolls made with the skill most relevant to the blessing you were trying to invoke are made with a bane. Roll a D4 every morning. If you roll a 1, you are freed from this curse. It can also be lifted by the DISPEL spell at power level 3.
- 10 Demon** You inadvertently summon a demon who immediately attacks you.

## Domains of the Gods

Any character with the Divine Connection heroic ability should choose three domains whose blessings they can invoke. Priests may replace one of the profession skills listed above with a skill belonging to one of their chosen domains.

The domains described here are broad in scope and can be modified to fit your game's campaign setting. Examples of gods and goddesses from various historical cultures are given for each domain.



### Gods of the Hunt and the Forest

The gods and goddesses that watch over the wild places, worshipped by hunters and those who live in the wilderness. Examples: Artemis, Skadi, Erastil, Thelandir.

**Skills:** HUNTING & FISHING or BUSHCRAFT

**Blessing:** Receive the ability to rest in the wild without needing to roll, or ignore armour in your next ranged attack.



### Gods of Death and Sickness

The gods of the dead, sickness and the end of all things. Funerary rites and ceremonies are made to please them and to allow the souls of the dead to rest in peace. Examples: Hades, Hel, Pharasma, Kelemvor.

**Skills:** SPOT HIDDEN or AWARENESS

**Blessing:** Deal D8 damage that ignores armour as the enemy's skin starts rotting away (no effect against undead), or learn the last words a dead person spoke. (You need to have their body in order to do this.)



### Gods of Law and Justice

The gods of all that's right, and the law of the land, worshipped by lawyers, vigilantes, paladins, and heroes alike. Examples: Forseti, Athena, Iomedae, Tyr.

**Skills:** SWORDS or PERSUASION

**Blessing:** You can tell if a person is lying, or you or one of your allies gets +3 AR for the next round as you glow with divine light.



### Gods of War and Destruction

The gods of war, fighting, and mayhem, worshipped by warriors and generals to grant them strength in battle. Examples: Thor, Ares, Gorum, Tempus.

**Skills:** EVADE or AXES

**Blessing:** You or one of your allies gets a boon to their next attack roll, or deals +D6 damage in their next attack.



### Gods of Life and Healing

The gods of life, healing and fertility, worshipped by physicians and healers to bless them as they care for others, and by farmers to ensure good harvests. Examples: Freja, Demetre, Serenae, Helm.

**Skills:** HEALING or PERSUASION

**Blessing:** +3D6 HP to you or one of your allies, or cure a sickness or poison.





## Gods of Light and the Sun

The gods of light and the shining glory of the sun, worshipped by paladins and those who hunt the undead. Examples: Sol, Apollo, Serenae, Lathander.

**Skills:** AWARENESS or PERFORMANCE

**Blessing:** Emit light in a 10m radius for a stretch or until you reach 0 HP, or cause 3d6 damage to an undead creature or a demon (ignores armour).



## Gods of The Night and The Moon

The gods of the night, mystery and darkness, worshipped by thieves and criminals to hide their tracks but also by those who travel at night for safety. Examples: Mani, Nyx, Zon-Kuthon, Selune.

**Skills:** SNEAKING or BLUFFING

**Blessing:** See in the dark as if it was daylight for one stretch, or get a boon on a SNEAKING roll.



## Gods of Civilisation and Knowledge

The gods of knowledge, expertise, civilisation, order and sometimes magic. Examples: Odin, Athena, Abadar, Oghma.

**Skills:** CRAFTING or MYTHS & LEGENDS

**Blessing:** Get a boon to a non-combat skill roll, or ask the GM for a hint to help solve a difficult problem.

## Adventure Seed

Strange things have been happening in the town of Pikewatch. Cattle, and then people, have been disappearing only to turn up dead and covered in weird sigils. Hooded figures have been seen walking the streets at night and people report recurring nightmares.

A local priest recently caught a man trying to steal a holy relic from the temple. He imprisoned him in the temple, fearing to turn him over to the town watch in case they too were mixed up in the strange goings-on. Through the blessing of the gods of light and justice, the prisoner was made to reveal that a demonic cult has taken root in Pikewatch.

The priest hastily wrote a letter to his superiors requesting help to root out the cult and bring peace back to Pikewatch. You are the priest chosen to help your brother, but when you and your companions arrive in Pikewatch after a long journey, you find a crowd gathered around the temple. Entering, you find the priest dead, his body displayed in ritualistic manner and the holy relic gone.

Who is responsible for this terrible crime? Which of the townspeople are members of the cult? Where are they hiding, and what are they planning to use the relic for?



# Dragonrider

## Profession



Dragonriders are among the greatest, most feared, and shortest-lived of all warriors. Simply finding a dragon who is still young enough to be trained will most often prove to be a quest of epic proportions in itself, and attempting to actually bond with a dragon is an extraordinarily brave and foolhardy thing to attempt. If they succeed though, the dragonrider is assured that their name will pass into legend.

**Key Attribute:** AGL

**Skills:** Acrobatics, Awareness, Beast Lore, Evade, Bows, Persuasion, Riding, Spears

**Heroic Ability:** Dragon Whisperer

D6	Nickname
1	Dragonburned
2	Firekissed
3	the Foolhardy

### D6 Gear

1-2 Long spear, Large shield, Chainmail, Torch, Flint & tinder, Book on dragon lore, D6 food rations, D8 silver

3-4 Long spear, Longbow, Quiver (iron head), Studded leather armour, Map showing the location of a dragon's nest, Torch, Flint & tinder, D6 food rations, D8 silver

5-6 Short spear, Leather armour, Small shield, Dragon egg, Torch, Flint & tinder, D6 food rations, D8 silver

### D6 Nickname

4 Rabidus  
5 the One-Eyed  
6 Dragonlord



## Heroic Ability

### Dragon Whisperer

Requirement: Beast Lore 12

Willpower Points: 3

This heroic ability allows a PC to attempt to form a bond with a dragon, such that the dragon will allow the hero to ride them. It is only possible to bond with a hatchling dragon or a young dragon (see pp.124–127 in the Dragonbane Bestiary). In order to attempt this, the dragonrider must make successful rolls for BEAST LORE, PERSUASION, and RIDING. If the dragon is a young dragon, each of the three rolls are made with a bane. Each roll costs 3WP. The rolls must be made

at the same time, and if any one of them fails, the attempt to bond has failed and the dragonrider can never attempt to bond with that particular dragon again.

A dragonrider can ride a dragon they have bonded with. In combat, use the rules for combat-trained mounts on p.55 of the Dragonbane Rules.

A dragonrider can spend 3WP in order to activate one of the monster attacks of a dragon they have bonded with, directed at their enemies.

A hatchling dragon is too small to be ridden. If a dragonrider bonds with a hatchling dragon, they must wait until it grows into a young dragon in order to ride it.

## Adventure Seed

After a long and dangerous quest, the aspiring dragonrider has finally obtained the treasure he has dreamed of ever since he saw the silhouettes of dragons flying above the mountains in the evening sun as a small boy. In his hands he holds a dragon egg (a real one this time...).

Now all that remains is to keep it warm, keep it safe, and wait for it to hatch. The dragonrider will make sure he is the first thing the newly-hatched dragon sees, to ensure it bonds with him!

So he waits. And waits. And waits some more. And nothing happens. He tries everything he can think of, to no avail – building a nest for it, heating it, singing to it. Nothing works. Growing increasingly desperate, he combs through every book on dragon lore he can get his hands on, until finally – a glimmer of hope.

He reads the story of Gwynn the Scarred, a dragonrider who was the champion of the king of a land beyond the southern mountains. According to the tale, Gwynn had, in his youth, not only found a dragon egg but also found the secret to hatching it!

However, the tale goes on to narrate the tragic death of Gwynn's dragon

Orfax at the hands of an arrogant knight looking to make a name for himself at Gwynn's expense. Heartbroken, Gwynn left the king's court never to return and, rumour has it, retreated to the mountains to live out his days as a hermit.

All this was many decades ago, but could Gwynn still be in the mountains somewhere, now an old man? Might it be possible to learn the secret of hatching a dragon's egg from him? And what will it take to persuade Gwynn to help him?



# Tavernkeeper

## Profession



*"To run a tavern is to hold the keys to the kingdom of mirth and merriment.  
And I, dear friends, am but a humble steward of this realm of revelry."*

**- Alden Quench, Tavernkeeper of the Lily Pad Lounge**

The tavernkeeper is a charismatic and hospitable individual who runs a bustling tavern, inn, pub, watering hole, or hole in the wall. They excel in the art of persuasion, entertaining guests with stories and songs, and ensuring that everyone feels at home. Their keen sense of hospitality and ability to connect with people from all walks of life make their establishment a popular gathering place. Beyond managing the day-to-day affairs, the tavernkeeper oversees the

establishment's operations, from the kitchen to the bar, ensuring patrons are well-fed, entertained, and always eager to return.

**Key Attribute:** CHA

**Skills:** Awareness, Bartering, Bluffing, Brawling, Evade, Performance, Persuasion, Spot Hidden

**Heroic Ability:** Innkeeper's Insight or Hospitality



<b>D8 Tavernkeeper Name</b>	
<b>1</b>	Gwendolyn Alesmith
<b>2</b>	Cedric Barrelwright
<b>3</b>	Rosalind Brewster
<b>4</b>	Finnegan Hopps

<b>D6 Tavern Name</b>	
<b>1</b>	The Hearth and Hops Inn
<b>2</b>	The Cat's Cradle Tavern
<b>3</b>	The Croak and Cask Tavern
<b>4</b>	The Feathered Flask
<b>5</b>	The Lizard's Lair Alehouse
<b>6</b>	The Frog and Fiddle Inn

<b>D8 Tavernkeeper Name</b>	
<b>5</b>	Thaddeus Taverner
<b>6</b>	Harold Tankard
<b>7</b>	Reginald Quaffington
<b>8</b>	Merric Smallbottle

<b>D6 Gear</b>	
<b>1-2</b>	Leather armour, Knife, Crowbar, Playing cards, Flint & tinder, Torch, D6 food rations, D6 silver
<b>3-4</b>	Leather armour, Dagger, Hammer, Dice, Flint & tinder, Torch, D6 food rations, D12 silver
<b>5-6</b>	Leather armour, Hammer, Mace, Chess set, Flint & tinder, Torch, D6 food rations, D12 silver

## Heroic Abilities

### Innkeeper's Insight

Requirement: Awareness 12

Willpower Points: 2

Your years of experience as an innkeeper have given you insight into the secrets and rumours circulating among your patrons. By conversing with travellers and listening to their tales, you can gather valuable information about nearby locations, hidden treasures, and potential threats lurking in the shadows.

### Hospitality

Requirement: Persuasion 12

Willpower Points: 2

Your friendly demeanor and welcoming attitude make you a master at soothing tensions and diffusing conflicts. By activating this ability, you automatically succeed on a roll for PERSUASION to calm hostile NPCs or convince them to join your cause, turning potential enemies into allies.

## Adventure Seed

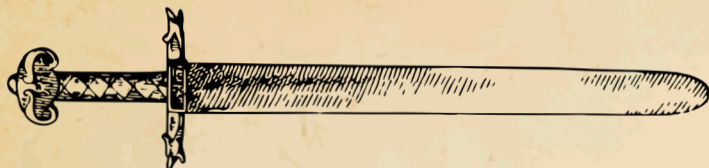
In the teeming city of Alebrook, where ale flows as freely as the river, word is spreading of the ultimate brewing challenge—the Brewmaster's Gauntlet. This legendary competition promises fame, fortune, and the coveted title of Brewmaster to the victor. The PCs find themselves at the Pondside Pub, where the Mallard Tavernkeeper Mallar Fowlrunner is caught up in the excitement.

One evening, Mallar regales the PCs with his dreams of brewing greatness and of one day holding the title of Brewmaster. Seizing the opportunity

to repay his kindness, the PCs offer to help him achieve his dream by entering the Brewmaster's Gauntlet together.

Without hesitation, Mallar Fowlrunner accepts their offer and together they set out on a quest to gather the rare and exotic ingredients needed to create the ultimate ale. Where will the quest take you? From the lush forests of the Whispering Woods to the sinister and twisted Bloodwoods. From the cold tips of the Frosthaven Mountains to the dark and shadowy Barrenstone Mines.

# A Guide to Magical Items



## Magical Weapons

A basic magical weapon can be considered to be a mastercrafted weapon (see p.74 of the Dragonbane Rules). Attacks made with any magical weapon count as magical attacks. In addition, a magical weapon may have one or more of the following qualities:

### KEEN

**1<sup>st</sup> class:** +3 damage  
**2<sup>nd</sup> class:** +2 damage  
**3<sup>rd</sup> class:** +1 damage

### ACCURATE

**1<sup>st</sup> class:** may spend 1 WP to gain a boon on the attack roll  
**2<sup>nd</sup> class:** may spend 2 WP to gain a boon on the attack roll  
**3<sup>rd</sup> class:** may spend 3 WP to gain a boon on the attack roll

### POWERFUL

**1<sup>st</sup> class:** spend 1 WP for +D8 damage  
**2<sup>nd</sup> class:** spend 1 WP for +D6 damage  
**3<sup>rd</sup> class:** spend 1 WP for +D4 damage

## Magical Armour

### HELMS

A magical helm may grant at most an extra +1 AR compared to a non-magical helm of the same type. Some rare helms may also grant boons to rolls made for a particular attribute and associated skills, usually WIL or CHA.

