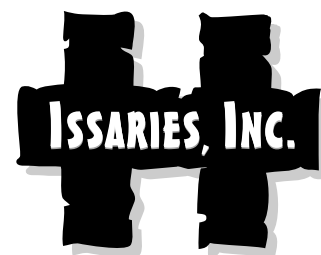


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**Dear Narrator,**

Thank you for undertaking the project of game mastering a ***Hero Wars*** game. We think you'll like it and hope that you will enjoy the process. We've been designing fun roleplaying games for 25 years, and feel that this is the best one yet. I think we finally have a way to play the game that is easy and quick to learn.

***Hero Wars*** is a story telling game, with emphasis on plot, personality, and consequences instead of numbers, charts, and spell lists. You need to focus on the story as the center of action, where the heroes move through the world by narrative. Players only use dice – the Great Randomizer -- in moments of crisis. The focus is on actions, constantly modified by the circumstances. Thus, a game is about the players, who are trying to modify circumstances to their advantage by using their strengths, and avoiding situations that would expose their weaknesses.

You, the narrator, need to know the rules. Do not run this scenario if you have not studied the ***Hero Wars*** rules either on-line or from your own copy of the book. Do not attempt to run this sample if you have not already played out five or eighty sample tries at using the **Extended Contest Table**. It is really easy once you get used to it, and you must be used to it to effectively narrate the game. A clumsy attempt will not help us attract players, nor will it garner you the fame and appreciation that you deserve.

This package has a copy of the Rules Synopsis that you can give to players, but this is not sufficient to learn how to play ***Hero Wars***. The synopsis is sufficient to use to guide players, and to say, "See, this section on page so and so." It has explanations of the important terms that might be used (more than you will probably use, really) and of the couple of charts needed to play at first. Take a look at this, and when you start a game with newcomers use it to educate them, or at least show where the chart is.

If you do not own ***Hero Wars***, go to <http://www.glorantha.com> and review the rules that are on-line. The site has chapters from the book that explain the essence of the entire game system, and should be enough to run the game. These chapters, with the synopsis, sample episode, and prepared characters, should allow you to run an enjoyable game with new players. We estimate such an introduction need only take a few hours to allow the players to gain familiarity. We imagine you can hand out character sheets and explain the game briefly and run the entire episode in less than six hours.

### **Get a Volunteer's Shirt!**

Either the retailer or you have, in this packet, an Authorization Document. This should be filled out by the storeowner or other appropriate authority to verify your hours worked. If you will spend the time to learn this new system and then to spend six or more hours of your time to narrate a game for strangers in the store, then you will qualify for an Official Issaries Volunteer Shirt. This is a special-issue shirt that is not available for purchase. It is given out only to volunteers who have performed a certain amount of work for Issaries.

So please take a look at the enclosed. We'll be glad to answer some questions for you, though please do forgive us in advance if our limited resources prevent as much contact as you might want and certainly deserve.

Sincerely,

Greg Stafford  
President; Issaries, Inc.

# Welcome to *Hero Wars*

## Narrator Information

This package is designed to give the players a colorful introduction to the world of Glorantha, the setting for *Hero Wars*. The episode is intended for one narrator (or game-master) and six players. It has been designed to introduce players to the game's combat resolution system. Although this is the most difficult part of the rules to become used to, it is actually quite simple, and easily mastered after a few game sessions.

You should read this entire package. Once you have done that, decide which of the sample bands the characters will belong to; give each a character sheet and have them fill it out with their character's stats. Give each a chance to read the rules synopsis and the two-page write-up for their hero band, which will give them enough background to understand their characters.

Once the players are ready, run them through the adventure. When the game is over, have each complete one of the Feedback Forms provided with the game and return it to you. You should complete the Authorization Form and return it to the retailer with the players' Feedback Forms.

## Introducing *Hero Wars*

Briefly explain what a roleplaying game is, if necessary for the new players. Explain how these rules are different from many other games. Say something like this:

*Hero Wars is a storytelling game. It is not a game of number crunching and mathematical minimaxing. Numbers are used, but it's more important for you to visualize the events and explain what your character is trying to accomplish. I, the narrator, will tell you when to use the dice to determine success or failure.*

To play you will need the cooperation of the players. Be generous and help them along. Don't compete against them. Ask them what type of character they like, and then select the hero band is most appropriate for their style of play.

