

STORES GAMES BOOKS MAGAZINES ONLINEPLAY EVENTS COMPANY INTERNATIONAL



Legends OF THE Lance™

The *Legends of the Lance* newsletter for the **Dragonlance®** Saga includes interviews with authors and designers of the setting, information about upcoming **Dragonlance** releases, and other fascinating items exclusive to this publication.



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An Open Letter from Steve Miller

by Steve Miller

 When I write a **Dragonlance**® supplement--or any roleplaying game supplement--my primary purpose is to give Narrators tools to create their own adventures. From my point of view, **Dragonlance** game product exists not only to expand the information about the world, but also to give fuel to the creative fires of **Saga**® Narrators and **AD&D**® Dungeon Masters. To me, the **Dragonlance** setting truly lives in the game products, where the unique world of Krynn can fully show its potential in the hands of roleplayers. To me, the best part of having been involved with the **Dragonlance** line for the last four years has been to help bring those thousands of different visions of what Krynn is to life.

As of this writing, I think [Heroes of Defiance](#) (one of the earliest **Dragonlance: Fifth Age**® supplements) and the newly released *Dragonlance Classics 15th Anniversary Edition* (written with Stan! and based on the adventure series by the original **Dragonlance** design team) are my most successful attempts at writing game supplements that expand the details of the world while providing lots of story fodder. *Heroes of Defiance* was a set that, among other things, featured wide-ranging campaign guidelines for playing roguish characters within the **Dragonlance** setting. This boxed set included a description of Northern Ergoth that turned that island into what amounts to a self-contained gaming area. The sourcebook featured never-before-revealed historical, geographical, and cultural information about the area that is home to one of the oldest human civilizations in Ansalon. The cultural and historical information spans the two main campaign areas, and it provides adventure nuggets and story seeds that are intended to foster ideas for campaigns set during the Reign of Istar, the Kinslayer Wars, or even during the time of Ackal Ergot himself. Among my favorite story hooks from *Heroes of Defiance* is the following:

- A pair of scholars from Gwynned told friends that they had made a startling discovery about Vinas Solamnus by comparing documents in the Library of the Ages to documents found in the archives of the Imperial University. They promised that it would cause the world to see both Solamnus and the Knighthood he founded in a completely new light. Before they could reveal any details, however, they were murdered. What's more, their research has been stolen. Who killed these scholars? What had they discovered that was of such magnitude that it cost them their lives? Were they about to destroy the reputation of one of Ansalon's most revered historical figures, or would their information have boosted his legend even further?

In [Dragonlance Classics 15th Anniversary Edition](#), Stan! and I endeavored to create a game book that would let players who never played the original module series find the tools they need to experience a personalized version of the War of the Lance. We also wanted to allow those who own the original versions find plenty of material to augment these products while providing inspiration to revisit the exciting days of the War of the Lance. Based on the storyline of the Chronicles trilogy, the game book describes all the important locations from the original **Dragonlance** series while providing literally hundreds of adventure seeds, many of which can be expanded by enterprising Dungeon Masters and Narrators into full-blown adventures in their own right. Even after the epic

tale of the War of the Lance has been told, this edition will still have lots of gaming potential within it. Among my favorite new adventure opportunities in this book is the following:

- In the wilds of Silvamori, the heroes may encounter Dalamar as he walks a path forbidden by his place in the rigid hierarchy of Silvanesti society. Enterprising Narrators can turn this chance encounter into the foundation for a friendship with (or, perhaps, become associates of) a key figure in the **Dragonlance** Saga.

I know what I had in mind when I set up the situations found in the game products I write. Likewise, I know how a given adventure seed or encounter played in my personal **Dragonlance** campaigns and other playtest groups works into the world as a whole. What I don't know is how the scenarios played out in your campaign or what answers you concocted to the questions I asked in *Heroes of Defiance* and *Dragonlance Classics 15th Anniversary Edition*. I would like to find this out, however, and you can write me with your campaign stories in care of this newsletter.

The **Dragonlance** setting is here for all of us to make our own. I hope you are letting your imagination roam free, and I will count myself fortunate if I can be of some small help in helping you along the creative path.



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Legends OF THE Lance™

Worldbuilder: An Interview with Jeff Grubb

by Patrick McGilligan

Although Jeff Grubb is one of TSR's grand old men, he is only 42. Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he has worked for the company in its various incarnations, with occasional interruption, since 1982. He is married to Kate Novak, his co-author on several TSR novels. He started out in professional life as a lowly civil engineer, and in fact boasts a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, "which surprises some people," Grubb says. "That's my advice to young writers--get training in something that will keep you alive while you're working on your craft."



McGilligan:

When and why did you first join TSR, and can you describe the operation in that time?

Grubb:

I joined TSR as a game designer in the summer of 1982. I had been a civil engineer designing air pollution equipment at a time when the EPA was being de-fanged (thank you, Reagan Administration). At the time, TSR was in mid-move to its new quarters, and the design department was still in the top floor of the old Hotel Claire in downtown Lake Geneva. The building has now been completely reconditioned into a multi-level set of shops, with a chocolate store where the old Dungeon Hobby Shop was, but at the time it was pretty close to condemnation. Tilted floors. Water damage. Merle Rasmussen, the creator of [the] **Top Secret®** [game], worked in Al Hammack's bathroom (Al was the boss at the time). I had a big office with a man-sized hole in the ceiling (I've heard three different stories about WHO fell through the hole). We could not hold a full department meeting in any room for fear the building would fall over. I didn't meet designer Tom Wham for the first two months--he worked at night and kept his door padlocked. It was at the Old Hotel that I first met Tracy Hickman. He was one of the few to have a computer terminal. We didn't have personal computers on the desks, but rather a handful of terminals hooked up to a mainframe at the new building, using a word-processing program that had been literally designed by accountants. For the first two projects I worked on, I had a typewriter, and then had to re-copy everything into the mainframe. Anyway, Tracy, with all of six months more experience with TSR than I had, slung his arm around his terminal, and in his best drill-sergeant imitation drawled, "This is the HP-2000 computer system--it will be your FRIEND." Within six months, we were in the new building in tiny cubes with windows looking into other cubes. Tracy and I were neighbors, separated by a window, so whenever one of us had something published, we put it on the window, facing the other guy. No competition, mind you. Since then, TSR has grown, shrank, and moved. And I left the company for a few years before coming back to help design introductory roleplaying games for TSR, now a unit of Wizards of the Coast. Now I work a day job in a small cube WITHOUT a window. Hey, wait a minute . . .

McGilligan:

What was your personal background and your background as a gamer?

Grubb:

As mentioned earlier, I went to school as a civil engineer [at] Purdue University. I had gotten into war games in high school--stuff from Avalon Hill and SPI. Purdue had a wargaming club, and at one get-together I encountered [the] **Dungeons & Dragons**® [game]. It was a case where there were a group of kids at a table (without a board) all talking at once. I walked up to see what was going on, and one of them turned to me, shoved three six-siders into my hand, and said, "Roll these--we need a cleric!" The rest was history. I ran a **D&D**® campaign through college and brought it back to infect the rest of my friends in Pittsburgh that summer (this would be about '76 or so). The name of my campaign was Toril, which we eventually gave to Ed Greenwood's **Forgotten Realms**® setting. It was during this time that what would become the gods of Krynn first took shape. The *Perechon* also first showed up in those days, run by my female half-elf Macques (she had a half-orc business partner named Phrytz). One of our group had parents with a summer house in Lake Geneva, so we would gather there before **GenCon**® [Gaming Fair] (which was right before school began) for a week of gaming. From attending **GenCon** [Gaming Fair], we got into helping Bob Blake run the **AD&D**® Open, one of the big tournaments at the time. After a friend mouthed off that we could write a better tournament than the one we had just moderated, Bob took us up on the bet. I ended up writing a lot of it (thanks to the fact there were cutbacks in engineering at the time), and on the strength of those adventures was hired full-time at TSR. I served with TSR for twelve years through all manner of worlds and adventures. I took a three-year "sabbatical" to try my hand at other games (including working with Margaret Weis and Don Perrin on the *Wing Commander* and *Star Trek* card games for *Mag Force 7*), but now I'm back at TSR. In gaming, I'm an omnivore--I read just about everything and note new mechanics, presentations, formats, and concepts all the time. I have less time to play than I want, but my current faves are **Magic: The Gathering**® Collectible Card Game, *Call of Cthulhu*, and as a guilty pleasure, FASA's *Crimson Skies*.