### ARMOUR

Most magical armour will grant an extra +1 AR compared to non-magical armour of the same type. Rare and exceptional pieces of magical armour may grant up to an extra +3 AV.

### BRACERS OF DEFENCE

These give from +2 AR to +4 AR to an otherwise unarmoured character, with no penalties. Normally such bracers are made of iron or another kind of metal, which inhibits spellcasting, but there are legends of such magical bracers made of dragonbone or other non-metallic materials.

## Magical Gear

Boons and banes are a core mechanic in Dragonbane, so a good way for GMs to create magical items is to have an item give a boon to all rolls made for a particular attribute, and all skills associated with that attribute. Here are some examples:

**Belt of Strength** gives a boon to rolls for STR and associated skills.

**Gloves of Dexterity** give a boon to rolls for AGL and associated skills.

**Girdle of Toughness** gives a boon to CON rolls, and +2 HP.

**Headband of Intellect** gives a boon to rolls for INT and associated skills.

**Periapt of the Will** gives a boon to WIL rolls, and +2 WP.

**Cloak of Charisma** gives a boon to rolls for CHA and associated skills.



## Magical Properties

In addition to, or instead of, the attributes already described, you can roll on the table below to give an item a magical property. Roll a D20 for weapons, and a D12 for other items. If the result does not fit the item in question, re-roll to generate a more suitable result.

Magical items must be worn (in the case of armour/helmets and jewellery) or be at hand (in the case of weapons and instruments) in order for their effects to be used.

Roll	Magical Property	Item type	Effect
1-3	Ensorcelled	Any	Roll on the Ensorcelled table.
4	Radiant	Any	Spend 1 WP (free action) to emit a 10m light source for one stretch.
5	Healthy	Any	Gain +3 to max HP.
6	Focused	Any	Gain +3 to max WP.
7	Thorned	Any	Inflict D4 piercing damage to a melee attacker that deals damage to you.
8	Aquatic	Any	Spend 2 WP (free action) to breathe underwater for one stretch.
9	Invisibility	Any	Spend 3 WP (free action) to become invisible for one round. Attacks against you count as being in total darkness, and you gain a boon to SNEAKING rolls.
10	Warded	Any	When you take damage (after damage reduction from armour), you can choose to lose WP instead of HP.
11	Animated	Weapons, Armour (not helms), Instruments	The item can leave your possession to become a levitating Companion (using the same rules as the Companion Heroic Ability, Dragonbane Rules p.36). Its HP are equal to its durability or armour rating and it becomes damaged until repaired if it reaches 0 HP. It shares your movement rating, skills and attributes. For 3 WP (free action) you can command a weapon to attack, a suit of armour to grapple, or an instrument to perform.
12	Resistant	Armour Shields Jewellery	Roll again on the Resistance table. Damage you take of the specified type is halved.

13	Enchanted	Weapons	A 1–2 counts as rolling a dragon when attacking or parrying.
14	Vampiric	Weapons	Regain 2D6 HP when you deal damage to a living target with a critical hit. Maximum one target per round.
15	Siphoning	Weapons	Regain 2D6 WP when you deal damage to a living target with a critical hit. Maximum one target per round.
16	Flaming	Weapons	Spend 3 WP (free action) to set the weapon aflame for one stretch. It deals an additional D6 fire damage and ignites flammable material. It also acts as a light source with a range of 10m.
17	Envenomed	Weapons	Roll on the Envenomed table. The target is affected by poison of the type and potency indicated when they take damage from the weapon.
18	Smashing	Weapons	Spend 2 WP (free action) on successful hit to knock a target D8 metres directly away from you. It takes the same amount of bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone.
19	Slayer	Weapons	Roll again on the Slayer table. A successful hit against the specified target type deals an additional D8 damage.
20	Summoned	Weapons	Spend 1 WP (free action) to instantly materialize the weapon at hand or equipped, no matter where it is.





## ENSORCELLED TABLE

Ensorcelled weapons have PERMANENCE, CHARGE, and MAGIC SEAL binding one of the spells listed below. Roll a D3 to determine the spell's power level, and roll D6+6 to determine how many charges of WP the item can hold. Spells are cast using a successful LANGUAGES roll to correctly recite the activation command, and items can be recharged with the CHARGE spell.

D20	Spell
1	Dispel
2	Protector
3	Banish
4	Farsight
5	Ensnaring Roots
6	Lightning Flash
7	Treat Wound
8	Sleep
9	Fireball
10	Frost
11	Gust of Wind
12	Shatter
13	Tidal Wave
14	Pillar
15	Levitate
16	Stone Skin
17	Mental Strike
18	Teleport
19	Dominate
20	Resurrection (the item crumbles to dust after the spell is successfully cast)

## RESISTANCE & VULNERABILITIES TABLE

D6	Damage Type
1	Bludgeoning
2	Slashing
3	Piercing
4	Fire
5-6	Magical

## SLAYER TABLE

D6	Enemy Type
1	Dragons
2	Playable Kin
3	Nightkin, Trolls
4	Undead
5	All other monsters
6	Demons

## ENVENOMED TABLE

Roll once for potency, and again for poison type.

D3	Potency	Poison Type
1	12	Lethal
2	15	Paralyzing
3	18	Sleeping

## Cursed Items

Some magical items hold terrible curses! When a character first equips a magical item, roll a D20. On a demon roll, the item is cursed. Roll on the Curses Table below. Roll a D20 for weapons, and a D12 for other items. If the result does not fit the item in question, re-roll to generate a more suitable result.

A cursed item magically binds itself to its victim. It cannot be removed or disarmed unless the wielder is killed, and the item itself cannot be destroyed. Someone trying to forcibly

take the item suffers D6 magical damage and is knocked prone. A character can sleep in cursed armour (though it is very uncomfortable).

Casting DISPEL on the item will break the curse and allow it to be unequipped, but it does not purify the item. When it is equipped again, the curse takes hold once more.

SENSE MAGIC allows the caster to roll the D20 to see if the item is cursed or not before someone equips it, but it does not reveal the type of curse.

**CURSES TABLE**

Roll	Curse	Item type	Effect
1	Weakening	Any	When rolling to regain HP from a Stretch rest, halve the result (rounding up).
2	Disturbing	Any	When rolling to regain WP from a round or stretch rest, halve the result (rounding up).
3	Diseased	Any	When you equip this item or add it to your inventory, you are afflicted by a magical disease with a virulence of 16. Everyone you come into close contact with during the next shift is also exposed to the disease.
4	Vulnerable	Any	Roll again on the Vulnerabilities Table. Damage you take of the specified type is doubled.
5	Haunted	Any	A hostile ghost appears at the most inopportune moments (as determined by the GM) to try to murder you. Unless the ghost is banished, or the curse is lifted, the ghost will always return.
6	Gluttonous	Any	You must consume D4 rations per day instead of just 1 (roll when you eat). If you don't, you start to suffer the effects of starvation.
7	Undying	Any	If you are killed with this item equipped or in your inventory, you will come to life again as a living dead after D3 rounds. The reanimated creature has the same attributes, skills, and equipment as your character had in life (but not any of their abilities). It is up to the GM how the situation unfolds.
8	Chilled	Any	Any time you take a shift rest, you must succeed on a BUSHCRAFT roll (blankets and furs have no effect). If you fail you suffer the effects of being Cold. Warmth from a campfire or other heat source has no effect.



9	Withering	Any	You become one category older, for example from Adult to Old. Your attributes and derived ratings change as per the table on page 24, but your skill levels do not. If you were already old, you become very frail and get -2 STR and CON. This effect lasts as long as you have the cursed item equipped or in your inventory.
10	Destitute	Any	Any gold or silver you touch crumbles into dust, except this cursed item.
11	Whispering	Any	Generate an additional character weakness. This item continually whispers in your mind to act on this new weakness. Any time you forgo an opportunity to do so, you lose 1 WP.
12	Petrifying	Any	If you reach 0 HP with this item equipped or in your inventory, you turn into solid stone over the next D3 rounds. A successful HEALING roll or healing spell such as HEAL WOUND or TREAT WOUND will halt the process, but only the RESTORATION spell can fully reverse the effect.
13	Stubborn	Weapons	Skill rolls made with this weapon cannot be pushed.
14	Barbed	Weapons	Every time you make a successful skill roll using this item you suffer 1 point of magical damage (no armour reduction).
15	Draining	Weapons	Every time you make a successful skill roll with this item you must spend 1 WP. If you have 0 WP, the skill roll fails.
16	Betrayer	Weapons	If you roll a demon when rolling to hit with this weapon, the weapon deals its damage to you (do not include your damage bonus). This replaces the normal effects of rolling a demon in melee combat.
17	Profane	Weapons	A 19–20 counts as a demon roll when attacking or parrying with this weapon.
18	Jealous	Weapons	All rolls to attack or parry made with any weapon other than this one receive a bane.
19	Bloodthirsty	Weapons	If any damage is dealt to a living target with this weapon, you must keep attacking it until it is dead. You can attempt to make a WIL roll to stop attacking the target once per turn (free action).
20	Doomed	Weapons	Keep a running tally of every time you fail a skill roll when using this weapon. When the total reaches 20, a demon appears within the next shift to claim your soul.



# Stand and Deliver!

## Blackpowder Weapons for Dragonbane

Be they the invention of a mad alchemist or rare dwarven or goblin technology, if you want to introduce blackpowder weapons to your game, here are some rules you can use.

### Secondary Skill

#### FIREARMS (AGL)

If a demon is rolled when firing, instead of rolling on the effect table, roll for damage. If the damage exceeds the weapon's durability it is broken and excess damage passes to the user.

### Heroic Ability

#### FAST LOAD

##### Willpower Points: 2

Gives a boon on rolls to reload.

### Weapon Features

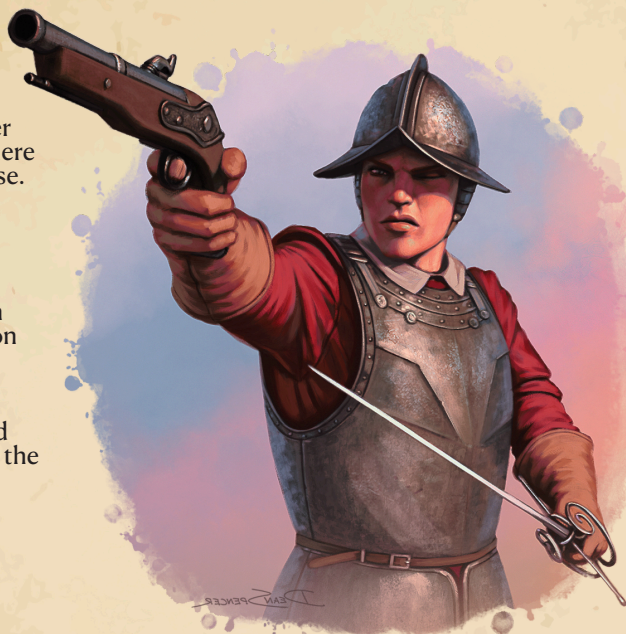
All blackpowder weapons have the following features: Exploding Damage, Piercing, Load. Blackpowder weapons give no damage bonus.

#### EXPLODING DAMAGE

If the number rolled on any of the damage dice is the highest value for that die type (e.g. a 6 on a D6), roll an additional die of the same type and add the result to the total damage.

#### LOAD

Once a weapon has been discharged, a successful weapon skill roll is required in the following round to reload the weapon.



Reloading is an action. Rolling a dragon on the skill roll for reloading means that it counts as a free action. Rolling a demon indicates a loss of ammo or powder and requires an additional action to rectify the issue before another reload action can be attempted.

All weapons with the load feature require both an ammo pouch and a powder horn. A bandolier or baldric can fulfil the functions of both these items.

#### SHOT

All targets within a 15m cone take damage. Each damage die counts against armour separately, including exploding dice. Damage is reduced by one die for each 5m of distance between the attacker and the target.



## Weapons

Weapon	Grip	STR	Range	Damage	Dur.	Cost	Supply	Features	Melee
Pistol	1H	7	20	3D4	6	300 g	Rare	Load	Small Club
Carbine	2H	7	30	4D4	7	400 g	Rare	Load	Staff/Spear
Musket	2H	7	40	4D4	9	500 g	Rare	Load	Staff/Spear
Dragon	1H	7	15	3/2/1D6	6	300 g	Rare	Load, Shot	Small Club
Donderbuss	2H	7	20	4/3/2/1D6	7	500 g	Rare	Load, Shot	Large Club

## Trade Goods

Item	Cost	Supply	Weight	Effect
Powder Horn	10 g	Rare	1	Required to fire firearm, in combination with ammo bag
Ammo Bag	5 g	Rare	1	Required to fire firearm, in combination with powder horn
Bandolier	50 g	Rare	1	Required to fire firearm

### Pistol

Pistols were used as self-defence weapons and as military arms. Their effective range was short, and they were frequently used as an adjunct to a sword or cutlass. Pistols were usually smoothbore although some rifled pistols were produced.

### Carbine

The carbine was originally developed for cavalry. The start of early modern warfare around the 16th century had infantry armed with firearms, prompting cavalry to do the same, even though reloading muzzle-loading firearms while mounted was highly impractical.

### Musket

A musket is a muzzle-loaded long gun that appeared as a smoothbore weapon in the early 16th century, at first as a heavier variant of the arquebus, capable of penetrating heavy armour.