Explain the resolution system. Do a dry run by pitting the characters in an imaginary fight against each other. Show them how modifiers work, perhaps by having one group uphill from the other. Tell them something like this:

*You character's actions are more important than memorizing the rules. I'll help you by providing hints about how to get an advantage that will give your character modifiers.*

## Hero Points

Hero Points are a way for the players to partially control the destiny of their characters. To start with, give each player

a Hero Point and explain how it can be used in play. Then, during the game remind the players when they can use their Hero Point. Hero Points are most effectively used to rescue a character who has **fumbled** (raising his result to a **failure** instead) or to bump up a simple **success** to a **critical**, especially when the character's opponent has fumbled.

## Attitude

Glorantha is a big place, and it is appropriate to make it seem huge and threatening. However, it is not right to trash first-time players on their first game. If a brand new player does something stupid or foolish, pause and explain how the game works in such circumstances and, for certain, that he would be killed if he leapt off the cliff. The point here is to entertain the players and get them interested in the game, not scare them away. Thus, this first episode should be a challenging but pleasant experience.

## The Hero Bands

If you are having trouble coming up with a justification for the sample hero bands to be involved in this episode, just consider how a band of strangers could help an isolated village. The Hidden Gale Clan might be seeking support from the village. Similarly, the Ibex Moon Society could be seeking to establish a new temple nearby, and might need to convince the locals (Orlanthi, and thus nominally enemies) of their good will before they will con-sent to work for Society. Use your imagination.

## Episode: The Hound Tower

Episodes are short stories set in Glorantha that star the player heroes. Each episode can usually be completed in one or two game sessions.

To aid in gaining familiarity with the rules, the episode presented here focuses on a specific game concept, physical combat, to illustrate the *Hero Wars* contest resolution system. Game rules needed for the episode are provided in the Rules Synopsis or in the episode itself. Things usually left to the narrator's interpretation, like the effects of theistic feats, are described in detail as examples of game moderating. However, these are provided as suggestions; use or ignore them as necessary to develop your own style as a narrator.

Fighting is always a possibility in an episode, and in some series may be the primary type of adventure. In such episodes the important thing is to vary the opponents; to be challenging and clever. Balance is important too -- most fights need to be even contests, so that the heroes have a chance to win.

Above all, remember to entertain the players and yourself. That's what the game is all about.

# Ibex Moon Society

**“The old world is over, let us show you. Travel safely!”**

The Ibex Moon Society is a bold mercantile venture that has recently established itself in Dragon Pass. It is essentially a travel agency that conducts rich Dara Happans on safe tours of the barbarian, draconic land. It offers regular, special, or adventure tours in Dragon Pass (and in several other places as well). It has a widespread network of experts, hirelings, and trusted locals.

*Form:* Lunar subcult.

*Cultural Context:* Travel agency and tour guides. The Society provides guided tours for the curious and adventurous. Imperial residents seeking to look at Dragon Pass employ it to provide efficient and safe passage to its many wonders. “Let us guide you safely through the wonders of this primitive society.”

*Ideology:* “Travel safely.” The world can be a better place if we all meet each other.

*Look and Feel:* Enthusiastic promoters of travel, with an underlying intention of progressive peace-keeping through making friends.

*Purpose:* To provide safe and educational journeys for Lunars who want to visit the newly pacified lands of Sartar, Prax, and Heortland. To spread the philosophy that “Talk and Listen proves ‘We are all Us.’”

*Reactions:* Pro-Lunar attitudes always raise the prejudice of anti-Lunar bigots. The Ibex Moon Society’s non-aggressive attitude allows it to be accepted in many places where anti-Lunar feelings are weak.

## Resources

*Leader:* Analax the Traveler.

*Renowned Members:* Drofats the Dittyman, who made up a series of popular rhymes that circulate about in the Empire, each of which marvels at a Dragon Pass wonder. They are more renowned for their lyrical melody than their words.

*Membership:* Varies according to needs, since they often hire and release as needed. Minimum in the Dragon Pass area is around 80, with many solo agents residing in strategic places throughout the land, including one in Pavis.