McGilligan:

What was your first involvement in the **Dragonlance** setting, and is there any way you can delineate your contribution over the years--without stepping on other peoples' egos?

Grubb:

I'm always a little hesitant to "claim credit" for parts of [the] **Dragonlance** [setting], not because of egos, but because so much of it was synergistic in nature. Raistlin is a good example. Tracy had a wizard on the team as a matter of course. Harold Johnson pushed hard for the wizard and fighter being brothers, and I was the one who suggested Raistlin's trademark gold skin and hourglass eyes. Terry Phillips brought the sibilant voice, both in playtest and later in the **Dragonlance** plays. And Margaret brought the character fully to life in the books. So, who created Raistlin? All of us, in my opinion, with more than a healthy nod to Margaret.

Having said this, I will confess to adding a few bits and pieces (both claiming the credit and accepting the blame). The gods of Krynn were originally the gods of my old campaign, which just HAPPENED to have the platinum and chromatic dragons in the pantheon. They went through some further development over the years, including Mishakal changing gender and all sorts of interpersonal relationships that were not in my original. I take the blame for the gnomes as well, the small techno-driven creatures that started in Krynn and have now spread to campaigns throughout the multiverse. In many ways they were intended as a satire on my previous occupation as an engineer--indeed, the ideal gnome invention goes through a deep development process, as it attempts to solve the problems of the last development process. Again, though the Krynnish gnomes are mine, the gnomefingers and the other great inventions within Mt. Nevermind were Tracy's. I put in the *Perechon* (and *Maquesta*), refugees from another campaign, and was pitching a "city at the bottom of the whirlpool" module concept that became *Istar*. I was a guinea pig for most of the recipes in the first *Leaves of the Inn of the Last Home* collection, and I have had enough

spiced potatoes for one lifetime. I did contribute gnome chicken. I gave Toede his name but did not chart most of his career. And Krynn is very similar to my sister-in-law's name, Corinne.

McGilligan:

When, why, and how did you move into writing fiction and novels? What's your total output to date?

Grubb:

Novels were a natural progression, and I got into them through the **Forgotten Realms** [setting]. While [the] **Dragonlance** [setting] was the land of a great epic, the Realms was conjured up as being a big playground where we could tell a lot of stories at the same time. At the start, we were more concerned about translating Ed Greenwood's world fully into the **AD&D** game, and as a result, we had a mixed lot of novelists in the first year. They were Doug Niles (who in addition to playing Flint Fireforge for the **Dragonlance** plays was also the designer to WRITE the most **Dragonlance** adventures of all of us), Bob Salvatore, original founder Ed Greenwood, and Kate Novak and myself working as a team. As the Realms got started, we needed novels, and I pitched a concept of a female warrior with a hidden past, Alias of the Azure Bonds. I started explaining the plot to the book to my wife, Kate, one night as we were heading to Milwaukee to dinner. By the time we got to Milwaukee, I had gained a co-writer, and one of the primary characters (the halfling) changed sex (gender-swapping seems to be a motif in the creative process). The result was the initial trilogy of our novels set in the Realms--*Azure Bonds*, *The Wyvern's Spur*, and *Song of the Saurials*, all by Novak and Grubb. After *Song* we stopped for a while, in part because I started working in comic books for a few years. DC had the license, and did the **Dragonlance** book (which I never had a chance to work on), **AD&D** [comics] (which I did a few stories for), and **Forgotten Realms** comics (for which I did the entire 25-issue run and was most proud of). I figured I was done with novels for a while. You and Margaret got me back into writing, which is the one reason that I can never refuse you a short story. Oh, you were sneaky, with a short story here (I think "Clockwork Hero" was the first), a small request there. You and Margaret were the ones to hit me up for [Lord Toede](#), which, despite everything I'd done previously, was my first solo novel. And you let me run with the character, letting him be humorous and letting me bring him back from the dead. And Margaret was there to speak out on my behalf when a number of folk got REAL IRRITATED on the net that this . . . this . . . REALMS AUTHOR dared to write a FUNNY **Dragonlance** book. I still love that book, and strongly recommend it to anyone who takes Krynn too seriously (for those who have not had the pleasure--Lord Toede is two parts British comedy show and two parts Warner Brothers cartoon). Since then, I've reteamed up with Kate for more Realms novels (six to date, including the original trilogy). I wrote a massive hardback tome with Ed Greenwood called *Cormyr: A Novel*, which tracks the history of one of the Realms' nations, and in many ways was preparation for what I am doing now. I wrote the first of the new **Magic: The Gathering** novels--[The Brothers' War](#), which was a delight in that I was playing in a new sandbox. My second book in the **Magic: The Gathering** universe is called *The Gathering Dark*, and I have become the "historian" of [the] **Magic** [universe]--writing all the old tales that took place in **Magic**'s early days. *The Gathering Dark* showed up in June and is the first book of the Ice Age trilogy ([I'm] writing the second now). So that makes a dozen novels (half of them solo, the other half with a variety of co-writers), and about a dozen short stories (most of them for [the] **Dragonlance** [setting], and most of those beginning with the first line "This is a gnome story. . .") Long term, I have a few more worlds I need to build, and more than a few stories I need to tell. I'm going to be busy through the end of this year finishing up the Ice Age novels for [the] **Magic: The Gathering** [setting], but Margaret and you have already trapped me into contributing for the next collection of short stories; of course, it will feature gnomes. After that, I have no idea--it's been a wonderful ride so far, and I can't wait to figure out what happens next.

McGilligan:

What are your duties and challenges at the company nowadays?

Grubb:

My day job is as a senior designer for R&D-RPG, Wizards of the Coast. That's what the TSR

designers [and editors] have become as the talent is slowly being assimilated, ah, incorporated by Wizards. Editor Thomas Reid and myself are "Da Boyz"-the guys that Bill Slavicsek throws nasty, burning products at. It's a lot of fun. No, really. Right now, the biggest challenge facing our roleplaying games is that there seem to be fewer new gamers, and particularly fewer new DMs [Dungeon Masters]. I've been working on a series of introductory games known as Fast-Plays, which walk a new DM through the entire process of running a session. Most of us learned to play by having someone teach us; this is in many ways Jeff-in-48-pages, showing the basics of the **D&D** game in a very straightforward way. It's gotten nice reviews. Right now, I'm doing a version for inclusion in a new computer game, which I can't discuss more because we haven't signed the bloody contracts yet (of course, I've finished the design)*. And in my spare time, I'm writing novels for this card game--it's pretty popular, I understand.

McGilligan:

What is your present involvement with the **Dragonlance** setting, and where do you see it heading?

Grubb:

My present involvement? I sometimes feel my role in the **Dragonlance** setting is Old Guy, who reminds the others of what things once were and provides some sense of continuity. My contribution at the moment consists of the odd story (some of them very odd), and answering questions about the early days (Often the question is along the lines of "What were you thinking when . . . , to which I would reply "Thinking? We were thinking?") I am very impressed with Steve Miller's compilation of the entire DL series of modules in one book for the anniversary, though he continues to apologize for hacking out huge chunks of my DL7 in order to make it all fit. The big danger to all the TSR worlds is that there aren't enough DMs out there--we have to go back and teach people it's cool to run an adventure. Then we can continue to expand out, not only the **Dragonlance** setting, but the **Greyhawk**® setting and the Realms and perhaps bring back a few of the more esoteric worlds (like the **Al-Qadim**® setting, or dare I say it, **Spelljammer**® [material]). One of **Dragonlance's** greatest strengths has been its novels, particularly when Margaret is involved, both with Don [Perrin] and Tracy. If when we were first starting out, you told us we'd be around for the millennium, I would have scoffed. But we're here, and we're still going. And that's a credit to the creators and the fans of the series.