### Dragon

A dragon is a shortened version of blunderbuss, a firearm with a short, large-calibre barrel which is flared at the muzzle and frequently throughout the entire bore. Dragons were typically issued to dragoon cavalry, who needed a lightweight, easily handled firearm while mounted.

### Donderbuss

The donderbuss or blunderbuss is a firearm with a short, large-calibre barrel which is flared at the muzzle and frequently throughout the entire bore, and used with shot and other projectiles of the requisite quantity or calibre. The blunderbuss is commonly considered to be an early predecessor of the modern shotgun, with similar military and defensive use. It was effective only at short range, lacking accuracy at long distances.



# Taking Sides

## A Misty Vale Adventure



### Overview

This module is centred around the conflict between two headstrong NPCs. It includes character descriptions and a random encounter table to help the GM introduce them to the PCs, along with two minor quests that lead to a finale where the party must choose sides.

There is no need to run all parts of this adventure immediately one after the other. This story can easily be woven into a larger campaign.

### Premise

A hunter has been roaming the countryside killing wild animals with no respect for their lives and little concern for their suffering. He is fond of gold and drink and is generous with both. However, there is someone who intends to put a violent end to this hunter's violent ways, just as soon as he learns his identity. Their collision is inevitable.

Which of them will the player characters support when the final confrontation comes?



# Reynar Callisper



**Movement** 14    **HP** 16    **WP** 12

**Dmg.** AGL +D6    **Armour** 1

**Skills:** Awareness 13, Evade 12

**Abilities:** Twin Shot

**Gear:** Longbow 15 (D12), Handaxe 12 (2D6) Leather armour

Reynar, or "Crazy Reyn" as he is jokingly called around town, is a world-weary, drunken huntsman known for his peculiar habit of mumbling to himself. In reality he does no such thing. Under his jacket, close to his chest, rests his younger brother Nylas, who was turned into a flying squirrel as a result of a run-in with a witch.

Reynar and Nylas fled to the Misty Vale to escape a conviction for poaching. Now they live a simple life centred around hunting and tracking and are quite content, if perhaps a little bored. Reynar is said to be able to put an arrow in the eye of an eagle mid-flight – when he's sober that is.

Reynar can act as a teacher (see p.29 of the Dragonbane Rules) for the following skills: BOWS, BUSHCRAFT and HUNTING & FISHING.

## Nylas Callisper

SQUIRREL FORM

**Movement** 15    **HP** 2

**Skills:** Awareness 14, Evade 16



# Mlok-Dir



<b>Movement</b> 10	<b>HP</b> 14	<b>WP</b> 18
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<b>Armour</b> 1
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<b>Skills:</b> Animism 15, Awareness 12, Evade 8
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<b>Spells:</b> Ensnaring Roots, Lightning Flash, Treat Wounds, Spirit Call (see below)
--

<b>Gear:</b> Staff 10 (D8), Bone armour
---

An old orc who got left behind by his tribe for reasons he won't share, Mlok-Dir now lives a nomadic life in solitude, caring for all things wild. He can barely speak the common tongue, but can manage well enough to enable him to trade with travellers.

He usually carries some smelling salts for bartering. They function just like normal healing potions but heal fewer HP (D6) and leave the user Exhausted for a short time after taking them.

Mlok-Dir usually minds his own business and advises others to do the same. Wronging him will most likely lead to battle, with him uncorking his most potent concoctions. One of these sends Mlok-Dir into a battle trance and another turns his pet goat, Gruk, into a frightening beast, allowing Mlok-Dir to ride him like a mount in battle.

## Gruk

### BEAST FORM

<b>Movement</b> 18	<b>HP</b> 20	<b>WP</b> 15
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<b>Skills:</b> Evade 15
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<b>Abilities:</b> Fast Footwork
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<b>Attack:</b> Horns 12 (2D8)
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# Random Encounters

The GM can use the table below to introduce Reynar and Mlok-Dir. The encounters can be played in any order. Roll, pick, or simply start from the top and work your way down.

These encounters are designed to be used in the grasslands, not too far from some sort of civilised settlement.

## D4 Encounter

### 1 Wounded Deer

Faint specks of blood can be seen in the grass ahead of you. The irregular trail leads to a buck lying on the ground with an arrow buried deep in its flank. It is struggling to draw its final breaths. Moments later, a rough voice can be heard nearby: "Would you be quiet, I'm trying to track the bloody thing!" It is Reynar, who soon hails the adventurers and claims his kill. He only cares about the antlers and offers the PCs the meat (2D8 rations).

### 2 Coloured Smoke

A pillar of smoke can be seen billowing into the sky, about a league away from the party. It is unusually thick and has streaks of red, yellow and orange in it. It is coming from Mlok-Dir's tent, where he is in the middle of a shamanic ritual. The heavy fumes envelop his campsite and a successful CON roll is required to avoid being affected by them. A failed roll results in the player character suffering a violent coughing attack, taking D6 damage. The fumes dissipate after D4 hours. If the PCs are able to withstand the poisonous fumes and wake Mlok-Dir from his trance, he is sure to be most displeased with them.

### 3 Archery Competition

The player characters come across a wooden pole driven down into the dirt with a fist-sized stone balanced on top. If the party scans the area they will just barely be able to make out a figure quite a way off. Either way, there is a sudden whistling sound and the stone is knocked off the pole. A blunt-tipped arrow can be seen on the ground and the figure in the distance starts to wave the player characters over. The skilled archer turns out to be Reynar who proposes a friendly wager: the PCs have three attempts to repeat the shot he just made and he will give them 2D6 silver pieces. Should they fail, the PCs must instead give him the same amount. The attempts are made by a character rolling for the BOWS skill with a bane. If necessary, Reynar will grudgingly lend his opponent his cherished longbow to take the shots.

### 4 Strange Goat

Have each of the PCs roll for AWARENESS. Those who succeed suddenly have the eerie feeling of being watched. Looking around, they spot Gruk in the distance, staring intently at the group without blinking. Orcish symbols in yellow paint are daubed all over his white fur. Pursuing the goat causes him to skip on ahead and then stop again to stare back at the PCs, a process he repeats until he reaches Mlok-Dir's camp.

# Questline

When meeting Reynar or Mlok-Dir through the random encounter table, you can expand the narrative by having them each offer their respective quests: **1A** and **1B**. Each of these quests lead to a finale where the player characters must choose to side with only one of the NPCs. While it is possible to only do one of the quests, it is recommended to have the players complete both quests before the finale.

## Part 1A

### Placing Traps, Earning Scraps

Reynar offers to pay the PCs to set a number of bear traps in different locations in the grasslands. Rather gruffly, he states his conditions: the traps need to be placed at least two kilometres apart from each other and marked on a map so he knows where to check them later. There are 4 traps in total and they are 1 weight each. He offers 2 silver per trap and an extra 2 silver if they set all of them. To receive their reward, the PCs simply need to go and find him at The Three Stags (or any other suitable tavern in your setting).

#### FLESHING IT OUT

This side-quest works well when used in combination with other tables found in the adventure book from the core set, such as omens (p.10) or other random encounters (p.28).

## Part 1B

### Spirit-Linked

Through gestures and the creative use of his limited vocabulary in the common tongue, Mlok-Dir gets his request across to the PCs: he wants to guide them on a spiritual journey. Why

he needs them to participate is unclear, but what could go wrong?

If they accept his invitation he invites them into his tent and motions to them to sit down in a circle, facing each other. When they're ready, read the following text:

*You close your eyes. It is already quite warm inside the tent, but you hear Mlok-Dir adding even more wood to the fire and then the unmistakable grinding sound of a mortar and pestle. After a moment the sound stops. It smells of earth and iron. You sit in silence, listening to the crackling firewood. Beads of sweat roll down your spine. Then your next breath sends you reeling. It feels like your brain just turned inside out and you find yourself thinking that maybe it's better this way. Your eyes itch, so you open them, and see painfully bright colours dancing on your retinas. Far off, you hear the faint beating of a drum. It starts slow but builds in speed and volume, building up to a wild and forceful rhythm. Your heart seems to joyfully follow the rhythm, pumping along to the beat like it's about to burst. Then Mlok-Dir's distant voice begins to chant, using words from a language that is foreign to you, and the coloured lights begin to take form...*

*Your strange new body is moving. You're running for your life. Something hits you mid-step but you push through the pain. You keep running but one of your legs is struggling. You can't go on like this much further. You have to hide. There, among the trees! Quickly! You collapse. A numb, cold sensation spreads through your insides but somehow you're still warm on the outside. A wet kind of warmth. You wait. It might be minutes, it might be hours, it's hard to say. Then you hear voices. You try to make yourself small. The voices keep coming closer and seem to be arguing. They stop right next to you; a shaggy pair of boots is visible through the foliage. They move on and the footsteps fade away. You exhale. But then something lands behind you. It hurts to turn your head but you need to know what it is – a*



*red squirrel stares at you with cold black eyes. Once again you exhale. You're safe. Then the squirrel screams with a shrill and terrible voice:*

*"Hey Reyn, over here! I found her! Told you it was a doe, no antlers, see?"*

*Another voice responds, out of sight: "Crap, my mistake then. Well, let's just leave it. The pelt is barely worth the effort."*

*Once again the footsteps fade away and so does your connection with the animal's spirit. You drift, and then disconnect completely. You open your eyes and find yourself back in the tent.*

The ritual has clearly taken a toll on Mlok-Dir. He looks spent, and his expression is one of deep sorrow and grim determination. After a minute or two he gets up and gives each of the PCs a small wooden token as thanks for assisting with the ritual. Players succeeding on a roll against MYTHS & LEGENDS understand that the tokens function as a sort of currency within orcish communities – not for commodities, but for favours.

Proceed to **2B** right away or have Mlok-Dir bid farewell.

## AFTER-EFFECTS

Have all player characters who took part in the ritual make a WIL roll to see how well they handled the connection of spirits. A failed roll results in a PC being drained of D10 WP. If they are drained of more WP than they have available, the excess is taken from their HP.

## VISION SUMMARY

Should you wish to move the story along a bit quicker, simply tell the PCs that they all shared a spiritual connection with a wounded deer that was being hunted by Reynar and a

strange talking squirrel. Disappointed, they left the deer to die in pain and fear once they realised it didn't have any antlers to harvest and sell for gold.

## EXTRA IMMERSION

Should you want to immerse your players in the ritual even more, have them hold hands and close their eyes at the table when you read the text describing the vision.

## Part 2A Violent Motives

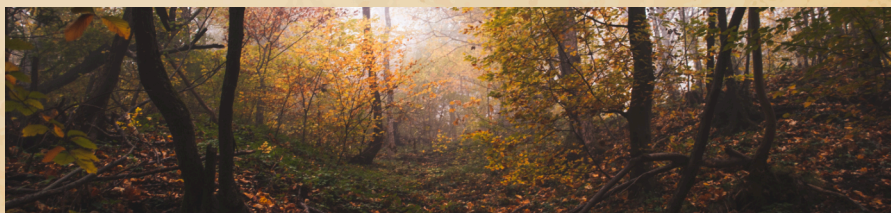
### SIDING WITH REYNAR

The next time the party comes across Reynar he is sporting a swollen black eye. After thanking the PCs and rewarding them with the agreed-upon silver he shares how he got hurt. Apparently he caught a goat with "greenskin markings" in one of his traps and when he tried to cut its throat the following happened:

"The damned beast broke loose somehow and hoofed me good, let me tell ya. It all went black for me, but when I came to I was able to follow the tracks to an orcish campsite. I was in no shape to start trouble, but brother am I ready now! I could use some help if you're interested. And look, if we find any loot we'll split it evenly. Whaddya say?"

Reynar is eager to get going but needs to pick up some supplies first. He takes the lead as soon as you meet up again, heading off into the wilderness. After a couple of hours marching across the plains Reynar calls for quiet and readies his longbow. You're getting close...

Roll on the table on the next page to find out what happens next.



## D6 Campsite Situation

### 1 Abandoned Campsite

It looks like the orc packed up and left. There's nothing here now but goat droppings and the remains of a campfire. Will you continue the hunt and press on, or make camp for the night? Your call. (This event can only occur once. Roll again if necessary.)

### 2 Catching Mlok-Dir Unawares

Smoke drifts out from the top of the tent and you can hear the orc shuffling about inside. Successful SNEAKING rolls are required to get close. If a fight breaks out, Grukhh joins the fray to aid his master in the second round of combat.

### 3 Goat Sentry

Grukhh is lying on the ground and yawning occasionally, but don't be fooled, he is very much aware of your presence. Moving closer without alarming him requires a degree of subtlety. All PCs must make a successful roll against BEAST LORE. A failed roll results in startling the goat who instantly sets off towards its master to warn him of the intruders. Offering a suitable treat gives an advantage on the roll.

### 4 Empty Campsite

Nothing can be seen or heard around the tent. Looks like a perfect opportunity to set up an ambush – as long as you're not interrupted. Mlok-Dir returns to his camp from collecting herbs in D6 hours, with Grukhh trailing behind him.

## MLOK-DIR'S TACTICS

At the first sign of trouble, Mlok-Dir gives Grukhh a whiff of a rare smelling salt which transforms him into a far more ferocious beast, and then leaps up onto his back. In combat Mlok-Dir prefers to attack his enemies from a distance using his array of spells. Because of this, he seeks open ground, where Grukhh has plenty of room to EVADE his attackers. If cornered they will charge their way out.