*Headquarters:* Temple of Selven Hara in Gostolos, in the Lunar Satrapy of Arir (far to the north of Dragon Pass). Many smaller temples can be found locally. The Sartar headquarters is the Selven Hara Temple in Aldachur, which has approximately 20 full-time staff, 30 full-time guards, and many guides (all of whom are initiates of the cult).

*Other Contacts:* The Society has extensive casual contacts throughout urban Dragon Pass, including previously agreed-on rates for lodging, food and supplies, etc. It has nice maps that it gives away to its customers. The Society also has extensive casual contacts throughout the Empire with guests whom it has escorted safely, and who have gone home to normal duties. Because it worships a hero subcult of Etyries, the Ibex Moon Society is on excellent terms with other worshippers of the Lunar trade goddess.

## Organization

The local headquarters oversees operations throughout the entire area, with Analax and his officers over-seeing large scale operations. Headquarters works with crews, whose membership can be as few as five or as many as a hundred.

## Employment

The Ibex Moon Society hires anyone who promises not to harm them or their wards, to obey tour leaders, and to speak no ill of the Red Goddess or her. They feel friendly contact is most easily maintained without pressure. In Sartar they are among the most friendly Lunar peoples.

The Ibex Moon Society offers two types of employment. Casual employees can be anyone who meets the Entry Requirements. The Society hires many Heortlings and other locals, with a daily wage set by oral agreement. These are commonly bearers, or owners of eating establishments, lodging houses, or outfitters. Many casual employees have long-standing friendships with local guides.

Formal employment is for longer periods, and requires swearing an oath to protect the travelers, obey the Ibex guides, and fulfill the task for which they are being hired. Most formal employees become initiates of Selven Hara; other employees are not taught magic by the society.

## Ibex Moon Guide Keyword

*Entry Requirements:* Speak the local language fluently; must have proven oneself capable of survival in the wilderness. If applicants already know skills taught by the Society, it is counted in their favor when they apply for the position.

*Physical Skills:* Archery, Build Shelter, First Aid, Load Pack Animal, Make Fire, Ride Horse, Scimitar and Shield Fighting.

*Mental Skills:* Find Path, Local Area Knowledge, Read Map, Speak [local language], Speak New Pelorian.

*Personality:* Confident, Friendly.

## *Hero Wars: Role-playing in Glorantha*

*Magic:* Guides must be initiates of Selven Hara. They may devote themselves to her if they wish.

*Living Standard:* Prosperous.

*Equipment:* Leather armor, shield, scimitar, riding ibex, camping and survival equipment.

### **Selven Hara**

Selven Hara was once a woman, but through Sedenya became a goddess. She was born in the Fifth Wane (about 150 years ago), and as an adult became a merchant. She traveled widely and studied the teachings of Etyries, the merchant goddess. At Gostolos she heard and absorbed the Word of Etyries, whereupon she began her thirty years of ministry. After death she became a goddess to protect the organization that she had founded, the Ibex Moon Society.

### **Selven Hara Magic Keyword**

*Entry Requirements:* Be a worshipper of Etyries, any of the Seven Mothers, or any aspect of the Lunar great goddess, or join the Ibex Moon Society as a permanent employee.

*Mental Skills:* Mythology of Etyries, Mythology of Selven Hara.

*Affinity:* **Travel Safely** (Be Understood by Anyone, Calm Strangers, Detect Enemy, Find Shelter, Run)

*Secret:* **Escape Safely** (Automatically succeed at a single final action during any contest in which the character has used his Travel Safely affinity, even if he normally would not be allowed a final action.)

*Worshippers:* About 800, scattered at many stops along the Oslira River.

*Other Connections:* The cult of the goddess Etyries is the leading mercantile cult in the Lunar Empire. Temples are in all major cities, most smaller ones, and many borderlands. The cult customarily helps the society, for a small fee.

*Disadvantages:* Selven Hara is not always appreciated by locals, primarily because of its Lunar affiliation rather than its or its members' activities.

“Hail! Snow! Lightning! Thunder!  
Every one is right there under  
Kero Fin, the mountain wonder.”  
*Drofats the Dittyman*



## Sample Characters for the Ibex Moon Society

This small group is typical of the tour participants that may be encountered in Dragon Pass. The members are not necessarily friendly to each other, but all are sensible enough to understand that they may be in a hostile situation and they will fight to defend themselves and each other as a means of survival. However, in quieter times there are many tensions that could cause problems. Phalinde has the job of making sure they reach their destinations safely and without undue trouble.