* Since the interview, the contract has been signed, and it can be revealed that Jeff has been working on the Diablo II adventure game, an introductory RPG based on the upcoming Blizzard computer game. Watch this website for more information!

*Patrick McGilligan is currently finishing up work on the first novel for the War of Souls series and continues to be involved in several other **Dragonlance** projects.*

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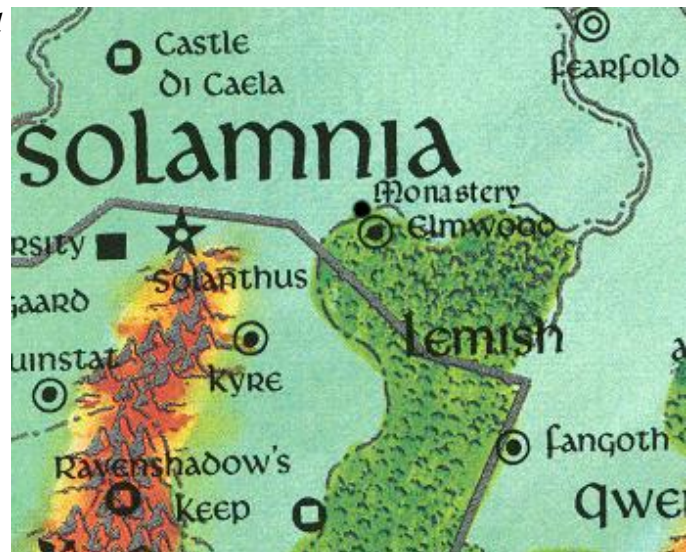


The Order of Majere Monastery

by Timothy R. Haney

Of all the faiths of Ansalon that have suffered from the departure of the true gods in the aftermath of the Chaos War, perhaps the Order of Majere has been the least affected. Two of the teachings of the god Majere were meditation and faith. These two teachings have become the backbone in a revival of the monastic way of life in Solamnia. The Order of Majere Monastery in particular has become home to the new monks of the Fifth Age.

Unlike the followers of other faiths, the monks of Majere take an oath never to raise edged weapons of war against their enemies. No weapons beyond a staff are allowed onto the grounds of their order. The monks have dedicated themselves to meditation and service to the community. Though they appear weak and powerless, the monks' meditation techniques involve working the body into physical perfection through exercises involving the martial arts. Even the lowest monks can grab arrows out of the air or break thick boards with their bare hands. They can defend themselves and their fellows, but only after they have tried other methods to drive their enemies off.



History of the Monastery

Of the monasteries that have risen in Solamnia during the Fifth Age, perhaps none have such a grand history than the Order of Majere, which is located near the city of Elmwood in the northern edge of the Lemish Forest. Two monasteries devoted to Majere have been built near the city of Elmwood. The first came into being in the year 35PC, during the time of the dominance of the Istar clergy. Many faiths other than Paladine's were in decline as Istar's dogma expanded throughout Ansalon. The Monastery of Majere was built on the northern edge of the Qualinesti Forest to seclude itself from Istar's influence. The monastery remained undamaged during the Cataclysm though the lands around it underwent great changes. Records indicate that many of the elder monks in the monastery disappeared before the Cataclysm, leaving only the youngest and most inexperienced ones behind. As time passed, the village of Elmwood sprang up nearby for the pilgrims who journeyed to the monastery looking for answers to the gods' abandonment. For hundreds of years, the monks kept their routine of meditation and faith in the return of Majere. In the year 351AC, the War of the Lance exploded into their peaceful world. As the dragonarmies advanced westward, a benighted priest of Majere brought the sacred artifact known as the Sign of Majere to the monastery. Fearing this would be a tool used to ignite faith in the true gods,

dragonarmy agents attacked the monastery in search of the artifact. They killed many of the monks, and fire gutted the building. For all their efforts, though, they could not find the artifact. The forces of Evil left the building in ruin as the Blue Dragonarmy occupied the nation of Lemish.

However, the monastery continued to provide aid to the people near it. Several of the surviving monks from the dragonarmy attack returned and spread the word of the return of the true gods, giving the people hope. They also helped those who sought to flee to Solamnia from the tyrannical Evil of the invaders. Then, after the monks spent many years helping others, outside forces rocked the order again. The Chaos War had ended and with it, the nation of Solamnia had conquered Lemish, ending its reign of Evil over the land. However, to save the world from the god Chaos, the god Majere and his fellow gods had been forced from the world. Unlike the other faiths, the monks' history had prepared them for this occurrence.

A new monastery was completed over the ruins of the old in 3SC. Monks again fill its walls as they await the return of Majere. The new monastery looks much the same as the original. The front doors open into a large foyer and continue on to magnificent sanctum with an elaborate altar against the back wall. Light comes through three rows of large windows on both walls. To the left and right are stairs that lead to the second story. An open-railed walkway surrounds the sanctum and connects over the foyer. This walkway leads to the various cells of the monks as well as guestrooms for visitors. To the left of the foyer, doors on the ground floor lead to the dining room. The opposite doors to the right lead to the scriptorium and chapter house.

A low wall surrounds the grounds of the monastery. Gardens are located in the back, which provide food for the monks. A small building near the gate of the wall is used to store visitors' weapons.

Life of a Monk

Life in the monastery requires complete dedication. Their strict life keeps a monk's day busy. All monks begin their life as a novice in the Order of Majere. Children whose fathers gave them to the monastery are called oblates until they are old enough to take their first vows to become a novice. After several years, if the head of the monastery (abbot or abbess) agrees, the novice takes his or her final vows and becomes a monk. Currently, no females reside within the order's walls, they live in a hut outside the wall, but the question of how the order will handle them when this eventually happens is in constant debate. The favorite option thus far is to create another set of living facilities for them and allow them to share the current common areas (such as the scriptorium and sanctum).

All monks are called "brother" or "sister" regardless of their station in the order. Additionally, they must give up all of their personal wealth before entering the monastery.

Tasks

Monks spend much of their time in meditation. They also train in the use of martial arts, work in the common gardens, and help those of the city of Elmwood. In fact, monks have very little time for nonproductive activities. The abbot or abbess creates a schedule of activities for each individual. Refusal to follow the schedule without good cause is grounds for the abbot to ask the monk to leave the order. Perhaps the strictness of the life of the monk is most evident in the dining room. This time is the only part of the day all monks currently at the monastery gather. In the years past, this time would be spent in silence. Now, they discuss the day's activities, which builds the foundations of friendship with each other. They are allowed two meals a day in the wintertime and three in the summer. Rarely do the monks eat meat, but when they do, it is prepared in stews.

Many of the monks unable to work in the garden, practice martial arts training, or travel spend their time in the scriptorium. The scriptorium is where books and manuscripts are written and illustrated. Monks known as illuminators decorate these written items with beautiful paints and gold leaf. It requires a very skilled hand to be an illuminator. Most of these works are histories, legends, and songs of Majere or Solamnia. The monks take great pride in their work and hope to replace the lost manuscripts from the Great Library of Palanthas. One of the most highly praised works is the

history of Solamnia during the Summer of Chaos called *A Discourse on the Upheaval of Solamnia in the Year 383AC*. The monks traveled across Solamnia for interviews and firsthand accounts of that frightening time.

Absolution

In the chapter house, monks can ask for a pardon for anything they have done wrong. They can also accuse each other of bad behavior if they have a very good reason. The name chapter house comes from the practice of reading a chapter from the monastery's rules before beginning the meeting. The abbot or abbess presides over each chapter house meeting and determines what actions should be made if any bad behavior is brought up.

A Monk's Background and Role

It is important to remember that not all monks have been cloistered their whole lives. Many have had various vocations. However, they have put their previous life behind them to take up the challenging role of the monk. The monastery teaches that Majere will return as he has before, but not all monks believe this, nor are they encouraged to do so. The monks of the monastery do not believe it is their purpose to spread faith in Majere or any other god. Their purpose is to experience an honest confrontation with one's self. Once achieved, they seek to help others to reach the same self-discipline or find ways to help the surrounding community lead more fulfilling lives.