## SPIRIT CALL

Through violent chanting, Mlok-Dir directs the spirits of all the dead animals back at their killer: Reynar, as well as anyone who is aiding him, no matter where they are on the battlefield. Manifesting out of thin air, wild animals strike each target, dealing 2D6 damage, then disappear again. The attacks can be dodged or parried. Cost: 3 WP.

## NYLAS PULLS HIS WEIGHT

Should Reynar find himself in serious danger, Nylas flies out from his jacket to bite and claw at the eyes of either Grukhh or Mlok-Dir, giving them a bane on their next roll.

## THE PRIZE

As soon as the fight is over, and if Reynar is still alive, he goes to work on the enormous curled horns of Grukhh. It takes him more than an hour to salvage the trophies. He says he knows someone who would pay good money for the horns and offers a 50/50 split after making the sale. His argument for this is that the player characters would never find someone interested in the horns without him so it is only "fair" that he gets half the profit. The horns each have a weight 2 and each fetch a price of 2D6×5 gold from the right buyer.

## LOOT

On Mlok-Dir's person one can find trinkets of feather and bone worth D6 silver, along with his armour, staff and several small pouches filled with powders and ingredients. Meddle with them at your own risk. Inside the tent there are some furs, a decent cauldron and a sizable mortar and pestle made from some sort of black stone etched with orcish symbols. The set is worth 2D6 gold and gives users a boon on applicable MEDICINE rolls.





## Part 2B

### Orcish Negotiations

#### SIDING WITH MLOK-DIR

After the ritual Mlok-Dir asks for help dealing with the Callisper brothers. He means to capture Nylas and offer to turn him back into a human. In exchange, the brothers must agree never to hunt in the Misty Vale again. If the PCs side with Mlok-Dir they will need to take the bait he's made, use it to kidnap Nylas and bring him back to Mlok-Dir.

#### SNATCHING NYLAS

The bait consists of a foul-smelling liquid inside a hollow horn, sealed tight with both stopper and string. Pouring the liquid out somewhere near the Callisper brothers results in Nylas showing up D4 hours later, whether he likes it or not. It is extremely potent and tailored specifically for him. Then all they have to do is catch him, which might prove easier said than done...

#### THE STANDOFF

When Mlok-Dir gets his hands on Nylas there is not much to do but wait. Reynar will turn up in D6 hours with reinforcements – desperate-looking bandits (Dragonbane Rules p.105), twice as many as the PCs. Half of them approach together with Reynar, and the other half hide behind trees or in high grass within bow range. Mlok-Dir holds a knife to Nylas' throat and states his demands. Even though he struggles with the common language, his point is very clear – accept his gift or accept death.

#### TURNING HUMAN

Reynar grudgingly accepts Mlok-Dir's ultimatum. Mlok-Dir then asks a PC to fetch a bowl which is boiling above his fire inside the tent. He places it on the ground and before anyone can react, he lifts Nylas over the bowl and cuts him deeply across his chest. The blood drips down Nylas' paws into the simmering bowl, mixing with the elixir. A thick cloud of yellow vapour soon covers Nylas' body and he begins to shake and scream. Within seconds he magically transforms into a human

once again. He looks like a younger version of his brother except for his long red hair. The wound on his chest remains but otherwise he seems unharmed, if perhaps a bit shocked. He stumbles over to Reynar, who embraces him and orders his companions to lower their weapons. They retreat slowly, Reynar casting a final glance towards Mlok-Dir.

#### BATTLE

Reynar has no intention of backing down. Before the PCs leave Mlok-Dir's camp he will lead his gang in an all-out attack. The bandits fight crudely but fiercely. However, once they lose the upper hand, their morale will falter – life is precious after all. Reynar will fight from the rear using his longbow. Nylas is still wounded and will not take part in the battle unless he fears for Reynar's life. In human form Nylas has the same stats as a bandit, but starts the fight with  $\frac{2}{3}$  HP.

For how to handle Mlok-Dir as an NPC in combat: see **Quest 2A**.

#### NYLAS' CONSCIENCE

Nylas is conflicted. On the one hand he wants to be loyal to his big brother, who took care of him for so many years without asking for anything in return. But on the other hand, he feels bad for turning on Mlok-Dir – the person who gave him his old life back. What will he do? Play to find out.

#### REWARD

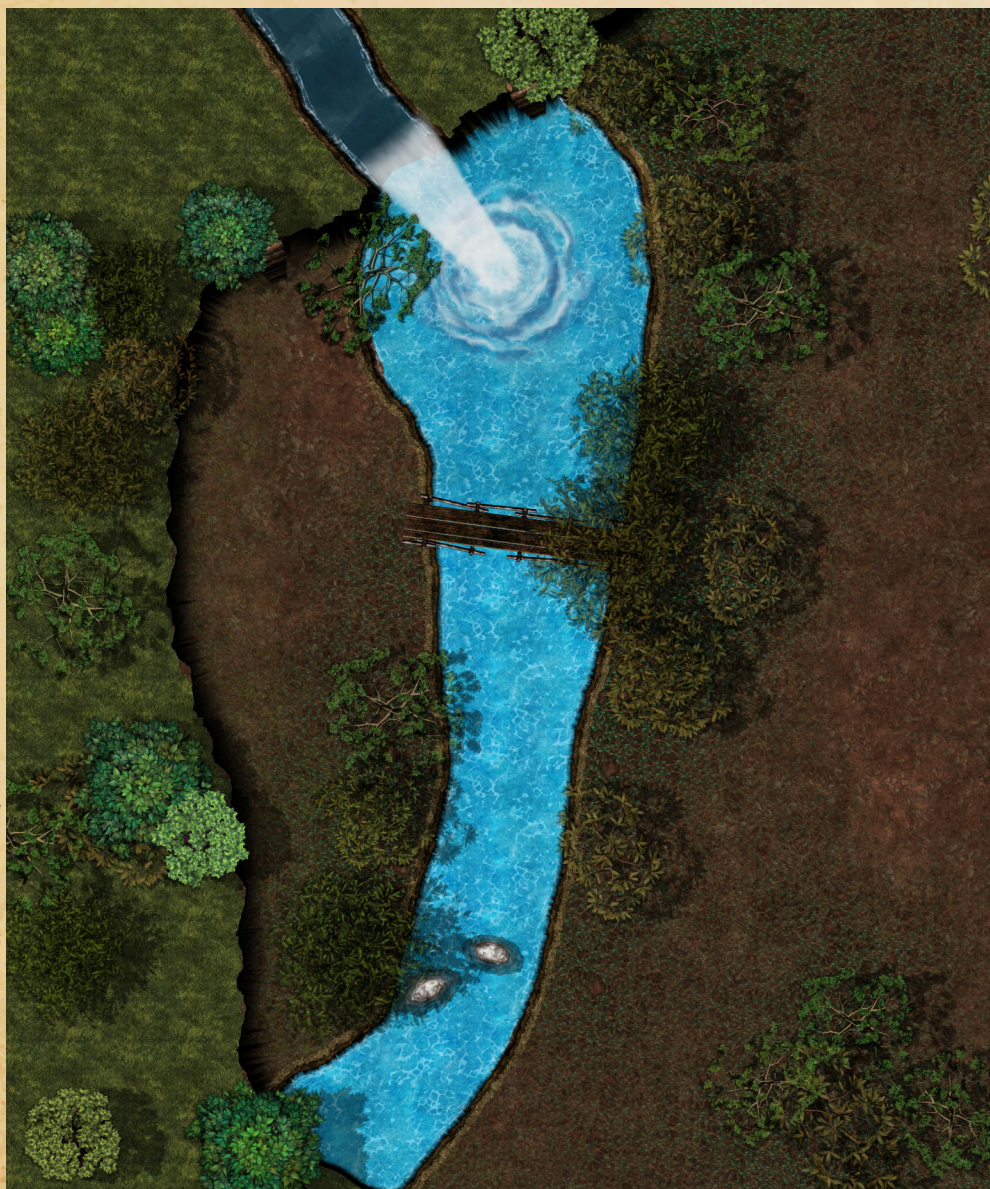
Mlok-Dir takes off his necklace and solemnly gifts it to the PCs. It is a magical artefact made of bone, with three thin finger-like rods tied together with string. By breaking one of the bone rods the user turns into a random animal from the "Common Animals" table (Dragonbane Rules p.99) for a stretch. Roll a D12 to determine which animal. If the player rolls a 1 they may choose freely.

#### LOOT

Apart from their gear, each bandit carries money equal to one of the three lowest copper coin treasure cards, chosen at random. Use the same process for Reynar, but use the three lowest silver coin cards instead.



# Map of Mlok-Dir's Campsite









# WINDHEIM

## Revenge for the Fallen

This scenario takes place on Windheim, a remote island far from the mainland of the campaign world Eshfera. In this scenario you'll get a glimpse of one of the main conflicts on Windheim, as well as a few of the kin that inhabit the island. Since the players will not have background info on the world it is best if their characters originate from the mainland. There are enough realms and areas there to host any of the playable kin and professions in Dragonbane. Most backstories can easily be converted to the mainland, it is so far away it will not affect the events on Windheim. Having said this, there are some pregenerated characters available for download on [Nordic Skalds' Facebook page](#).

### Introduction

Windheim is an island, a colony of the Bastionian Empire, which rules most of the known world. The Bastionites are a human and halfling culture worshipping Thrakon, the ruling deity of the pantheon. On Windheim their power is strong but not quite as dominant as in the rest of the world. Most of the island is ruled directly by the Bastionites except for two powerful dwarven realms and some very remote areas. The northern one of these dwarven realms is Thym Zûr and it is allied with the Bastionian Empire. They keep a close watch on their ancient enemies from Khal Dhem in the south. These realms are at war but battles larger than skirmishes have





been very rare since the arrival of the Bastionites some 200 years ago. The schism between Thym Zûr and Khal Dhem dominates the conflicts on the island.

Also allied with the Bastionian Empire and Thym Zûr are the Myhl, another human culture on the island. But due to heavy taxation from the Bastionites they have rebelled several times during recent decades. The latest, and bloodiest, of these rebellions has caused the Bastionian authorities to harshly restrict the freedom of the Myhl. They are for example banned from owning weapons other than spears and bows that can be used for hunting. The dwarves of Thym Zûr are deeply sorrowful over the increasing tension between their two allies but are too dependent on the support of the Bastionites to act as intermediates with any weight. On the mainland though, the Myhl who've managed to make their way there are renowned and respected for their unsurpassed skill as singers. No one on the mainland has heard of the small uprisings of a faraway and obscure colony, so the player characters (if they originate from the mainland) would not be prejudiced towards the

Myhl as most (but not all) Bastionites on Windheim are. Nowadays, here on the island, they are considered to be troublemakers and rebels by most Bastionites.

## The Map

The map shows the isthmus between the barony of Stoneswaardh in the west and the Myhl peninsula in the east. In the small mountain range in the southwest there dwells a goblin tribe that sometimes raids the villages near the mountains. The wall was built by the Bastionites to keep some control over Myhl travelling west from their lands. On the western side of the wall to the north is the town of Hilltop, which overlooks the landscape for many miles in all directions. In the south lies the newly built village of Southwall. There is a Myhl village southeast of the wall along the coast about 30 kilometres from Southwall which is home to the Tohn tribe. They are fisherfolk, which is rather unusual for the Myhl who are mostly hunters. There is a player handout map available on [Nordic Skalds' Facebook page](#) that does not show the site of the ambush or of the Tohn tribe.



## Opening Scene

The player characters are in the village of Southwall for one reason or another. Perhaps they are travelling to the Myhl territory in search of the singers of that land, or maybe they are here to poach some ferner furs, or perhaps they have come to earn coin hunting rebel Myhl on behalf of the Bastionites.

As they are sitting in the tavern The Brokhen's Head (brokhen being big bison-like creatures that live all over Stoneswaardh and the Myhl peninsula), the innkeeper Penor approaches and asks them about their reasons for coming to Southwall. He is a very patriotic Bastionite with a receding hairline and a perpetual smirky smile on his face. He will warn the party about the wild Myhl if they say that they are headed through the wall and into that territory.

The conversation is cut short due to a commotion outside. A patrol has just come in from beyond the wall, and they seem to have come through a fight recently. They are all slightly beat up and the straps of their studded leather armour are cut or broken here and there. They will heal up well with some rest though, all except one who is lying limp across one of the horses having suffered several grievous wounds. Corporal Gyrek, who is leading the patrol, salutes Captain Vohra who exits from the garrison building with a clenched fist to his chest, and makes his report loudly for all to hear, saying that the patrol was ambushed by a party of five Myhl bandits in the hills just a few hours' ride beyond the wall. His patrol had tried to pursue the attackers but lost them in the hills. Gyrek then made the decision to return to Southwall with haste to find a better tracker, and to try and save their comrade. But he died on the way back, and is in Thrakon's hands now. Captain Vohra instantly proclaims that there will be a bounty on the heads of these five bandits and that she will pay a reward of 10 gold pieces per bandit (or head) brought back to Southwall. She will send out an official search party to try

## Thrakon Wells

Every Bastionite will sacrifice a tenth of all money or other profit from trade or farming to Thrakon. One chooses if this is paid yearly or every time a profit is made, whatever is more practical. Many choose to sacrifice more than this though, to gain more favour with Thrakon. All Bastionite villages therefore have a well, blessed by the clerics of Thrakon, into which they sacrifice their offerings. These wells do not seem to have any bottom, at least there is never a sound from things thrown down into it...