### Phalinde the Friendly

*A middle-aged woman from Sylila who traveled far through the provinces and eventually was recruited into the Ibex society due to her extensive knowledge of the Orlanthi, their ways and sites of interest in Dragon Pass. She is level headed, charming, attractive and garrulous. Phalinde is a perfect example of a good lunar citizen and is a credit to the Empire. She has several contacts across Dragon Pass including friendly tribesmen and traders.*

**Keywords:** Sylilan, Imperial Citizen, Scout, Initiate of Etyries, Devotee of Selven Hara.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat 15 (Scimitar & Shield), Survival 19, Attractive 2<sup>W</sup>, Ranged Combat 17 (Archery), Build Shelter 2<sup>W</sup>, First Aid 17, Load Pack Animal 16, Make Fire 2<sup>W</sup>, Ride Horse 18.

**Mental Skills:** Knowledge of Dragon Pass Geography 3<sup>W</sup>, Sensible 2<sup>W</sup>, Find Path 4<sup>W</sup>, Read Map 16, Speak Tarshite 18, Speak Sartarite 16, Speak Praxian 12, Speak New Pelorian 16, Sedenyic Philosophy 13.

**Personality:** Charming 19, Friendly 6<sup>W</sup>, Confident 14.

**Relationships:** Initiate of Etyries, Devotee of Selven Hara, Imperial citizen 14, Dragon Pass Contacts 18.

**Affinities:** **Travel Safely** 1<sup>W</sup> (Be Understood by Anyone, Calm Strangers, Detect Enemy, Find Shelter, Run); **Discovery** 15; **Trade** 16; **Travel** 14.

**Wealth:** Prosperous.

**Equipment:** Leather armor <sup>Λ</sup>2, iron scimitar <sup>Λ</sup>5, shield <sup>Λ</sup>3, horse, camping and survival gear, magical warning whistle that can only be heard by initiates or devotees of a Lunar cult, enchanted composite bow from Pent <sup>Λ</sup>6.

**Combat Tactics:** Phalinde prefers to use her bow and avoid close combat, leaving that to her guards. If the danger is great she will flee and take her customers with her.

### Davyon Redface

*A young man from a potters family in Glamour, fresh from the College of Magic minor classes. He is seeking relevant field experience for his thesis that will grant him major class status. Davyon is attempting a study of barbarian magic to prove that it could be combined into magical units in a similar fashion to the Colleges of Magic. His red skin comes from a freak accident in class that left the teacher a cinder and all of his class with an indelible burn across their faces. The Redfaces wear their scars with pride and consider themselves a class apart from the rest of the university students.*

**Keywords:** Dara Happan, Imperial Citizen, Scholar, Sorcerer of the Order of Makabaeus.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat 14 (Dagger Fighting, Staff Fighting), Tall 14, Find Way in City 15, Resist Cold 17, Endure Hardship 17, Ride Sable 15, Make Pottery 14, Winter Survival 15.

**Mental Skills:** Sedenyic Philosophy 1<sup>W</sup>, Rule of the Makabaeon Order 18, Read New Pelorian 17, Write New Pelorian 17, Symbolic Sight 19, Scribe Circle of Lunar Power 2<sup>W</sup>.

**Personality:** Proud 18.

**Relationships:** Red Skins 18, Imperial Citizen 16.

**Grimoires:** **The Tome of Bleak Despair** 5<sup>W</sup> (Heat Rock, Warm Body, Slow Wind, Shatter Ice Demon, Resist Valind); **The Tome of Grim Vengeance** 17 (Curse of Impotence, Curse of Discord, Curse of Frail Iron, Curse of Rotted Food); **The Tome of Humility** 18 (Enhance Understanding, Comprehend Rufelza's Love, Shrive Pride).

**Wealth:** Prosperous.

**Equipment:** Davyon wears a piece of Sedenya's body mounted on a silver ring crafted to resemble the Red Moon; all his spells are linked to it. Davyon wears expensive robes, carries a staff of authority, a symbol of the College of Magic, and rides a sable. Like all members of his order he is adept in winter survival methods and carries a kit of handy equipment in such conditions.