A Monk's Garb

The clothing of a monk consists of simple robes of red. The only other item they wear is a medallion crafted in copper with the image of the mantis symbol of Majere (native to Solamnia). Their hair is kept short, with some monks opting to shave their heads to keep it from disturbing them during their work. Sandals complete the ensemble. The abbot's or abbess' dress is no different from any other monk's.

Characters of the Monastery

- **Tilden Brynwood, Abbot of the Order of Majere Monastery:** *Human elder male, insightful demeanor, Master.* Ag 6C, Dx 5A, En 6A, St 4A, Re 7D, Pe 8C, Sp 8A (64), Pr 7A, Dmg 0 (common clothing), Def +1 (unarmed), also mysticism (channeling, healing, sensitivity).
- **Abbot Tilden Brynwood, male human P11:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 65; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2; SA priest spells; SZ M (5'11"); ML elite (13); Str 8, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14; AL NG.
Spells Memorized: Choose from these spheres--Major access to All, Astral, Charm, Divination, and Summoning, and minor access to Animal and Sun.

Tilden is sixty-three years old and was the leader while the monastery was rebuilt. He is a bald man whose eyes remain bright with a youthful glow. Tilden was born after the ending of the War of the Lance and so never knew a time when the gods were not with the world--until the Second Cataclysm. He spent a year in meditation without speaking to any before construction was begun. During this period of silence, he says that a dream revealed "the harbinger will sing." At the time, Tilden did not understand the dream's message but began rebuilding the monastery waiting for this harbinger. Now, he believes the harbinger to be Goldmoon and her song the gift of mysticism. Tilden has become a great interpreter of dreams, as he believes they carry messages from Majere even today.

- **Sandor Snowmist, Monk of the Order of Majere Monastery:** *Half-elf adult male, curious demeanor, Adventurer.* Ag 8B, Dx 7A, En 9C, St 7B, Re 6C, Pe 6B, Sp 7B (36), Pr 8C, Dmg 0 (common clothing), Def +1 (unarmed), also acute sense (touch) and mysticism (healing).
- **Sandor Snowmist, male half-elf P6:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 34; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2; SA priest spells; SZ M (5'5"); ML elite (13); Str 14, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 16; AL NG.

Spells Memorized: Choose from these spheres--Major access to All, Astral, Charm, Divination, and Summoning, and minor access to Animal and Sun.

Sandor grew up in the monastery as an oblate. The slanted eyebrows and vague points on his ears are all that gives away his elf heritage. Sandor is of average height and has rich brown hair that he keeps short. He has found a love of gardening and enjoys traveling to find exotic seeds to try in the garden. He prefers to observe life and rarely speaks on any subject save gardening.

- **Northrain, Illuminator of the Order of Majere Monastery:** *Barbarian young adult female, meticulous demeanor, Novice.* Ag 6C, Dx 6C, En 7C, St 7C, Re 8C, Pe 7C, Sp 7A (49), Pr 8C, Dmg 0 (common clothing), Def +1 (unarmed), also mysticism (alteration, meditation, mentalism).
- **Northrain, male human P2:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 14; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2; SA priest spells; SZ M (5'10"); ML elite (13); Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 16; AL NG. *Spells Memorized:* Choose from these spheres--Major access to All, Astral, Charm, Divination, and Summoning, and minor access to Animal and Sun.

Northrain is from one of the tribes of the mountain barbarians whom the monks of the monastery often visited. When she came of age, she left her home and entered the order as a novice. There she discovered a natural gift for artistic work and has become an illuminator. Word has spread as far as Palanthas of the incredible talent she possesses. Northrain is a tall woman with dark hair that she has allowed to grow in the style of her people. Though she spends a great deal of time at her work, she still maintains a daily regiment of training.

Adventure Nuggets

- **The Sign of Majere:** Tales have circulated of the existence of a magical bronze amulet with the old symbol of the Monastery of Majere etched into it. The Sign of Majere was thought lost during the War of the Lance. Tilden sends a group of monks to investigate the rumors. The rumors lead to a priest's grave in Maelgoth, where the heroes discover the story of the last bearer of the artifact, Velin Tephoras. Velin had been buried with the artifact embedded in his chest. Upon investigating Velin's grave, they find it despoiled and the artifact missing.* Clues lead to a village near Maelgoth where a crazed man is calling himself the god Majere and terrorizing the citizens. However, a company of the Knights of Takhisis is also searching for the man and the artifact. They must find this man and retrieve the artifact before it falls into the hands of the Dark Knights.
- **The Garden Thieves:** Sandor reports that thieves have been in the garden. Tilden suggests a watch be set up and the thieves discovered. On the second night of the watch, goblins from Lemish Forest sneak into the garden. Fearing this may be a prelude to an attack, the monks request support from Elmwood. However, the warriors may be too late. As night falls, the goblins, led by a hobgoblin, attack the monastery, and its outlying hut. Unable to find food and shelter, they have discovered the isolated monastery. Seeing what they believe an easy target, they have amassed outside the walls. What can the heroes do to assist in this situation? Will they arrive in time? Or, if at the monastery, what plan can they come up with to prevent the goblins from winning the day?
- **The Importance of History:** Murder has visited the monastery. One of the brothers is found half-buried outside the wall of the monastery. The next night, the scriptorium is ransacked, but Northrain discovers the thief. Unfortunately, the thief escapes, but Northrain reports that the rogue grew wings and flew to the top of the monastery. The thief is a Sivak draconian who has been hired by a wealthy man in Lemish to retrieve notes on the history of Lemish. The notes were originally sent to the monastery to be made into a book. In this history, a small passage reveals his father's involvement with a dragonarmy. In order to secure his status, he has hired the draconian to infiltrate the monastery and steal the book. The draconian, Kardash, has killed and assumed the identity of another monk. He was forced to kill the one discovered outside the walls quickly, which did

not allow him time to bury the body properly. How do the heroes discover this, and what do they do when they find this information out?

Timothy lives in his hometown Boaz, Alabama. The most inspirational person he knows is his ten-year old niece, Megan. She reminds him how great an imagination can be.

* See the **Dragonlance** comics for more information on past bearers of the amulet.

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Spell-O-Rama

Spirit Form

by Brandon McKee

Within the forests of Silvanesti, Selana Starflower pined away for the world above. Many years ago, just as Lorac's Nightmare washed over the forest, her small community of Larune fled the surface and started living in some magically created caverns beneath the earth. It was a hard decision for the people of Larune to make, but as followers of the god Lunitari (which was forbidden to Silvanesti elves), they had been out of touch with their Silvanesti brethren long enough to miss the warnings to leave the forest. With the combined strength of their magic and the desperation of seeing their forest start to change around them, the people of Larune sealed off their underground habitat from the strong effects of the Evil dragon orb. The effort almost killed all of them, but they succeeded at their goal: They were safe from the Nightmare. However, as years passed, the elves beneath the earth paled and weakened, deprived of their sunlight and stars. The only bright note occurred when one of the mages had a dream that Lunitari came to him and told him of the return of the gods. Despite this, the people of Larune seemed to lose most of the joy that they had possessed before coming down below. Selana Starflower was born into this environment of physical and emotional darkness.

Though Selana never knew the forest above, she heard the stories of her parents and other townsfolk. She dreamed about a bright orb radiating heat and light, and of breezes whispering through green trees. As she grew, she saw how her parents became lifeless and lackluster--almost emotionless--and she wished she could find the way back to the surface. However, the divinations of the priests and mages showed that though the Nightmare had vanished, more Evil was to come shortly. Finally, after the Year of Great Despair when the mages and priests discovered that they could no longer cast their magics, Selana went to the library in search of something that she had heard whispered of: *The Tome of Fayal*.


Fayal, the founder of Larune, was one of the three elf mages who brought High Sorcery to Krynn. However, before this, they had used raw magic, or wild magic, as the tome called it. After reading through this forbidden tome, Selana started thinking. Then she started practicing small magical effects in secret. Essentially, Selana discovered the sorcery that other Fifth Age sorcerers use today. Her first major magical working is the spell spirit form. Her dream to go back to the surface, despite Larune's leader and elders, caused her to create a rather sneaky way to visit the world above. With it, she made her way up the forbidden stairs and through the locked doors to the world above. (She even dropped the magical wardings that had once protected Larune Below from Lorac's Nightmare, but that's another story entirely.) Luckily for her eyes, she came into a forest lit by stars instead of sunlight. Soon after her first trip, she persuaded other young elves to journey with her, which eventually led to the official opening of Larune Below to the land above. However, the people of Larune still use this spell to gather information and journey to places outside of their immediate area.