## Bastionite Prejudice

With random Bastionite non-player characters, always make a random D6 roll to see how prejudiced they are towards the Myhl on a scale of 1–6. If you roll a 6 everything the Bastionite says will reveal their deep prejudice. The hatred towards the Myhl runs deep in them, maybe they've lost a loved one in a recent rebellion? If you roll a 1, they probably have friends who are Myhl, view them as allies and are saddened by the estrangement between Bastionites and the Myhl in recent decades. The other results from 5 to 2 will give a descending amount of prejudice.

and catch the criminals, but the reward is for any civilian who beats her to it and brings justice and revenge for the fallen soldier.

If there is a wolfskin in the party, Captain Vohra will approach the party straight after having heard Corporal Gyrek's story. Wolfskin are often used as scouts by Bastionites but the garrison here does not have one. If they want to get the reward of 10 gold per bandit, the party must go out on their own ahead of Vohra's patrol. They could also wait until the patrol is assembled and join it, but then only the wolfskin will be paid. (This is to encourage the players to head out ahead of the patrol).

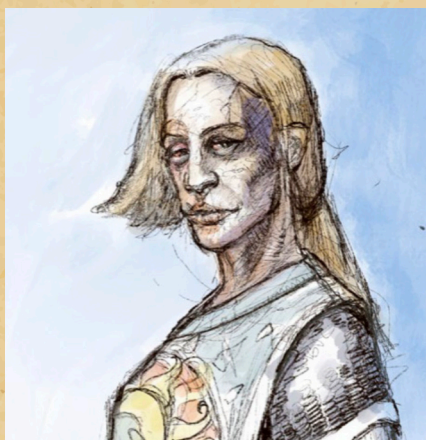




## What Actually Happened

The reason only one of the patrol soldiers was killed is that this was a personal act of revenge against the soldier who died in the ambush, Jukap. He had brutally killed Lon, the brother of Lon, leader of the five Myhl who attacked the patrol. Jukap was notorious for his very brutal behaviour towards the Myhl: he often roughed up any who looked at him the wrong way, and this was what had happened with Lun.

Lon, who is one of the Myhl's best hunters, had then carefully planned the ambush for over a week to make sure they would not kill more soldiers than necessary during the attack. She understood that the retaliation from the Bastionites would be heavier the more soldiers were killed. Furthermore, Lon made sure that only she and no one else fought Jukap, so that she would be the only one taking part in the ambush who would actually have to kill someone. The other Myhl only kept the rest of the patrol busy and away from the main fight.



## Captain Vohra

Vohra is the Bastionite captain in charge of the border patrols in Southwall. She is very proud and dutiful and often speaks with a little too much volume for comfort. Her tabard, like that of all other Bastionite soldiers, displays the Bastion with a burning sun as background.

<b>Movement</b> 10 (18 on horseback)	<b>HP</b> 20 <b>WP</b> 18
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<b>Dmg.</b> STR +D6	<b>Armour</b> 8
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**Skills:** Brawling 14, Persuasion 14, Riding 14

**Abilities:** Defensive, Double Slash, Focused (2), Robust (2)

**Gear:** Longsword 16 (2D8), Large shield, Plate armour, Great helm

## Corporal Gyrek

Corporal Gyrek is a tall man in his early twenties with dark skin and long black hair. He is very eager to please, most of all Captain Vohra.

<b>Movement</b> 10 (18 on horseback)	<b>HP</b> 14
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<b>Dmg.</b> STR +D4	<b>Armour</b> 2
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**Skills:** Awareness 10, Persuasion 10, Riding 12

**Gear:** Broadsword 14 (2D6), Studded leather armour

## Accepting the Mission?

Now the party can choose if they want to act as trackers for the official patrol that will be sent out in an hour, or if they want to head out immediately to get a head start. Perhaps they do not want to try and catch the Myhl at all due to something in their backstory, and wish instead to investigate and try and help the Myhl? Maybe they investigate the fact that only one of the soldiers was killed when all the others only had minor bruises.

There is a moral dilemma here, because neither the Bastionites or the Myhl are good or evil. Yes, the Bastionites are not treating the Myhl well and tax them heavily. But they were also the ones who liberated them during the conquest of Windheim some two hundred years ago, and the Myhl agreed to pay tax to the empire. And yes, the Myhl are being ill-treated but their rebellions have claimed the lives of many Bastionites, not only soldiers but civilians as well.

There is therefore no right or wrong path to take. The party can either help the patrols looking for the bandits, or help the Myhl who had avenged their murdered friend and brother get off the hook in some way.

## Southwall

Southwall is a village just west of the southernmost part of the wall that cuts the Myhl off from the rest of Windheim. The village is newly built and is bustling with new businesses and settlers, the smell of new wood is thick in the air. The characteristically practical Bastionite way of organizing a town is evident with its well-built houses, straight roads and sewage system. And of course – the sacrificial Thrakon well in the main square.

The garrison building dominates the view, built on top of the highest hill in the village and it is only from up there that one can see east over the wall to the hills of the Myhl. The soldiers of the border patrol and their auxiliary personnel make up most of the



population. The wall is only about 100 m away from the outskirts of the village, there is a road leading straight to the south gate.

## Investigations in Southwall

If the party wishes to talk to some people in the village before they head off (regardless of whether they accepted the mission or not), there is some information to be found.

- Corporal Gyrek is recuperating in the infirmary, and he can give them more clear directions to the place where the ambush took place. If a player succeeds on a PERSUASION roll, he will also grudgingly admit that Jukap had a long history of brutality against the Myhl. He was there when Lun was beaten to death. He will also tell the party that the Myhl fled south after killing Jukap and disappeared into the hills.
- Captain Vohra is gathering the force that will soon head through the gate and try to bring the Myhl bandits to justice. The party can work out an arrangement with her to either accompany her troops in the hunt, or negotiate over the reward. She can give some general information about the Myhl and the surrounding territory. She is very zealous in performing her duty, but not the sharpest tool in the shed.
- If they examine Jukap's body, they will see that he died from many deep cuts, and a successful roll for INT will tell them that the cuts were definitely made with an axe. His right hand was also cut clean off a bit above the wrist.
- Other soldiers or villagers will mostly confirm what Gyrek and Vohra have said, and have no further useful information. Most will know about Jukap's brutality and, depending on how prejudiced they are towards the Myhl, they will either think he was right to treat them as he did, or feel that he was too cruel towards them.

## Bastionite Patrol Guard

<b>Movement</b> 10 (18 on horseback)	<b>HP</b> 12
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<b>Dmg.</b> STR +D4	<b>Armour</b> 2
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**Skills:** Awareness 10, Riding 10

**Gear:** Broadsword 12 (2D6), Studded leather armour

## Ferner

The Myhl pay their taxes with furs from the extremely hard-to-catch and dangerous marten called ferner. The furs are a luxury item in the capital and the nobles love to show off their wealth and importance by wearing them.

## Finding the Myhl

Regardless of what choices the party makes, they will probably want to try and find Lon and the other Myhl who staged the ambush. They will possibly start by examining the site of the ambush, a valley between low rolling grassy hills, about 25 kilometres directly east of Southwall. When they arrive at the site, they see large bloodstains where Lon and Jukap fought, and there is a clear trail of blood leading south from that spot. But after only a few hundred metres the blood trail gets fainter and fainter, until it disappears completely.

They can track the Myhl southwards by rolling successfully for either SPOT HIDDEN or BUSHCRAFT. They will then be able to follow the tracks down to the village of the Tohn tribe where Lon and her companions are hiding. This is about 20 kilometres south of the site of the ambush.

If they fail to track the Myhl, or simply choose not to try and instead try to find someone to talk to, then after half a day's journey they will come across Bahùlkhar. He is an important Thym Zûr dwarf travelling back to his home from a visit to one of the Myhl clans further east (the Gurions, hunters of the hills several days journey to the east, but they do not come into this

story). If a player succeeds on a PERSUASION check (if there is no Bastionite in the group and they say that they are trying to help the Myhl sort this mess out they may roll with boon), Bahûlkhazar will tell them that he has not heard of the ambush, nor has he seen anything suspicious on his journey back west. But he will recommend that they try looking in a village a few hours' walk to the south, where the Tohn tribe live close to the shore. There they have set up their yurts to fish for the eels that always come with the spring currents to East Bay south of the wall. If the PERSUASION check is a dragon roll, Bahûlkhazar will join the party on their journey there. If the player characters have decided to help the Bastionites catch the Myhl bandits Bahûlkhazar will not help them, but with a successful BLUFFING roll they can trick him into thinking they want to help the Myhl. Bahûlkhazar can be used as an encounter even if the party is on the right track, should the game master feel like including it.

If the players fail both the tracking and the persuasion rolls, they can ask any

Myhl they pass by if there is a settlement nearby, and thus find their way to the village of the Tohn tribe. There will not be many Myhl passing by though, and they will probably be reluctant to help with more than vaguely pointing the way to the village.

If there is a mage in the party who succeeds with the spell SCRYING at the site of the ambush, the spell will show glimpses of the ambush, making it clear that the Myhl were trying to avoid killing any of the Bastionites except Jukap, and then show them taking off to the south.

## Bahûlkhazar

<b>Movement</b> 8	<b>HP</b> 20	<b>WP</b> 14
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<b>Dmg.</b> STR +D6	<b>Armour</b> 4
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**Skills:** Awareness 14, Persuasion 14, Myths & Legends 16, Languages 14

**Abilities:** Defensive, Massive Blow, Veteran, Robust (2)

**Gear:** Heavy warhammer 17 (2D10), Heavy crossbow 16 (2D8), Chainmail







## Village of the Tohn Tribe

As the party approaches the village, they see a lot of activity: people heading out into the water to fish for eels, children running around, and people smoking the eels that have been caught on rows of racks that have been set up just north of the village. The salty smell of the ocean is mixed with that of smoke and freshly caught eel. There are about fifteen yurts made of hide, and the tribe seems to include up to two hundred people. The village does not have any sentries out so when the party comes in sight of the villagers, they will hurry inside their yurts. A few of them will come out with bows, arrows nocked but not drawn, and ask the party what their business is in coming to their home. They will be suspicious but not hostile as long as no one is wearing Bastonian tabards or other insignia. If the party is trying to help the Myhl and succeeds on a **PERSUASION** roll (rolled with a boon if Bahûlkhazar is travelling with the party), the warriors will lead them to Lon and the other four Myhl from the ambush.

If the PCs are trying to bring Lon and the rest to justice, they will either have to first of all figure out a way to find out who they are and then abduct them somehow, or wait a few days until they leave the village and try to take them on in the wilderness. After they have found out who they are, they could also try to find Captain Vohra and go to the village along with her and her troops and arrest the five Myhl responsible for the ambush. That might be a very bloody affair though as Captain Vohra would need to bring a huge force from Southwall to the Tohn tribe, and demand that the criminals be surrendered to her. The village will refuse but if Lon hears this demand, she will turn herself in so as to try and save her friends and the Tohn tribe. Her companions will not though, out of fear of what the Bastionites will do to them. They will try and escape out the back of the tent they are in. The party can try to convince Captain Vohra to only arrest Lon, so as to avoid bloodshed, with a successful **PERSUASION** roll.

If the players choose to approach stealthily and succeed on a roll for

SNEAKING, then with a successful SPOT HIDDEN roll they will see Lon in the village and see her and her four companions run and hide if anyone approaches the village. If that roll is a dragon, they will also notice blood on their clothes or overhear them talking to someone in the village about the ambush. With a roll for INT a player character can figure out that the Myhl who were in the ambush have clothes that differ somewhat from the Myhl of the Tohn tribe, in that they wear more furs in their clothing style.

## Resolving the Quest

The party may have taken the side of either the Myhl or the Bastionites, and the scenario can therefore be resolved in different ways. If they have brought Lon and her friends to justice or killed them, they will get the promised

rewards from Captain Vohra who will also write a letter of recommendation if they wish, making it easier for them to take future assignments on behalf of the Crown. If the party aided the Bastionites by joining their patrol, they will not get paid but still get the letter of recommendation. If the party helped Lon escape in some way (or somehow convinced Captain Vohra that they've killed the bandits), the word will be passed around the Myhl tribes that they are friends and they will always find food and shelter on the peninsula.

## Bonus Encounters

If the game master feels that the scenario would benefit from a few more scenes, these may be used during the journey through the hills of the Myhl peninsula.





## Pirate Ship!

The party sees a ship in the bay to the south. It looks small, but faster than any ship they've ever seen before (unless any of them has ever seen a ship of the sea elves, but that is unlikely). If they go towards the shore to have a better look, they come close enough to see the feared pirate mallards with their green feathers and characteristic red mohawks, waving their raven beaks and shouting crude insults. They will not come ashore though, the scene is merely included as a foreshadowing menace for future game sessions.

## A Ferner! Catch It!

If you as the game master wish to include a ferner hunt, or if the players ask for it, have them roll for SPOT HIDDEN or AWARENESS with a bane. On a success they will see a ferner, the agile marten whose furs the Myhl pay their taxes with. If caught and properly skinned, the fur from this animal can be sold on the black market in Foamsvale (the main Bastionite town and port on Windheim) for 1 000 gold coins. But they are very hard to catch!

First, the party must know what it is they are seeing and succeed on a MYTHS & LEGENDS or a BEAST LORE roll (if Bahûlkhazar is with them this roll is not needed). If they succeed, each player may then make a roll for SNEAKING (rolled with a bane) to come close enough to fight it. If shot at from a distance, the ferner will flee and disappear immediately unless the party has it surrounded, so a player character would need to kill it with one single shot.