**Combat Tactics:** Davyon prefers to use his curses to weaken the enemy warriors either by destroying their equipment or creating discord and anger among them to weaken them internally. He also uses his humility spells to defeat aggression and mollify the angered. He avoids direct combat and attempts to flee if forced into such situations against enemy warriors.

### Weiran Swiftblade

*A warrior in the employ of the Ibex society, Weiran is the epitome of the Glamour success story. Slum born, he joined Yanafal Tarnils, served as a house soldier, temple guard, Imperial trooper and finally recruited as a duelist for the Satrap of Darjiin. He joined the Ibex society to escape potentially fatal censure from a rival house after killing one of their prominent members. He is now the loyal bodyguard of Phalinde and enjoys their travels and prestige among the provincials.*

**Keywords:** Dara Happan, Soldier (House soldier), Devotee of Yanafal Tarnils.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat 7<sup>W</sup>2 (Sword & Shield, Spear & Shield), Fight in Formation 18, Run in Armor 19, Dodge Missiles 17, Ride 18, Hide Items on Body 17, Listen 1<sup>W</sup>, Make Camp 17, Scan Terrain 17, Swift 2<sup>W</sup>.

**Mental Skills:** Mythology of the Seven Mothers 13, Orate 17, File Tactics 18, Size Up Enemy 16.

**Personality:** Brave 2<sup>W</sup>, Greedy 16.

**Relationships:** Loyalty to Ibex Society 14, Devoted to Yanafal Tarnils 19.

**Flaws:** Hunted by House Gergazarhm 14.

**Affinities:** **Combat** 3<sup>W</sup> (Charge of the Ram, Empower With Death Scimitar, Empower with Death Lance, Stand Against Many, Strike Ghosts); **Military Magic** 17 (Block Magic Scouts, Raise Courage); **Warlord** 17 (Create Morale, Perceive Enemy Weaknesses).

**Wealth:** Common.

## Hero Wars: Role-playing in Glorantha

**Equipment:** Scimitar 3, Spear 3, Armor (fine Darjiini bronze scale) 4.

**Combat Tactics:** Weiran lives for battle, it is where he excels. He typically moves with lightning speed thanks to the augmentation his Swiftess gives and if given time he will enhance his combat skills with augments from his magic. He particularly likes to cast all the augments he can then cast Charge of the Ram on himself and fly into battle in a berserk rage.

### Arzanelm of Raibanth

*Sent to the lands of war by his family to learn the reasons why civilized people make war on barbarians, Arzanelm typifies his class and background. He is scornful of rural existence, despises provincials and loathes the damp misery of Dragon Pass. He yearns to be back in the family palace in Raibanth but must fulfil his duty and learn the past and motivations of his people or he will never become a full noble of his house.*

**Keywords:** Dara Happan, Noble, Initiate of Lukarius.

**Physical Skills:** Missile Combat 17 (Archery), Know Place in Society 2, Ride 17, Close Combat (Dagger Fighting, Spear & Shield, Dueling) 13, Hunt 13.

**Mental Skills:** Dara Happan Religion 16, Dara Happan Customs 18, Raibanth Politics 18, Intrigue 14, Command Underling 13, Intimidate with Presence 14, Swift Tongue 15.

**Personality:** Arrogant 18, Intolerant 16, Noble 14.

**Relationships:** Loyalty to House Erzanelm 17, Loyalty to Emperor 13.

**Affinities:** **Bow Fighting** 17, **Law** 14, **Light** 17.

**Wealth:** Prosperous.

**Equipment:** Fine gilt armor 5, spear and shield (inlaid) 4, composite bow 5, fine clothing, a beautiful horse.

**Combat Tactics:** Arzanelm is a hunter, as befits a young noble, so is skilled with the bow and will use it should he find himself in trouble. He is also trained in formal dueling with spear and shield though he knows little of the chaos of real battle.