Invocation (30 minutes)	1
Range (personal)	1
Duration (1 hour)	5
Area (IVa: individual)	1
Spell effect (Vc: painful)	5
Total difficulty	13 (plus Endurance score)

This spell allows a mystic to become incorporeal and grants immunity to normal weapons and resistance to silver weapons. The difficulty of the spell is modified by the caster's Endurance score, so the harder the person targeted for this spell is, the more difficult it is for the person to become insubstantial. The recipient of the spell can choose whether to become invisible or not, though he or she must perform a successful *average Spirit* action to see if they can switch. Those in spirit form can climb stairs, walk up slopes, and so on, but since they cannot manipulate physical items, climbing ladders is impossible. People who see someone in normal spirit form might believe that they see a ghost, which has given rise to tales of ghosts wandering the Silvanesti Forest. Spirit form does not allow people to pass through the Silvanesti Shield.

Mishap: The spell drains all but 1 point of Endurance from the caster.

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STORES  BOOKS MAGAZINES ONLINEPLAY EVENTS COMPANY INTERNATIONAL

Legends OF THE Lance™

Letters to the Editor and Talk Back

Compiled by Legends of the Lance Staff

Dear Legends:
Why haven't you adapted the **Saga®** system to the **Ravenloft®** setting?
--Gilberto Wanderley
Filho, Brazil

Dear Gilberto:
If you read Matthew L. Martin's article "Saga of the Mists" in **Dragon #240**, you'll find an adaptation of the **Saga** system for the **Ravenloft** setting. We don't currently have any plans to adapt the **Saga** rules to any other campaign setting (aside from those already in existence), but you can use this article as a guideline.

Dear Legends:
I need statistics on creating a kender and Irda character for my campaign.
--Ed Perez
Queens, New York

Dear Ed:
Visit the following link to see the [Tales of the Lance boxed set](#), which can help you with your query!

Dear Legends:
I was wondering if you were going to write a book about Magius? He was briefly in *The Legend of Huma*, but not much was said about him. I'm also wondering what happened to the books *Murder in Ravens Bluff* and *Murder in the Tower of High Sorcery*. I have been looking for them for a while. Also, why did TSR stop publishing the **Dark Sun®**, **Mystara®**, and **Birthright®** novels? Are you considering republishing them?
--Jamie Griffis
Clarendon, PA

Dear Jamie:
I contacted the book department, and here is what Peter Archer had to say: At this point we don't have plans to publish a book about Magius. You're right, though, in that he is an intriguing character, and it's possible that sometime soon you'll see a book or short story about him.

Murder in the Tower of High Sorcery and *Murder in Ravens' Bluff* were taken off our schedule, and at this time we have no plans to publish them. However, we'll be publishing a paperback edition of *Murder in Tarsis* in October 1999, and a paperback version of *Murder in Cormyr* is already in print.

We discontinued publication of **Dark Sun**, **Mystara**, and **Birthright** novels at about the same time as the game lines for these worlds were discontinued. Sales had a lot to do with it. We're in business to make money, and these lines simply didn't sell enough copies to make them profitable, though

they were very cool worlds with some extremely dedicated followers. At this point, we don't plan to start publishing again in any of these lines, but you never can tell what the future will bring.

Dear Legends:

Could you mention the magazine I've finished in your next issue? The Web address is <<http://www.leafdigital.com/Gathering/>> and you can download and print it out, or just read it on-screen. It includes six pieces of varied and high-quality fan-fiction (by six different authors, including myself) for the **Dragonlance**® setting and a nice cover picture too, and it's been fairly nicely laid out and put together. Of course, it's free. So, I think your readers might be interested.

Dear Sam:

Consider it done!



Of all the Good and Evil dragons of Krynn, which one is your favorite and why?


I have two favorite dragons. The first is Silvara because she saw what was going on in the world and knew that the Good dragons were again needed in the fight of Good and Evil. She not only helped bring the Good dragons back, but she also gave Theros the silver arm so that he could forge the dragonlances. My other choice is Khellendros because of his undying loyalty to Kitiara and how he will do anything to bring her back from the Gray. Loyalty is something that I feel we have lost in our modern, civilized world. If we had more loyalty to each other then the world might be a better place for all of us.

--Steven Caughorn
Huntsville, TX

My favorite dragon is Gwyneth, the silver dragon that Huma rode before his death. The reason for my choice is that Huma and Gwyneth make the best human and dragon team.

--Joseph Kalanta,
Kountze, TX

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STORES GAMES BOOKS MAGAZINES ONLINEPLAY EVENTS COMPANY INTERNATIONAL

Legends OF THE Lance™

Behind the Tapestry

by Legends of the Lance Staff

Nancy V. Berberick

Nancy is wrapping up work on a novel about Dalamar the Dark. She is also working on another **Dragonlance**® project for the book department. Watch this spot for more information about both of these things!

Jeff Crook

Jeff is working up a synopsis for a **Dragonlance**® novel. It is to be part of the Crossroads (tentative name) series and should be about the city of Palanthas. A short story of his has been accepted for the next **Dragonlance** anthology after *Heroes and Fools*. He is also the editor of the newsletter for the Southern Realms Region of the **RPGA**® Network. His first issue came out in May.

Tracy Hickman

Tracy and Margaret have turned over the first draft of the first novel in the War of Souls trilogy. He continues to work with the **Dragonlance** team as a consultant. Also, work on the **Dragonlance** anthologies is moving along.

Miranda Horner

Miranda has finished editing the **Dragonlance** adventure *Chaos Spawn*, which can function as a sequel to [Seeds of Chaos](#) or as a stand-alone adventure during the Chaos War.

Todd Lockwood

Todd recently finished a very fun **Ravenloft**® piece for *Carnival* and a Realms piece of a creepy underwater throne festooned with dwarf heads, upon which is seated an evil underwater elf. After that, he has a **Dragon**® magazine cover for "Swashbucklers," then a **Dragonlance** cover for *Chaos Spawn*, with three dragons on it. He is really looking forward to the latter because he loves painting dragons.

Steve Miller

Steve is taking a break from the **Dragonlance** setting for a bit so that he can work on some **Ravenloft** and **AD&D**® products. He just finished work on a lost guide by famous monster hunter Rudolph van Richten. He also eagerly anticipates reader responses from [The Odyssey of Gilthanas](#).

Douglas Niles

He is finishing up his first "Seven Circles" novel, called *Circle at Center*. That will start a new trilogy from Ace. He has also finished working on a **Dragonlance** adventure called *Chaos Spawn*. Doug is starting a new trilogy for the **Dragonlance** setting, tentatively titled the Glacier Lands. It will be set in the region of Icewall and "attempt to at least partially explain how the place got to be the way it is." Finally, he and Michael Dobson are nearly finished with the final draft of *Fox on the Rhine*. It should be coming out in hardcover from Tor, probably during summer of 2000.

Jean Rabe

Jean Rabe is currently hard at work on a book tentatively titled *Dhamon: The Downfall*, which will be handed over soon to editor Pat McGilligan. It is the first novel in her upcoming **Dragonlance** trilogy. Also in the **Dragonlance** realm, she has a draconian tale--"Reorx Steps Out"--in the summer anthology *Heroes and Fools*, and a section on the Fifth Age Dragon Overlords in *Leaves of the Inn of the Last Home, Volume II*. Other upcoming publications include the following: "Last Flight Over the Giant's Dance," a short story in a DAW Merlin anthology that will be released later this year; a concordance in the Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman book packaged by Martin Greenberg; and "Nothing Newsworthy," a short story in a Barnes & Noble cat mystery anthology. On the gaming front, Jean is the co-author (with **Dragonlance** short story guru Janet Pack) of *The Forces of Dagnarus*, a Sovereign Stone villains sourcebook set to be released later this year; and she is a contributing editor on the *MechWarrior 3* game by FASA. She is also the editor of *MechForce Quarterly*, FASA's BattleTech magazine.