The best way to come close enough to kill one is to sneak up on it from at least three directions. The skinning of the animal requires a successful roll for HUNTING & FISHING (rolled with a bane for all non-Myhl) and this may only be attempted once and by one player.

## Ferner

The ferner are martens who live exclusively on the Myhl peninsula on Windheim. They are extremely shy and will run away at any sign of humanoid kin approaching. They have red fur that seems to almost radiate a light of its own with lines of white cutting through the red in different maze-like patterns. If cornered, they will defend their lives and attack ferociously with long teeth and razor-sharp claws.

<b>Ferocity</b> 3	<b>Size</b> Small
<b>Movement</b> 24	<b>Armour</b> 1 <b>HP</b> 16

### Attacks

#### D6 Attack

- 1 Bite attack!** The ferner bites the closest player character with its long teeth, inflicting 2D8 piercing damage.
- 2 Claw attack!** The ferner attacks the closest player character with its razor sharp claws, inflicting 2D8 slashing damage.
- 3 Swift strokes!** The ferner scurries through the legs of two random player characters within 20 metres and slashes at their legs, inflicting 2D6 damage on both.
- 4 Leaping attack!** The ferner makes a great leap and attacks a random player character 10 metres away, sinking its teeth into the neck of its prey, having found a weak spot in the armour. The attack does 2D6 piercing damage. Armour has no effect.
- 5 Piercing shriek!** The ferner lets out a shriek that pierces the mind and numbs the senses. All player characters within 30 metres suffer a fear attack.
- 6 It disappeared!** The ferner finds an opening to run away and successfully flees the combat through the high grass.

## Hurgor the Hill Giant

As the party is wandering the green hills, they hear a mighty roar in the distance. A successful roll for AWARENESS will allow them to see Hurgor, a four-metre-tall hill giant, carrying an enormous two-handed club. Hurgor is wearing very simple clothes of leather and furs. She speaks Bastonian, although haltingly, and using very few words. If the AWARENESS roll was successful, the party can choose to avoid her or choose the manner in which they approach her. If they failed, they will not see Hurgor until it is too late and she is upon them. She shouts "Dance little humies! Dance for Hurgor!" Now,

if the party choose to dance for her and succeed on a PERFORMANCE roll she will actually not attack, instead she will watch the dance with great delight and they can talk to her afterwards. She will then tell the party that she has indeed seen the Myhl heading south towards a village there. If the party does not dance, or hides from or avoids Hurgor, she will attack and fight to the death all the while shouting for them to dance for her.

<b>Ferocity 2</b>	<b>Size Large</b>
<b>Movement 12</b>	<b>Armour – HP 30</b>

## Attacks

<b>D6 Attack</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Bite 'em!</b> Hurgor opens her jaws and bites the nearest player character with her mighty teeth, inflicting 2D6 damage.
<b>2</b>	<b>Bash 'em!</b> Hurgor raises her mighty two-handed club over her head and brings it down upon a random victim within 2 metres, inflicting 3D8 damage.
<b>3</b>	<b>Kick 'em!</b> Hurgor flings her enormous foot forward kicking the nearest victim in the gut, inflicting 2D10 damage.
<b>4</b>	<b>Toss 'em!</b> Hurgor picks up two player characters within 3 metres by the belt and tosses them 3D4 metres in a random direction, inflicting an equal amount of bludgeoning damage. The victims land prone. Armour has no effect.
<b>5</b>	<b>Swift Blows!</b> Hurgor flails her long arms around wildly, hitting all characters within three metres. The attack inflicts 2D8 bludgeoning damage on each victim.
<b>6</b>	<b>Headbanging!</b> Hurgor grabs the two nearest player characters by the hair and uses their hair to bang their heads together. Both suffer 3D6 bludgeoning damage.





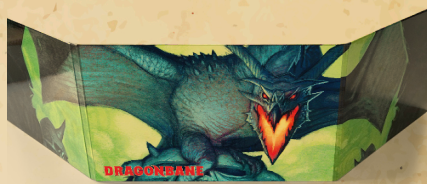
# News from Free League

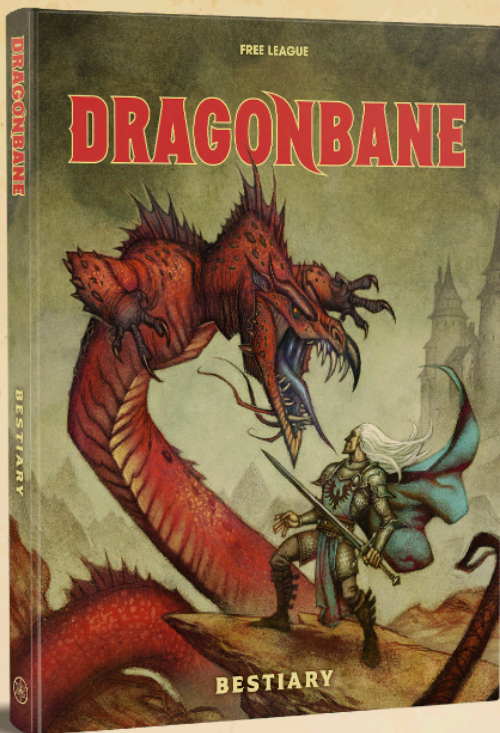
Dragonbane was released to the public on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2023, a little under a year after a hugely successful Kickstarter campaign ensured that Sweden's greatest roleplaying game would be returning in a new edition, and would for the first time be made available in English as well as Swedish.





At the same time as the core box, Free League also released extra dice sets and a GM screen (which fits nicely inside the core box).





Fans were soon clamouring for more, and less than two months after the game's official release Free League announced the Dragonbane Bestiary,

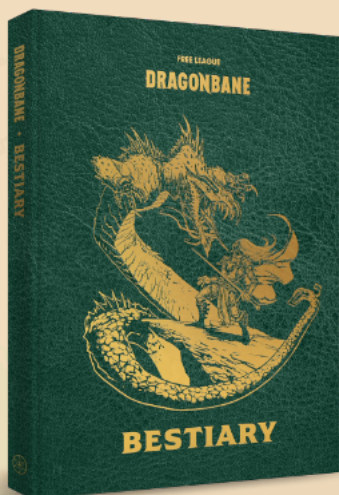
along with a set of 64 cardboard standees to complement those included in the core box set.





At the same time, a hardback version of the Dragonbane Rulebook was announced in response to demand from fans who wanted something a bit sturdier than the softcover rulebook from the core box set to flip through at the table. The content will be mostly identical to the Dragonbane Rules included in the core box set, the main differences being the inclusion of tables to replace the cards from the box set and the addition of an exclusive introductory adventure, *The Castle of the Robber Knight*.

A limited run of collector's editions of the Bestiary and Rulebook in faux leather with gold foil print will also be available.



At the time of release of this issue of Dragonzine, many gamers who pre-ordered the Bestiary and Rulebook had already received their books, whilst others were still waiting more or less patiently. The official release for both products will be on 27<sup>th</sup> February.

Attendees at Spelkongress 23 in Stockholm in October were given a sneak preview of an upcoming release for Dragonbane – an updated version

of a classic *Drakar och Demoner* campaign from the 1980s: *Arans väg*, or in English *Path of Glory*. This product has not yet been officially announced by Free League, but readers who are curious to get a glimpse of the cover can check out the post on [Johan Egerkrans' Facebook page](#) from 7<sup>th</sup> October. We look forward to bringing you more updates about *Path of Glory* in the next issue of Dragonzine!

# Third-Party News

## Recommendations and reviews of Dragonbane products from independent publishers

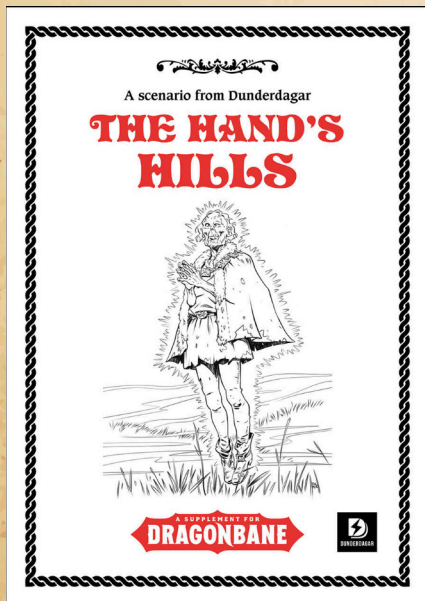
Dragonbane was launched at a time when the ability of third-party publishers to produce and sell content for big-name RPGs was a topic of much discussion and controversy in the RPG industry and community. Free League decided to create a Third Party License that gives independent publishers greater freedom to publish content for Dragonbane than for any other Free League game. It has been less than a year since the license was released, but already there has been an enthusiastic response from publishers both in Sweden and internationally with over 50 supplements available on itch.io and

DriveThruRPG, and several major successful Kickstarter campaigns due to be fulfilled in 2024.

Given the open nature of the Dragonbane Third Party License, the quality of the products available will naturally vary quite a bit. In this section we bring you a guide to the products we recommend, including our top picks for free/pay what you want products and paid products. We also have a full-length review of *Legends of Cyr-Nul: The Dire Pack*, which was the first major release under the third-party license and remains one of the most substantial supplements to come out so far.

## Paid Supplements

### The Hand's Hills *Dragonzine Top Pick*



The adventure has an interesting premise, with an open opportunity to hook the PCs into the story. The location is intriguing, with plenty to explore for such a short supplement. The adventure is concise and clear, and is easy to insert into a longer campaign. It would also work very well as a one-shot to introduce new players to the game. The layout is clean, minimalist, yet visually striking. The map provided is clear and no-fuss, and the only drawback to this supplement is the size of the map – a map this good should be at least a full page. This is a great-value scenario which is a must-have for any Dragonbane player.

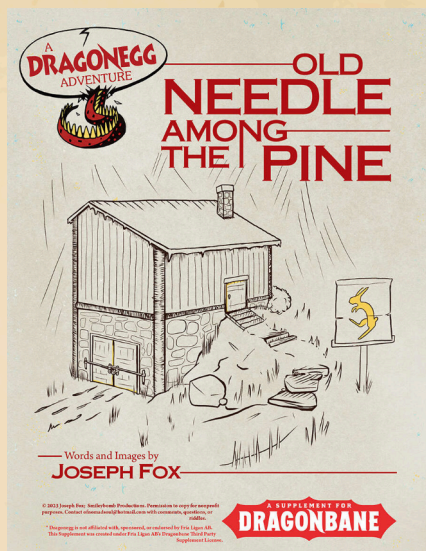
**Credits:** Jörgen Karlsson (writing and design), Per Folmer (images), Śraddhāpa Shan Welsh (translation)

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com)

**Price:** USD 1.00



## Old Needle Among the Pine: A Dragonegg Adventure



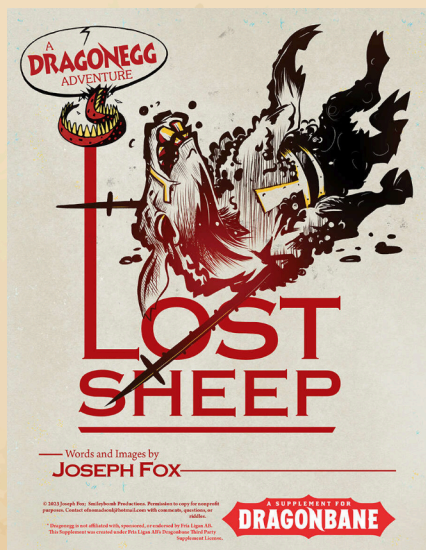
A well-organized adventure with colourful layout and attractive line art. As the GM, I enjoyed acting out Jolf the Innkeeper with his wooden spoon (that is to be treated "as [a] heavy wooden club"). The author leaves plenty of wiggle room to really expand the premise and build out the story for even more adventuring. (My players and I still need to finish this one!) The monster's backstory is moving, with monster attacks that are fun to play out. Two full-page maps are included. The only drawback is that the maps lack gridlines for those who prefer or need these visual markers for measuring distances during combat.

**Credits:** Joseph Fox, Smileybomb Productions

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com)

**Price:** USD 4.99 (currently 3.99)

## Lost Sheep: A Dragonegg Adventure



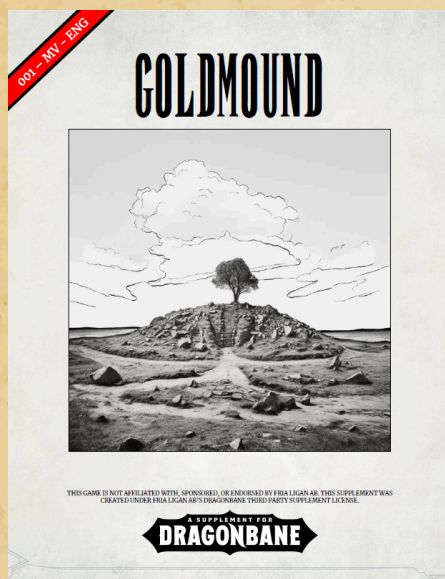
This is an enjoyable read, especially the mirthful comments about the NPCs at the beginning. The whimsical names for both characters and locations evoke a Tolkien-esque feel that makes me want to be in the adventure. The if/then structure along with the Optional Events table provides direction for GMs. This has the potential to provide some fun dungeon-crawling, with a solid hook to draw the PCs in and give them a rewarding adventure. The only drawbacks are that the cover image was quite difficult for me to read. Also, I would like to see a fully expanded map to further bring life to this great supplement.