### Uribus of Raibanth

*A solider of House Erzanelm like his father and his fathers father. Uribus is an unimaginative but hugely loyal and devoted soldier. He has been assigned to protect Arzanelm against all threats and due to his skills at fighting barbarians, he was considered suitable. Uribus is a great warrior and powerful devotee of his god. He follows his cult's heroic tradition and considers it, and himself, above the likes of petty newcomers like Weiran and his god.*

**Keywords:** Dara Happan, Solider (House bodyguard), Devotee of Urvairinus.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat 18 (Mace & Shield, Spear & Shield, Grappling), Fight in Formation 18, Run in Armor 17, Ride 1, Hide Items on Body 17, Listen 17, Make Camp 19, Scan Terrain 19, Strong 2, Tough 5, Ranged Combat 18 (Archery), Know Ones Place in Society 16.

**Mental Skills:** Dara Happan Religion 14, Mythology of Urvairinus 13, Orate 17, Ezranelm Unit Traditions 16.

**Personality:** Brave 4, Selfless 18.

**Relationships:** Loyalty to House Ezranelm 19, Devoted to Urvairinus 2.

**Affinities:** **Destroy Dara Happan foes** 2 (Disconcert Monsters, Pierce Trolls, Shout Away Undead, Spit Down Wind); **Light of Action** 4 (Courage, Demoralize Foes, March In Step); **Military Strategy** 19 (Count Army).

**Wealth:** Common.

**Equipment:** Spear 4, armor & shield 4, mace 4, bow 4.

**Combat Tactics:** Uribus relies on his huge strength in battle as he smashes foes out of his path or he crushes them with his bear hands. If given time to prepare he will use the magics of his god to augment his skills. Uribus enjoys fighting flying foes as he can knock them out of the sky with his magic, and no monster holds fear over he for he is a master at killing them.

### Deshera Nal

*Born to a staunch Yelmic family in Good shore, Deshera was rebellious and troublesome as a child. She incurred the wrath of her family so often that she decided she could endure it no more. Seeing Rufelza above her and the lights of Glamour so close, she escaped her past life and made her way to the city. She survived as a starving waif until rescued from the gutter by a nun of Teelo Norri. Seeing the child's stubborn will, the nun sent her to be taught by the Sisters of Natha where she learnt the blessings of the goddess to spread the good word and protect Natha's people. Soon after leaving the temple, she was recruited by the Ibex society as a scout and has been with them ever since.*

**Keywords:** Dara Happan, Imperial Citizen, Scout, Initiate of Natha.

**Physical Skills:** Dagger 17, Archery 5, Move Silently 3, Close Combat (Scimitar & Shield) 17, Sprint 16, Dexterous 18, First Aid 18.

**Mental Skills:** Rebel Against Ones Place 2, Sedenyic Philosophy 14, Mythology of Natha, Analyze Terrain 16, Spot Ambush 19, Lay Ambush 2.

**Personality:** Scorn Farmers 14, Scorn Dara Happans 2.

**Relationships:** Initiate of Natha 18, Imperial Citizen 15, Loyalty to Ibex Moon Society 13.

**Affinities:** **Healing** 19; **Otherworld** 17; **Combat** 2.

**Wealth:** Common.

**Equipment:** Bow 3, scimitar 3, leather armor & small shield 3, horse, camping gear.

**Combat Tactics:** Deshera is an scout and prefers to fight with missiles or from ambush. She avoids combat with hand to hand fighters and instead picks them off in a battle of attrition, retreating into the undergrowth or bush. If forced to fight she is fierce and uses her dexterity to enhance her skill. She will also heal stricken members of the group if needed.

# The Hidden Gale

**"The old world is dying, and we will save it."**

Gyffur Ulfsson led his men into battle, but his stead was burned behind him by a Lunar raid. Since that time he has taken to the mountains, leading guerrilla raids against the Lunars. He brought the remnants of his clan and the clan god with him, and has attracted followers from among those Heortlings who hate the Lunars for any reason.

*Form:* Rebel bandit cadre.

*Cultural Context:* Heortling resistance fighters.

*Ideology:* "We will fight forever if we must. Death to all Lunars!"

*Look and Feel:* Dedicated traditionalist barbarians, confident in their conservative ancient lore.

*Purpose:* To liberate Sartar from the Empire, to slay all Lunar worshippers.

*Reactions:* Most Sartarites have heard of the Hidden Gale Clan. While most secretly admire them and hope for their success, others are afraid of the Lunar retaliations their actions might bring and do not support them. They are officially outlawed by the Lunars, and are frequently sought by Lunar authorities and military units.