Stan!

Stan! is working on some very super-secret projects. Watch this spot for more information in the next issue.


Paul B. Thompson

Paul has a new short story in the forthcoming **Dragonlance** anthology *Heroes and Fools* entitled "Noblesse Oblige." He also has two articles in the forthcoming *Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home, Volume II*. One deals with Krynn artillery--catapults and such. He has always been interested in the throwing engines of antiquity, so it was a good chance to put his reading of all those ancient authors to use. For the **Dragonlance** anthology in the year 2000, he has submitted a story of spies, intrigue, corruption, and murder--all the things that make fiction worthwhile. His **Magic: The Gathering**® novel, *Nemesis*, is due to be released in early 2000. Finally, he and Tonya Carter Cook will be back soon with a brand new **Dragonlance** trilogy. Collectively titled The Barbarians, it will deal with the early history of the human tribes inhabiting the plains of Ansalon.

Margaret Weis

Margaret and Tracy have turned over the first draft of the first novel in the War of Souls trilogy. Margaret is also helping Patrick McGilligan with the next *Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home* book. Finally, work continues on the **Dragonlance** anthologies.

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STORES GAMES BOOKS MAGAZINES ONLINEPLAY EVENTS COMPANY INTERNATIONAL

Legends OF THE Lance™

Herald's Report

My name is Dana Foxtail, a vagabond bard and a Keeper of the Word. In my wanderings, I hear many tales filled with promise and portent, offering many lessons to be learned, if only one can decide where in these tales the truth lies*

A Taxing Dragon

My recent trip in search of the frozen dragon was in vain**--though we spent nearly a month at sea, we saw nothing. After nearly two months at sea, we put in at the Abanasinian port of Crossing, and I have never been so glad to stand on trampled sod. The first thing I did was head to a tavern I knew to be frequented by several of my brother Keepers of the Word, hoping that I could hear of the happenings that had occurred while I was at sea. Sadly, no bards sang to the crowd that day--however, I did make the acquaintance of a merchant from the city of Haven. He regaled me with that city's recent woes.

Though perched on the very edge of oppressed Qualinesti, the draconic pact that ended the Dragon Purge has ever kept Beryl the Green from reaching beyond the forest to engulf Haven. In the last few months, however, Dark Knights in the service of Beryl repeatedly visited the city making none too subtle suggestions that the city pay a "voluntary tribute" to the Green. The intimation was that Haven currently lay beneath Beryl's notice, which had been a good thing for Haven's citizens up until that very moment. With the current situation with the Qualinesti resistance, however, the Green might "accidentally damage" the city while routing out Qualinesti resistance cells in the region, unless the citizens did something to make her feel that the city was worth protecting--as thinly veiled an excuse for extortion as ever I've heard.

My merchant friend told me that he left the room as the city elders hurriedly discussed what, if any, options remained. He seems quite convinced that without the highly unlikely event of strong Solamnic support, Haven will have no choice but to begin paying tribute to Beryl--and woe betide the city once they start down that dangerous road.

Reborn In Fire

I intended to leave Crossing by land, since my earlier two months at sea had convinced me that blistered feet were preferable to constant seasickness, but the merchant's talk of roaming Dark Knights made me think twice. Instead, I boarded a ship sailing for Sanction bearing the unusual cargo of an entire circle of Solamnic Knights. Matters between the Knighthood and Lord Hogan Bite improved to the point that Sanction's governor extended his welcome to these representatives. (If you ask me, the reversal has more to do with breaking the Dark Knight siege than a heartfelt reparation.)

We arrived in Sanction to find a celebration underway, though it was not for the Solamnics' return but rather for two wayward travelers--Emma Xela and Briony Thistleknot! The emissaries from the Academy of Sorcery and Citadel of Light had been assumed dead for months, having disappeared

in a volcanic explosion near the Nordmaar city of Willik. They returned, though, just in time to save Sanction from a particularly aggressive assault by the Knights of Takhisis.

The Dark Knights pushed their way into Sanction itself by using a talon of Thorn Knights (skilled pyromancers and geomancers) to allow them to advance across the lava river that flows directly through the city center. They almost certainly would have succeeded in capturing at least the western quarter of town if not for the fact that lava began to roil all around them. Then the river nearly burst its banks as a tremendous shape exploded from below--a gigantic fire dragon ridden by Emma and Briony! The emissaries leapt from the beast's back at the first opportunity, and members of the city guard carried them to safety. More than half the Dark Knights sank below the molten rock during the dragon's entrance, but the rest immediately attacked the beast with the end result of both sides being utterly destroyed.

Emma and Briony later told me the extraordinary tale of their recent escapades (a story I will tell when we have more time--it is not one to be rushed or missed!). They plan to travel back to Crossing on the same ship on which I arrived; from there they will return to their respective institutions to report on their activities and take a well-deserved rest. However, they both desire to continue their mission of bringing knowledge of the new magic to every corner of Ansalon. I'm certain that I will hear more about them in the future.

When Enemies Unite

As I close this letter, I'm about to take back to the road--I've joined, of all things, an ogre merchant caravan headed for the city of Kernon. Rumors abound that the ogres there have had some sort of cultural renaissance. What's more, I hear that they are secretly negotiating with minotaur representatives from the Blood Sea Isles--to what end I have no clue.

I will, of course take the utmost care. Chances are good that the ogre merchant means to take me unawares and sell me into slavery. Luckily, I have one or two tricks up my sleeve for just such a circumstance. In any case, the truth will protect me.

May my master visit you with tales of joy and prosperity

*Keeper of the Word: A bard who has devoted his or her life to studying the tales and storytelling techniques of the Herald.

**From "The Herald's Report" in Legends of the Lance, Issue #4.

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The Songs of Krynn

by Janet Pack

Author and musician Janet Pack (who is also sometimes known at the **GenCon**® Game Fair as Tasslehoff Burrfoot) has recently been in touch with Mirrashar, one of Krynn's elven bards. Mirrashar just discovered a new group of Krynnish music, some of which will be included in the new book *Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home, Volume II*. Janet interviewed Mirrashar regarding the new pieces.

JP: How do you feel about so much new music being printed?

Mirrashar: I am very enthusiastic about it, but somewhat embarrassed also. This is because the pieces are gleaned from all levels of Krynnish society--not only human and elven music, but important works from the dwarves, the gnomes, and ...

JP: Who else is left? The previous collection included drinking songs and the Kender March.

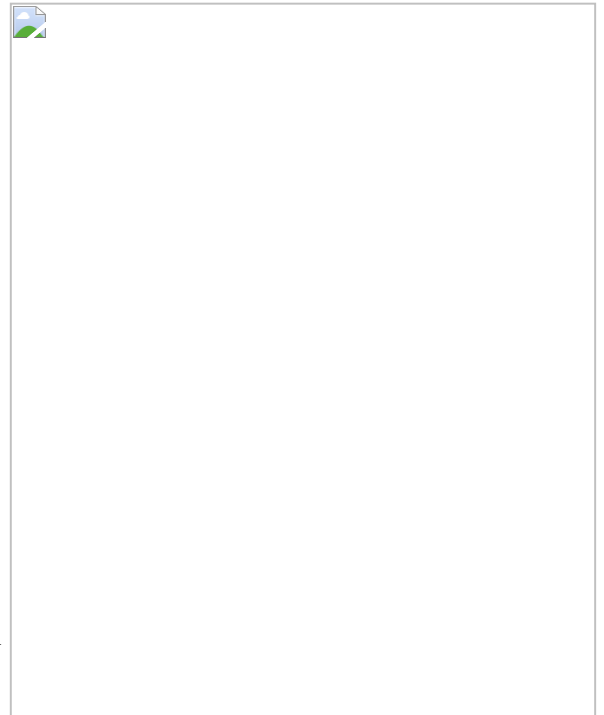
Mirrashar (stiffly): Gully dwarves.

JP: Will you elaborate?