**Credits:** Joseph Fox, Smileybomb Productions

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com)

**Price:** USD 4.99

## Goldmound



Contains AI images

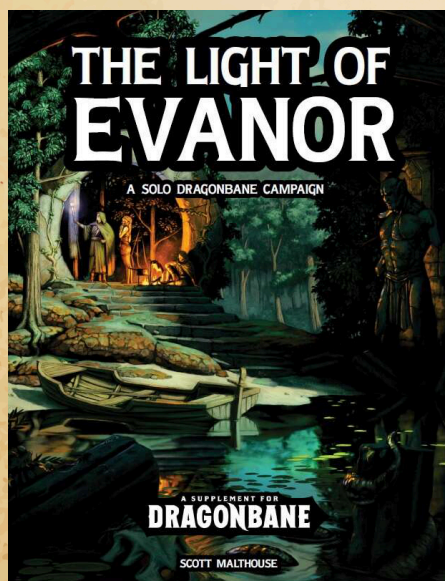
The premise of this adventure makes it easy to dive right in, and it can be inserted into any longer campaign without any complications. The lore is incredibly descriptive and a great read (Vinjia, the Ancient Ghost Witch, has a particularly fascinating background). The maps are printer friendly and the room descriptions are clear and user friendly. There are 20 locations to explore with loads of items and treasure to discover and enough monsters and traps to satisfy even the most experienced dungeon-crawling explorer. There are some great items in the Gear section (our favourite is the Life Coin). The only drawback is that the text is in need of a little more editing in places.

**Credits:** Jonathon Myhre (writing & design), Matthew McCloud (proofreading), The Midgard Press

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/1000000)

**Price:** USD 4.99

## The Light of Evanor: A Solo Dragonbane Campaign



One of the only solo products for Dragonbane on the market right now this adventure has a straightforward premise which will help players to get set up and start adventuring quickly. It is enjoyable to play, with a good balance between pre-described locations and “unknown” locations which require the player to use the tables from *Alone in Deepfall Breach* to randomly generate the environment. As one would expect in Dragonbane, there's a real threat of lethality, so the solo player should choose their path wisely. The only drawback is that there is only one picture in the interior, and a few more images would help the player to visualize the locations described.

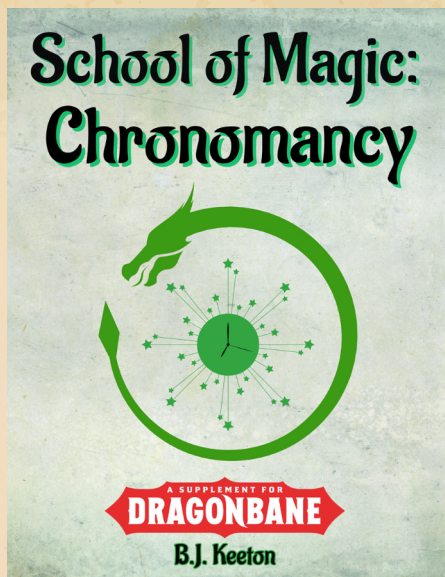
**Credits:** Scott Malthouse (writing & design), Dean Spencer (cover art), Petra Joura (interior art)

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/1000000)

**Price:** USD 1.00



## Dragonbane Magic: School of Chronomancy



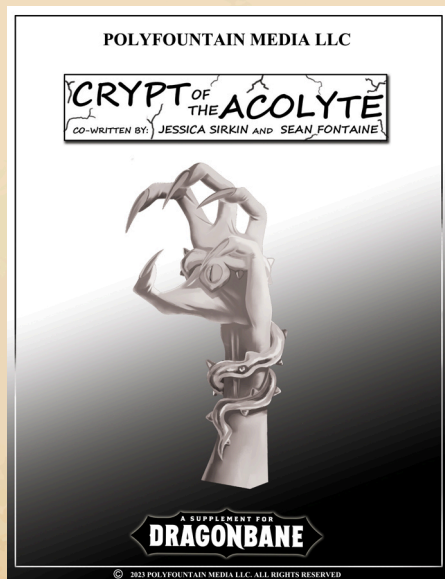
This supplement provides a new magic school focused on controlling and manipulating time. The approach taken is creative and refreshing, with some well thought-out spells that really bring something new to the game. As the author himself points out, there aren't many chronomancy spells that actually inflict damage, and chronomancy is designed to play more of a supporting role in combat. This would make it an ideal secondary magic school to take for a mage already proficient in one of the core schools given in the Dragonbane Rules. It goes without saying that this supplement will be particularly useful for GMs who want to include elements of time travel in their campaign.

**Credits:** B.J. Keeton

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com)

**Price:** USD 3.99 (currently 2.99)

## Crypt of the Acolyte



The Crypt of the Acolyte is a well-designed dungeon that provides a good balance of exploration, traps, and enemies – including a unique new monster and two magic items. The only reason not to get this supplement is if you are planning to buy *Legends of Cyr-Nul: The Dire Pack* (see our full review on p.87) as all of the content in the Crypt of the Acolyte is excerpted from this larger adventure. If you're not interested in a longer adventure and are just looking for a one-shot dungeon crawl in classic fantasy RPG style though, The Crypt of the Acolyte is a great buy.

**Credits:** Sean Fontaine (writing, art), Jessica Sirkin (writing), Coryolis (art), Polyfountain Media

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com)

**Price:** USD 5.99

# Free/Pay What You Want Supplements

## Dolgrim's Forge Dragonzine Top Pick

Dolgrim's Forge is an impeccably designed one-page dungeon filled with dangerous enemies, deadly traps, hidden passages, and plenty of reward for any characters who survive it. The author makes excellent use of limited space, packing a lot of information onto a single page, but without making the design feel cramped. The writing is terse and clear, telling the GM just what they need to know with no extraneous details, but at the same time very effectively evoking the atmosphere of the adventure site. The centerpiece of the supplement is the beautiful isometric map, which also comes in a player's version without the room descriptions. If you're looking for a deadly and exciting one-shot adventure for your players, you'd be hard-pressed to find anything better.

**Dolgrim's Forge**

**Legend**

- 1** **Grady Remains**: The remains of the Grady family, including a small child, are found in the ruins of the Grady family home. The child is a young girl, and the remains are scattered about the ruins.
- 2** **Grady Place**: The remains of the Grady family, including a small child, are found in the ruins of the Grady family home. The child is a young girl, and the remains are scattered about the ruins.
- 3** **The Cold Forge**: A large, cold forge, built of stone and metal, with a large fire burning in the hearth. The forge is used to smelt metal, and the fire is kept burning at all times.
- 4** **Empty Kitchen**: The kitchen is empty, with a large table and chairs. The table is covered with a white cloth, and the chairs are made of wood.
- 5** **Forgotten Store**: A small store, filled with various goods, including food, clothing, and tools. The store is run by a man named Grady, who is now dead.
- 6** **Hidden Way**: A hidden way, leading to a secret room. The way is hidden behind a door, and the room is filled with treasure.
- 7** **Item of Dolgrim**: A small, ornate object, made of metal and stone. It is a relic of the Dolgrim family, and it is said to have great power.

**Blackwind**

Blackwind is a small town, built on a hill. It is a town of about 100 people, and it is known for its blacksmiths. The town is surrounded by a wall, and there is a large gate. The town is built on a hill, and the view from the hill is excellent.

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Credits: Logen Nein

Available: [itch.io](http://itch.io)

Price: Pay What You Want

## The Hermit's Cabin

The Hermit's Cabin maintains the high standard set by Dolgrim's Forge, although this adventure site presents more of an aura of mystery and the occult than the more classic dungeon-delving offered by Dolgrim's Forge. It provides no less of a deadly challenge however, and under-prepared or incautious adventurers are unlikely to escape from the cabin with their lives. This supplement also offers a creative new monster, the Barghest, as well as a selection of creatures taken from the Dragonbane Rules. Again, the jewel of this supplement is the beautifully designed map which players will find a delight to explore. One particularly nice touch is the fact that players will encounter a quite different set of challenges depending on whether they explore the cabin during the day or at night. This is another outstanding Dragonbane product, and we look forward to more from Logen Nein in future.

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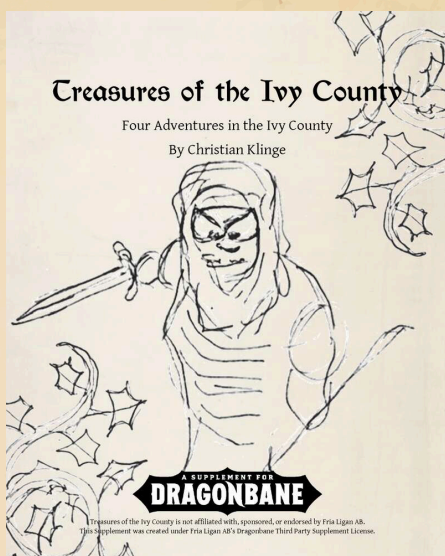
Credits: Logen Nein

Available: [itch.io](http://itch.io)

Price: Pay What You Want



## Treasures of the Ivy County: A Mini Campaign for Dragonbane/Drakar och Demoner



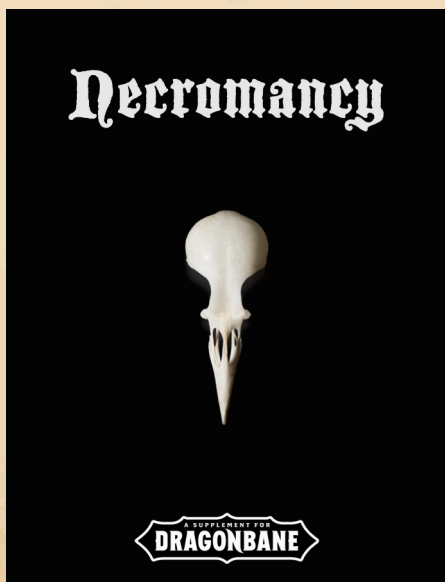
Treasures of the Ivy Country is a well-designed campaign that will provide enough material for at least 4–5 gaming sessions. The campaign is centred around the village of Bindvid, where adventurers can hear rumours that will lead them to four adventure sites in the surrounding area. The four adventure sites, which can be explored in any order, each have a distinct atmosphere and will present different challenges to the PCs. Each site includes at least one grid map. Also included is a table for generating random encounters on the roads around Bindvid and several new monsters, amongst which we particularly liked the Strangling Ivy.

**Credits:** Christian Klinge (text and design, maps and drawings), Eskil Klinge (additional design)

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com)

**Price:** Pay What You Want

## Necromancy



This supplement was the first product released by Dragon Cult Games and the author is Dragonzine's editor, so we're in no position to give it an unbiased review! As it's free though, you've nothing to lose by downloading it and checking it out. The supplement comes in at just over 80 pages, and as well as the Necromancy magic school with 6 magic tricks and 16 other spells, it includes a bestiary with 11 undead monsters and 4 NPCs, 11 magic items, rules for playing undead PCs, and 7 pages of random tables for generating adventures and encounters with an undead theme. For a preview of the contents, take a look at the Necromancer on p.30 of this issue of Dragonzine.

**Credits:** Śraddhāpa Shan Welsh

**Available:** [DriveThruRPG.com](https://www.drivethrurpg.com)

**Price:** Free

# Kickstarter News

Last year saw a flurry of successful Kickstarter campaigns for third party Dragonbane products both large and small. Some have already been fulfilled, such as *Legends of Cyr-Nul: The Dire Pack*, *Goldmound* and *The Hand's Hills* (which was originally part of a stretch goal for the Swedish-language supplement *Det Krypande Mörkret*), all of which are reviewed in this issue of Dragonzine. Those who have been actively backing Kickstarters for Dragonbane products have a lot more to look forward to in 2024 though. Here we give an overview of upcoming English-language products.

## Windheim & Horn of the Dawn

Nordic Skalds is a new Swedish RPG company founded by writer, podcaster, and composer Andreas Lundström, artist Robert Alm, and designer and fantasy cartographer Christian Lindqvist.



In August 2023 they raised over 500,000 SEK in their Kickstarter campaign for the setting book *Windheim Companion* and part 1 of the campaign *The Horn of the Dawn*. Backers should receive their rewards this summer, and the creators have indicated that they hope to open their pledge manager for late pledges in late February for anyone who missed out.

The island of Windheim is a colony of the Bastionian Empire. The Bastionites rule most of the island, with the exception of two dwarven realms, and they dominate the indigenous Myhl. The *Windheim Companion* will provide a detailed overview of the island, its cultures, kin, history, and religion, providing a rich setting for GMs to use in their games.

*The Horn of the Dawn – Part One* will be the first part of a planned trilogy of campaign books that will allow adventurers to explore Windheim and provide a varied selection of challenges for players – from dungeon crawls and epic battles to political intrigue and murder mysteries.

Both books will be hardback and together will include 6 new kins, 6 new professions, 13 new monsters, and 8 new heroic abilities. The books will be accompanied by a Foundry VTT module, and backers will also receive a soundtrack composed by Andreas Lundström, who also composed the official Dragonbane soundtrack.

Those who were tempted to back at a higher level will also receive 5 physical maps and a beautifully designed set of dice complete with dragon and demon icons on the D20s.