## Resources

*Leader:* Gyffur Ulfsson, a canny Orlanthi warlord.

*Renowned Members:* Vandolan Greybeard, Pola the Vingan.

*Membership:* 50 or so warriors with Gyffur; hundreds more in secret since the failed rebellion of 1613.

*Headquarters:* No set temple. The Hidden Gale is invoked by the chief whenever needed. A hard-core fifty members remain in constant attendance on the chief, but they coordinate other troublemakers over a wide area, sometimes leading large raids that attract several hundred temporary members.

*Other Contacts:* Most people of Sartar worship Orlanth and are sympathetic to the cause of the Hidden Gale. They provide food, hiding, and information, thus allowing the Hidden Gale to operate as guerrillas.

## Organization

Despite the small number of core members, Gyffur leads a traditional Orlanthi warband, organized like a war clan. When it is time for action he accepts the sworn oaths of other warband leaders, with himself as the chief of the temporary "clan" so formed.

## Clan Members

Only worshippers of the Storm Pantheon are allowed to take the oath of secrecy. These common people form the bulk of the members, who live and work in their own communities but assist the Hidden Gale in whatever way they can. Gyffur's core followers are all warband weaponthanes, who must be recommended to Gyffur by a sworn member before acceptance. Only those who have sworn dire oaths of loyalty are allowed to worship Barantaros and learn the secret of the Hidden Gale. Employment is without pay, for the work done by the Hidden Gale is that of liberation of the homeland.

## Hidden Gale Weaponthane Keyword

*Entry Requirements:* A willingness to put one's life on the line for the good of the cause and an ability to live the hard life of a warrior on the move. Also must become an initiate of Barantaros, and must swear oaths of loyalty and secrecy.

*Physical Skills:* Bodyguard, Ride, Sword Fighting.

*Mental Skills:* Local Area Knowledge, Spot Ambush, Warband Tactics.

*Personality:* Businesslike Fighter.

*Magic:* Initiate or devotee access to Barantaros, the Hidden Gale.

*Living Standard:* Common.

*Equipment:* Whatever is available, often only weapons unless the character can provide more for himself.

## Berserker Magic

Once a character invokes berserker magic, he has become a raving death machine, and will attack anyone or anything in their way. The berserk fit lasts until the end of the combat contest, which may be prolonged if the berserker does not recognize his friends and attacks them even after all the enemy are put out of the fight! The berserker may attempt to recognize his friends by using an appropriate ability, but must do so with a penalty equal to ¼ his rating in the berserk magic ability.

The berserker can be brought out of his fit by certain magics, or by someone trying to talk him out of it. To talk a berserker out of his rage, the person must use an appropriate ability against the ability which produced the berserk rage in the first place.

Berserk magic requires that the user bid at least ½ his current AP each round, but provides an edge equal to ¼ the user's ability rating in the berserker magic.

## **Barantaros, the Hidden Gale**

One day Orlanth led the Storm Tribe warriors on a great raid and left behind only Barantaros, one of the Thunder Brothers, to guard the stead. Not long after Orlanth left, a minor god came running to Barantaros, saying that a great army of Fire Chaos was coming. Barantaros went into the hills where the Chaos army had to pass and concealed himself among the rocks and bushes. As the vile creatures roared past, Barantaros gathered his strength and rushed upon them like a whirlwind, striking here and there with seeming impunity. He routed the fiery army and was rewarded well by Orlanth when he returned from his raid.

### **Barantaros Magic Keyword**

*Entry Requirements:* Join the Hidden Gale warband.

*Physical Skills:* Ambush, Climb, Run Up Hills.

*Feat:* **Whirlwind Combat \***. This feat can be used only to augment combat abilities, and is Berserker magic.

*Secret:* **Attacking Death Gasp** (This releases the devotee's soul to attack in a new contest against his killer. The ability rating of Attacking Death Gasp is equal to the negative AP the character had at death. The character's soul fights as a whirlwind, battering the enemy with debris and snatching away his breath. The soul wind collapses when all enemies are killed or at sundown, whichever comes first.)

*Worshippers:* Members of the Hidden Gale warband.

*Other Connections:* Barantaros is one of the Storm Tribe. His followers are a rebel band, welcomed by any Heortling who resists the Empire.