Mirrashar: No more than to say that they are the only group I know of in Ansalon who has no music of their own. Had none of their own. I leave the rest to be explained by the notes at the beginning of the work. I sincerely hope becoming involved with this piece will not sully my reputation.

JP: What other music did you find?

Mirrashar: There is a human warrior's march from the collection of Jarrus Locastus, who was once Assistant Librarian in Palanthas. He also included in his collection a "Minuet in C," which I have picked up for the new book. I discovered a lament from humans, apparently written soon after the Chaos Wars. Recently, too, I attended several so-called performances of the gnome national anthem and wrote most of it down. It is sometimes called the "Hymn to Mt. Nevermind." Typically, those gatherings are an experience because of the way the music is rendered as well as the unusual invented instruments on which it is played. The ensembles are never twice the same.



Art by Barbara Holmes

JP: What was the most difficult piece of this group to collect?

Mirrashar: Definitely the "Dwarven Forge Song." The dwarves are very protective of this piece and did not want to give it up for common performances by other races, who might not properly understand it. I feel fortunate to have heard several versions and set down the most typical one.

JP: There's a piece in this group thoroughly different from any other in the collection?

Mirrashar: Indeed, it is different from anything I've gathered so far. "The Thinking Song" looks very innocuous and straightforward, but is apparently much more than that. Peculiar things happen when it is performed. I'm beginning to think that just the mention of its title calls the attention of some power or spirit. I have long been in awe of the magic of music, but this is a bit more than I expected. The work is at this moment being investigated by experts. Let me say that I am happy for the announcement that more Krynnish music will see print, thus giving its devotees more access to its variety and sentiments. I am pleased that another part of my collection, as well as pieces collected by Jarrus Locastus, will serve again as a medium for experiencing Krynn.

After intensive practicing with Mirrashar, Janet performed selected pieces of this new collection at the **GenCon** Game Fair in Milwaukee this year. Come and hear live performances of the new music from Krynn at the next **GenCon** Game Fair!

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The Statuette of Peace

by Charlie Martin

Greetings, Nathal! I hope this letter finds you and Palanthas well! I truly enjoyed your last missive. Those Dark Knights always seem to be up to something, in my experience, so I wouldn't worry too much about them right now. And your story about those people who had to protect a hapless noble from a naga was rather amusing. I certainly hope that the group who helped him is having a decent time at his expense. Before I forget, here is the information you requested in your last letter. I wrote it up as I found it, and some of it comes directly from an account that a storyteller gave a wizard acquaintance of mine. He wrote it down for me just one month ago--in the style of the storyteller--so I copied it for you. I certainly hope it helps! If I discover more, I'll let you know.

Somewhere on Krynn, a broken man wanders. His spirit crushed by war and strife, he travels the far reaches of Ansalon giving the greatest gift he can: peace. Where others have killed, he repairs. When others would fight, he loves. The wanderer, forever nameless, wishes only to end the pain and strife that continually wracks Ansalon. Of this man's greatest accomplishments, the statuette of peace stands in brightness. Completed during the horrors of the Chaos War, this small pearl statuette holds some of the last wizardly magic cast on Krynn. The nameless wanderer gave this object to the kender who eventually suffered under Malystrix the Red's depredations during the early years of the Age of Mortals. Unfortunately, the Evil wyrm seized the beautiful object for herself, little realizing that someone of her malevolence could never control the peaceful powers of the item. After the combined forces of several metallic dragons and some stalwart heroes defeated Malys, the statuette disappeared. No one knows where it rests now, but all lust for the power that it holds.

The Statuette of Peace appears to be a small pearl carving of a man known as Pharus (presumably some sort of prophet from the very distant past). His arms are chained to rocks by fine silver strands, and he sits upon the obsidian base in a meditative pose, keeping all of his attention focused upon a small dove perched atop a quarterstaff in front of him. The statuette is believed to cause great relaxation and enlightenment in the user, but only if she pushes all violent thoughts out of her mind.

My research doesn't shed any light on the creator of this statuette. However, I have found a couple of other references to this statuette. Most are vague and claim that the statuette can calm even the most irrational and crazed people.

How to Use the Statuette in Your Campaign

Only characters who are pure of heart can hope to utilize the powers of the statuette. Thus, anyone with Evil intentions (i.e., any player who used a card of black aura when deciding her character's nature {*evil alignment*}) cannot use this statuette. By clearing one's mind for one minute and focusing upon the item's peaceful qualities while touching the object, one invokes the powers granted by the nameless wanderer. Focusing adequately may require a Spirit action if it is used in

times of great stress. For example, if the user has just lost a loved one and stands to lose more soon, the Narrator can call for a *challenging Spirit* action *{saving throw vs. spell}*.

Users enter a trance for twenty-four hours after opening their minds to the statuette. During this time, they barely notice all actions around them, which requires a successful *challenging Perception (Agility)* check to see anything unusual and a successful *daunting Spirit* action to react to the world around them *{Intelligence or relevant check with a -2 penalty and Wisdom or relevant check with a -4 penalty}*. Defense against attacks of all sorts start at a *challenging* difficulty. Thus, this item is rarely used in adventures, finding itself activated only in times when safety is ensured.

Upon coming out of the trance, users find themselves at complete peace and clarity of thought. Nothing that happens for the next twenty-four hours can shock them, and they consider everything they do during that time with a new sense of calm and pacifism. This calm helps them find new solutions to situations that normally led to fights, never let one's temper do the talking, and only use one's sword when all else fails. Users find war and combat virtually unnecessary, and they fight only in the direst of circumstances. Because the changes that this statuette causes among most adventurers are often very drastic, its powers may be invoked only once per month. Only one hero or character can use the statuette at a time.

Adventures Involving the Statuette

The Wanderer: Who knows what other potent magic the nameless traveler holds? At any rate, the statuette may hold the truth involving this enigma's identity and personality. All one would have to do is find where the statuette lies . . .

The heroes are hired by a middle-aged Qualinesti elf to hunt down this object. The item may be hidden anywhere. Unknown to the heroes, their employer is actually a polymorphed draconian who wishes to use the statuette's secrets to discover the wanderer's potent powers.

Old Magic: Upon the ending of the Chaos War, the old priestly and wizardly magic of Krynn vanished due to the departure of the gods. However, rumor has it that the creator of the statuette somehow completed the object after the departure. Perhaps the wanderer enhanced the lost powers of sorcery and mysticism by using whatever remaining essence the gods may have left behind. Or maybe the nameless one possessed magic that was not actually linked to the gods. At any rate, all manner of people (and monsters!) would just love to get their hands on such power. Could it be possible to retrace the steps of the item's creation? The heroes could play the role of pawns or of protectors of the object as a potential conflict draws near over this powerful piece of art.

The Pacifist: What if the statuette works too well and actually takes control of a hero? In this scenario, the heroes recover the statuette. Unfortunately, upon attempting to use the item, one of the heroes becomes completely transformed by the magic. The hero refuses to take up a weapon or enter a fight, seeing such actions as completely barbarous. This mentality can prove to be quite a hindrance to the rest of the group--especially if they encounter something as powerful as a dragon.

Inside the Statuette: Upon activating the magic item, all of the heroes are drawn into the trance caused by the item, but they cannot return. A noncorporeal creature has become trapped within the item and has drawn the heroes to it to bring it out. The heroes must find a method of escape from their constantly morphing prison. If the Narrator wishes to be truly nasty, enemies of the heroes might just discover them in their trance and join them in the strange dreamscape.

This is Charlie Martin's second submission to the newsletter. He lives in Vermont.

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Home Rules: Spellcasting Aptitude

by Tom G. Harrison

*One of the **Saga**® game's greatest strengths is the player's ability to create exactly the hero they want without the intrusion of too many mechanics. Certainly, a few restrictions and prerequisites exist here and there, but for the most part, only player imagination and the Narrator's guiding hand limit character creation. While this is a liberating aspect of the game, it can also turn into a serious headache for beginning Narrators who suddenly find themselves surrounded by a host of heroes stuffed to the gills with "A" and "B" ability codes.*

One of the challenges Narrators (especially beginning ones) are sure to encounter is how easy it is for heroes to come spellcasters for no better reason than the fact that their ability codes allow it. The roles introduced in the Heroes of a New Age supplements did something to remedy this, as did the background generator in [A Saga Companion](#). However, the spellcasting aptitude rule should help Narrators who feel the need to place further limitations on their heroes. Spellcasting aptitude considers a certain measure of a hero's background, for it determines whether a newly created hero would have had previous instruction in the magical arts before the onset of his or her adventuring career. Additionally, it should place limits on the number of spellcasters in any group of beginning heroes. Unless the Narrator wishes otherwise, spellcasting aptitude should not be considered a limitation on the hero's career.