We will of course include a full review of the *Windheim Companion* and *The Horn of the Dawn – Part One* when they are released, but all indications are that this is going to be a top-quality product from a team with decades of collective experience in the RPG industry. If you want a taste of Windheim you can check out the one-shot adventure *Revenge for the Fallen* on p.62 that the team at Nordic Skalds have generously allowed us to share with you.

For more information check out the Windheim [Kickstarter](#) page and [Nordic Skalds' Facebook page](#).



## Darkness and Dust



*Darkness and Dust* is the provisional English title for the project *Den brända jorden* from Daniel Lehto, another veteran of the Swedish RPG industry. *Den brända jorden* was funded in a successful Kickstarter campaign in May 2023 and in addition to the main setting and campaign book the Swedish-language box set will include a bestiary *Vildmarkens varelser* ('Creatures of the Wildlands'). Some of the stretch goals unlocked during the campaign include 2 double-sided map posters, 2 new magic schools, paper miniatures, a set of print-and-play NPC cards, and a bonus adventure *Bordonius Öde* ('The Fate of Bordonius').

The adventure takes place in the well-developed setting of Nordmark and offers players and GMs a classic sandbox-style of campaign. The book is packed full of interesting and well-mapped locations to explore as well as both friendly and less friendly NPCs to interact with.

The Kickstarter was only for the Swedish version of the product, but the creator has said that he plans to

release an English translation as a digital-only product on DriveThruRPG by the end of this year. We look forward to the English version of this excellent supplement and will be sure to bring you a full review when it's available. Swedish-speakers can check out the campaign's [Kickstarter page](#) for more information and pre-order the box set from the Lehto Spel och Media [website](#).

## Alea Masona

Daniel Lehto's second successful Kickstarter of 2023 was for *Alea Masona*, a fantasy world designed particularly for families and children which will be available in both Swedish and English. Lehto developed this setting for his own game *Sagospelet Aventyr* which was itself partly inspired by earlier editions of *Drakar och Demoner*!



Backers will receive three books – a setting book, campaign book, and bestiary – and the campaign is on track to get rewards to backers in August of this year.

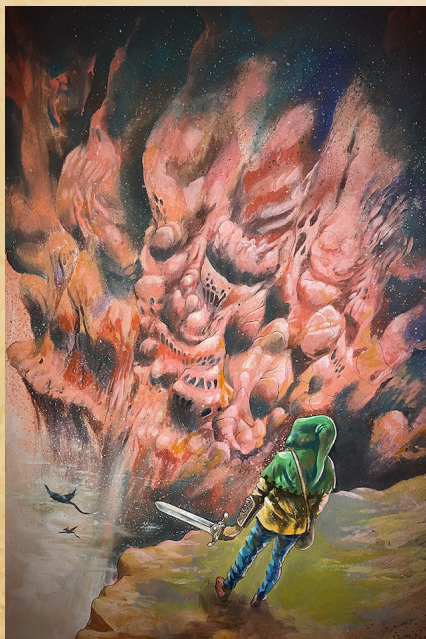
This looks like a great product for Dragonbane fans looking to for a way to introduce kids to the RPG hobby. We're looking forward to getting hold of the books and reviewing them for you when they come out later this year. In the meantime you can check out the [Kickstarter page](#) for more information. If you missed out on the Kickstarter, Lehto informs Dragonzine that he hopes to open late pledges through Backerkit soon.



## The Belly of Aramkass

The Belly of Aramkass is a 96+ page setting and adventure module from artist Pontus Björlin and game designer David Pagmar that was funded in a successful [Kickstarter campaign](#) in December 2023. The module looks to be bringing a slightly darker and weirder flavour of fantasy to Dragonbane, and we can't wait to see the results when the project fulfils this summer.

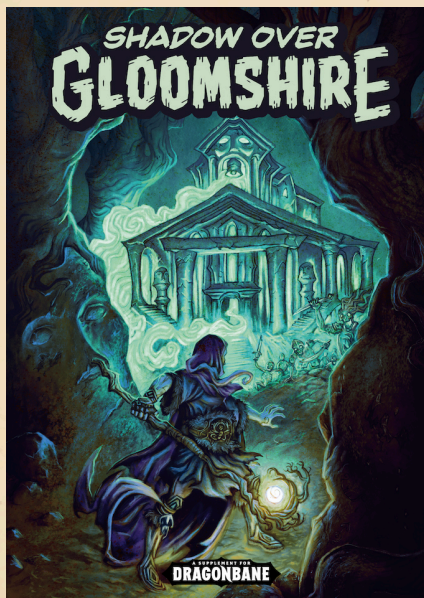
The creators have given some tantalising hints about the setting, promising a gigantic ruined city and an inferno hidden in the depths of the mountains. Undoubtedly the most striking element of the project that has been revealed so far though is Pontus Björlin's art, which includes both paintings realised in strong, almost psychedelic, colour and bold black and white drawings in a style reminiscent of the art from classic *Drakar och Demoner* modules from the 1980s.



To see more previews of the art from The Belly of Aramkass and Björlin's other projects, check him out as [/fantastiskfiktio](#)n on Instagram.

## Shadow over Gloomshire

The [Kickstarter campaign](#) for this module went live shortly before Issue 1 of Dragonzine was published, so if you're reading this before 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 you still have the chance to back it! The creator, Robin Fjårem, describes himself as a huge fan of dark fantasy and gothic horror, a theme which also shows in the cover art by Anton Vitus (whose art appears in the Adventures book from the Dragonbane core set) and the logo from Dragonbane's layout designer Dan Algstrand. In fact, we backed this Kickstarter on the strength of the cover alone, before we even got as far as reading the description of the contents!



Shadow over Gloomshire will be a 32-page adventure in zine format but it looks like it will be packed with content, promising 10+ new monsters, 15+ NPCs and 20+ random tables. It will also have two new professions, including a paladin, and we're particularly looking forward to see how Fjårem adapts this fantasy RPG classic for Dragonbane. The zine looks like it will have a clean, modern design whilst also staying very much within the artistic and visual tradition of the game – an approach we love.



# Legends of Cyr-Nul: The Dire Pack

Review by K.J. Montgomery



*Legends of Cyr-Nul: The Dire Pack* was funded by a successful Kickstarter campaign in July 2023, and was the first major third-party release for *Dragonbane*, coming out several months before the game's official release. The supplement is available in both [English](#) and [Swedish](#) versions on Drive Thru RPG as a digital or print-on-demand product.

## The Basics

A mysterious group of bandits have been attacking and plundering outlying villages and trade routes, causing chaos and fear. The key to unlocking who is behind these attacks is a halfling orphan child. The only clear detail she provided before ceasing to speak was that an enormous wolfskin referred to as “The Hunger” appears to be leading these attacks.

With a bounty placed on the wolfkin and his goblin cohorts, the clock is ticking, as many adventurers from all around accept the challenge to hunt down these perpetrators. Will anyone be successful in answering this call to justice, satisfying the terms of the bounty, and collecting its handsome reward?

The adventure is set in River Fork, a small town on the southwest coast of the continent of Cyr-Nul, in the world of Cyr – a world of vast oceans, farmland, foothills, dense forests, and more.

The striking artwork on the front cover of *The Legends of Cyr-Nul* should instantly catch your eye. This 68-page adventure module is the first in a series of supplements the creator Sean Fontaine plans to publish. It will be interesting to see how the adventures are interconnected and how the overall plot unfolds. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. For now, let's look at the first module, giving you the information you need to decide whether it should be your next purchase.

According to [Polyfountain's website](#), the Kickstarter for the project finished on July 31, 2023, reaching 345% of its initial funding goal with the support of 144 backers. If the successful crowdfunding campaign isn't enough to convince you, stay with me for a spoiler-free deep-dive into the details.

## The Upsides

The production value of *The Legends of Cyr-Nul* is solid. To start, the plot is pretty straightforward, but don't let that deceive you. The writers provide a wealth of opportunities for everyone at the table to enjoy playing through this adventure. The twists, rumours and gossip, side gigs, and numerous locations will keep the party engaged and interested. With a lot of investigation, environmental survival, and ample potential for intense moments of combat, this resource deserves a place on every Dragonbane fan's bookshelf.

The amount of time it will take a GM



Quenta Greenlake, bartender at the Stone's Throw Tavern in River Fork.

to lead a group of 3–5 players through this first adventure module will vary, as there are a lot of optional scenes and locations that can be explored.

There are six basic pregens available, but there shouldn't be any problem with players creating characters of their own for the adventure or bringing in existing characters. This scenario could easily be incorporated into a longer-running campaign with no issues.

I appreciate that the writers mention safety tools and specific elements of the content that GMs might want to discuss with their players before diving into the adventure. *The Dire Pack* doesn't include any content that would be considered particularly unusual or controversial in the context of a standard fantasy-based RPG, but holding a session zero is always a great idea, especially as a way to welcome new players into the RPG world (not everyone has been playing for as long as some of us have). Dragonbane is one of the best introductions to RPGs for those who have never tasted the glory of rolling a dragon or the fallout from rolling a demon.

Like any good module, the writers communicate up-front that players shouldn't read the adventure. They even take it a step further by informing



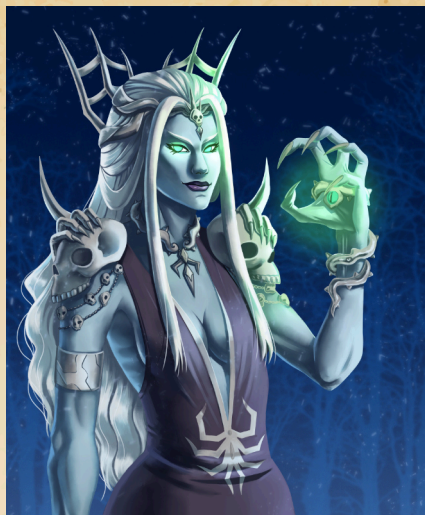
the GMs that text marked in italics contains story elements and plot spoilers. The last thing a GM wants is to give away the juicy plot points at the wrong moment.

The adventure consists of three main acts. GMs can rearrange these and the optional portions of each act as they prefer. The writers created these different elements in a way that gives a lot of flexibility to the GM, and this is something I personally appreciate when I'm considering purchasing a module. Players will see their characters encounter a fairly standard set of monsters throughout, and the writers introduce us to three new creatures in this module. The motivations behind the main BBEGs are not overly complex, and I think this allows for the adventure to be enjoyed by both beginner and more advanced players.

Another new element that the writers offer us is two schools of magic (chaoticism and order) and fourteen spells. I found Spying Eye, which allows a mage to see through the eyes of another character, to be particularly interesting and creative. The three new artefacts and enchanted weapons each have a unique history behind them; one has some especially fascinating dragon-related lore behind it that I hope we might see expanded on in future adventures in the series.

GMs can use Act I to introduce well over a dozen colourful NPCs (some major, some minor) while player characters begin the quest to win the bounty. There's plenty of intrigue and investigation in this section, along with the base locations that should be utilized to their fullest potential before moving on to the next two acts.

Going into the final part of Act II and all of Act III, the writers provide a great number of variations and suggestions for how GMs can resolve and wrap up the adventure. There is a lot of potential for spoilers here, so I won't go into too much detail. What I will note is that GMs could see different groups of PCs playing out different outcomes every time they run the adventure. The epilogue was one



A terrible vision the players might encounter in the course of the adventure

of the most exciting parts of this module. I am eager to see how the story arc will expand in the planned future releases.

## The Downsides

A few minor pain points are notable in the layout. For the PDF version, having hyperlinks to quickly access the different sections – especially ones the writers refer to frequently – would allow GMs to navigate their way through the digital version a bit faster. For both the print and PDF versions, a table of contents would've been a nice addition. Regarding accessibility, the font for some of the roll tables and stat blocks could be improved upon. The module could benefit from some refinement in editing and layout, but these are mainly cosmetic issues and will not hinder readers from understanding and enjoying the text.

**K.J. Montgomery** is a writer, creator, game reviewer, long-time GM, and player who loves supporting and encouraging others in the RPG community. She enjoys playing bass guitar and eating dark chocolate, but not at the same time.

# Credits

**Śraddhāpa Shan Welsh:** editing, layout & design

## Writing Credits

**Chekmx:** Stand and Deliver! – Blackpowder Weapons for Dragonbane

**Rasmus Hammerlund:** Turtlekin

**Andreas Lundström:** Revenge for the Fallen

**Simon Aghed Luterkort:** Taking Sides

**Julian "Archie" M:** Priest

**Jesse McGibs:** A Guide to Magical Weapons (pp.45–49)

**K.J. Montgomery:** Goatman adventure seed, Bugbear text & adventure seed, Gnoll text & adventure seed, Review of *Legends of Cyr-Nul: The Dire Pack*, Third Party News, additional proofreading

**Jonathan Myhre:** Beyond the Rules: Mr. Dragonbane's Tips and Tricks

**Simon Newman:** Goatman stats, monster attacks & introductory text, Bugbear stats, Gnoll stats, A Guide to Magical Weapons (p.44)

**Nicholas Nyberg:** Arcane Mistake

**Śraddhāpa Shan Welsh:** Interview with Tomas Härenstam, Turtlekin adventure seed, Bearkin, Night Elves (inspired by the descriptions of mörkeralver in 'Alver' by Johan Sjöberg and Michael Stenmark, Target Games 1993), Necromancer, Monk, Dragonrider, News from Free League, Third Party News, Kickstarter News

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