The Spellcaster Draw

There are two ways for a beginning hero to have training in spellcasting. The first, and most obvious, is to choose a spellcasting role (warrior-sorcerer, spellfilch, shapechanger, and so on). Heroes with these roles must have had ample instruction in the magical arts. If the player does not build his or her hero concept around a spellcasting role, there is still a chance that the hero can wield magical powers. After drawing the twelve cards from which the player fortifies his or her hero, the player should make the Narrator aware of his or her desire to possess some skill in magic. Already, the player should have attributed an ability code of "A" or "B" to either Reason or Spirit (if not, it's a moot point as the hero won't have access to spellcasting). The Narrator should then instruct the player to draw an additional card from the Fate Deck. If the card comes from the Suit of Dragons, the hero has had some instruction in the magical arts before the start of the game.

A Question of Skill

The Narrator can also use the spellcaster draw detailed above to determine the skill with which the hero can use magic. A Dragon card of 5 or less warrants the hero a single school or sphere. If the hero has an ability code of "A" and draws a Dragon card of 6 or better, he or she could wield all three potential schools or spheres. In the case of an ability code of "C," the Narrator might allow a single wild talent if the player draws the Ten of Dragons.

Basic Rules Option

This variation requires a bit of sacrifice on the player's part. In the basic hero creation rules, the player draws ten cards and distributes eight of these among the abilities. If the Narrator feels the situation warrants the uses of the spellcasting aptitude optional rule, one of the two cards the player discards must be of the Suit of Dragons. While this may not sound like much of a sacrifice, keep in mind that in this case the ability code is not tied to the card attributed to the ability. Thus, a player may have to choose between being able to cast spells or use that Ten of Dragons for one of the hero's ability scores.

Using this Rule

The rule should never act as a substitute for common sense. If the hero was the slave of an oppressive warlord before game play, it isn't very likely for him or her to have received any training in such skills. Of course, the Narrator could allow the hero some natural aptitude or wild talent instead. In addition, if spellcasting works as part of the hero's concept or background, the Narrator should forgo this optional rule and make a decision based on those factors. This rule is meant to aid Narrators, not to shackle them or their players. Likewise, a Narrator might wish to alter the conditions of the draw. For example, instead of a Dragon card, the player must draw the image of a mage or priest, or even draw a card of the appropriate suit for Reason or Spirit (Moon or Orb).

*This article is Tom's third **Legends of the Lance** article that explores optional rules for the Saga game.*

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Legends OF THE Lance™

The Parson

by Chris Schilling

*"You have the most noble profession one could desire. Your tie to the land allows others to live!"--
Trent Nevan of Solamnia*

The populace of Ansalon does not consist entirely of sword-bearing, magic-wielding heroes. In fact, without its humble base of peasants, these heroes would be starving. Yet, the peasants of this new age have found it difficult to carry on their backbreaking work without some inspiration. As the gods have left the land, many of the country priests lost their faith in the gods and themselves. Therefore, those few who still serve the gods have become even more important, as they are the ones who bring hope to these poor workers of the land. The parson is a man or woman who serves those living in the backcountry of Ansalon. The ranks of parsons include those from both noble and peasant backgrounds, with but one thing in common: their intense compassion.

Parsons include some of the most caring people ever to walk Ansalon. Forced to live without material goods and worldly pleasures for the most part, these souls continue to raise spirits among the downtrodden backbone of the Ansalon economy. All parsons are motivated people who want to inspire others to excel at everything. They have a habit of giving excessive, yet heartfelt, praise to those whom they think need a boost to their self-esteem. Additionally, parsons are also very humble. While very few come from wealthy backgrounds, those that do generally disguise this fact or renounce their ties to wealth. Those parsons who come from a middle-class background tend to be a little more prudent about renouncing family ties, but they too live a very simple life. Parsons from peasantry often live in the most squalid conditions of them all, refusing to exist above his or her fellow peasants.

Requirements

Parsons are without a doubt some of the best leaders in the whole land. Any general can inspire troops to fight because eventually battles end. For peasants, the harsh life they live never ends, and thus, the parson has a harder time bringing forth any sort of motivation for such hard work. Thus, a parson needs a minimum score of 6 in Spirit and 7 in Presence, as well as a code of "A" in Presence. In addition, the parson cannot have a score of over 2 in wealth. If a parson has a score over that amount, he or she can have their family ties largely denounced, which sets the stage for roleplaying encounters should the parson ever need some quick money. Additionally, a parson cannot possess a code higher than "C" in Strength and Endurance because of their tie with the peasantry. While they can pick up weapons such as cudgels and scythes, or use armor such as leather, better weapons or armor tends to violate the mentality of the parson role.

Advantages

In any case where characters may be afraid, want to give up, or lack courage in a noncombat situation, the parson enjoys an automatic trump bonus to the resulting Presence action to either raise

their spirits or dispel the fear. This action is entirely nonmagical in nature, though it can help others resist magical fear. Also, the parson enjoys an automatic trump bonus to any action when interacting with those of the lower class (wealth scores 1-3). This is due to the immense amount of time a parson spends with these people. The parson not only knows how to deal with them, but also knows how they think and act (if he or she has spent at least a few minutes of time talking to them beforehand). At the Narrator's discretion, those characters who have low wealth scores but high social standing are exempt from this advantage. Finally, emotional control of a magical or nonmagical nature cannot affect a parson.

Disadvantages

A parson will not have anything to do with the higher classes, and due to this, few bear expensive gear such as well-made clothing, lanterns, or even bedrolls. Also, the parson has trouble motivating anyone preparing for war. War harms the peasants in the short and long run, and the idea of soldiers quartering in a peasant's hut or razing farmland is antithetical to the parson's goal in life. Thus, when dealing with any career soldiers, not only does the parson never enjoy a trump bonus, but they also suffer a -3 penalty to Presence in any social action. In addition, a parson's appearance, which usually emulates the poor, mud-caked peasants around him or her, frequently causes wealthy, snobbish people to turn their backs upon the parson. Consequently, the parson will never enjoy a bonus to any social action with the upper class until revealing his or her position. (Some exceptions exist, of course. Leaders and higher-class people who either once came from the working class or sympathize with the working class might lower or negate this penalty.) The player must work the parson's position into his or her conversation without sounding like a braggart--remember these are humble people, not proud knights.

AD&D® Kit: Parson

The parson kit is loosely based on the peasant priest kit from *The Complete Priest's Handbook*.

Weapon Proficiencies: choose from short sword, short bow, awl pike, spear, sling, quarterstaff, or club. Secondary Skills: Any. Nonweapon Proficiencies: Bonus--agriculture, fishing, or animal handling, religion; Recommended--any of the general proficiencies that fit into the hero's background. Equipment: He or she may possess one only one object worth 10 steel pieces or more (excluding weapons), and the rest of his or her worldly goods cannot total more than 50 steel pieces in value (according to the *Player's Handbook* or *Tales of the Lance* prices). Special Benefits: Parsons always have shelter and can always gain aid from those in their communities. If outside their communities, they gain a +2 reaction adjustment with peasants. Additionally, by speaking with the common folk for at least 5 rounds before a battle or by making a successful Charisma check during a battle (or other hostile exchange), the parson can grant those common folk who listened a +2 bonus to any saving throws vs. spell to dispel charm or fear effects. The parson can grant this bonus each day a number of times equal to his or her level. Special Hindrances: In addition to the wealth limitation listed under "Equipment," the parson suffers a -2 penalty to reaction adjustments when dealing with royalty, nobles, and civil leaders of any type, unless they have a decided attachment or sympathy to the common folk of their land (Dungeon Master's discretion).

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