*Disadvantages:* Hidden Gale members are fanatic foes of the Empire and are detected as such by appropriate magics. Members are not resurrected.



## Sample Characters for the Hidden Gale Clan

### Saewulf Bjrinjolfsson

*Saewulf Bjrinjolfsson was a weaponthane from the Blue Rock Clan of the Torkani Tribe in northern Sartar. Another Blue Rock clansman betrayed him to the Lunars when he went to raid a caravan on the Pavis road and he was made to flee into the hills to escape. Saewulf has sworn on the sword of Humakt to have his vengeance on the traitor and to rid Sartar of every boot-licking collaborator. From his time hiding in Prax, Saewulf has adopted the habit of "counting coup". He will touch a future victim with his coup stick and so mark him; he gives his victims a few segments of Yelm's journey before he hunts them down and butchers them like animals.*

**Keywords:** Heortling, Warrior, Devotee of Orlanth Adventurous, Initiate of Barantaros.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat 5w (Spear and Shield, Sword and Shield), Acute Hearing 17, Run Up Hills 17, Ride Horse 17.

**Mental Skills:** Knowledge of Dragon Pass Geography 13, Spot Ambush 17, Warband Tactics 17, Speak Praxian 13.

**Affinities:** **Combat** 1w (Armor of Woad, Enchant Iron, Enchant Silver, Flickering Blade, Leaping Shield, Overbear Foe, Swordhelp); **Movement** 17 (Burst of Speed, Lift Objects with Wind, Rock-jumping, Run Over Mud, Run up Cliffs, Sunset Leap); **Wind** 17 (Call Clouds, Call Wind, Change Wind Strength, Drive Away Clouds, Hear Words on the Wind).

**Feats:** **Whirlwind Combat\*** 1w; **Mark Target** 19 (in coup stick; if the stick overcomes the target's magical resistance then they are marked for coup, any Praxian can see the mark).

**Relationships:** Member of the Blue Rock Clan 13, Loyal to Hidden Gale 17, Devoted to Orlanth, Adventurous 17, Initiate of Barantaros 17, Hate Lunars 13, Vengeance 13.

**Flaws:** Saewulf is a known exile and rebel. His vicious attacks on Orlanthi collaborators have made him unwelcome in many clans that would otherwise help his cause.

**Wealth:** 15.

**Equipment:** Praxian Coup Stick, Sword 13, Spear 13, Armor (Leather Armor and Helm, Shield) 12.

**Combat Tactics:** If he has time, Saewulf uses his feats of Flickering Blade and Swordhelp to augment his Close Combat before calling on Barantaros' Whirlwind Combat to enter a berserk frenzy. Otherwise he will spend an unrelated action to use Whirlwind Combat. Any task involving Lunars is augmented by Hate Lunar, a bonus to oppose them and a penalty if he is trying to be nice to them. If he is bored, Saewulf will chose an Orlanthi collaborator in the area, or a Lunar soldier and "count coup" before hunting the person down.

### Volr Speaks-with-Wind

*Volr Speaks-with-Wind is a Godi from the Red Cow Clan in the Cinsina Tribe. He is a renown poet and debater with a voice that can carry for miles on the wind. With his bodyguard Aelu and his apprentice Erthul he wanders Sartar spreading the ways of Barantaros and helping in local worship of Orlanth the Adventurer. Wherever he meets a Lunar missionary he eagerly engages her in debate, which he usually wins. Volr carries the Horn of Valind on a silver chain around his neck. He cares deeply for his people; he*

*takes no unnecessary risks with their safety and does everything he can to help them. You could call him an Orlanthi Missionary.*

**Keywords:** Heortling, Godi, Devotee of Orlanth Adventurous, Initiate of Barantaros.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat 13 (Spear and Shield).

**Mental Skills:** Mythology of Orlanth 1w, Pray to Orlanth 17, Mythology of Barantaros 17, Initiate into Barantaros 17, Sense Presence of Spirits Nearby 17, Debate Theology 1w, Oration 13, Compose Poetry 13.

**Affinities:** **Combat** 17 (Armor of Woad, Enchant Iron, Enchant Silver, Flickering Blade, Leaping Shield, Overbear Foe, Swordhelp); **Movement** 17 (Burst of Speed, Lift Objects with Wind, Rock-jumping, Run over Mud, Run up Cliffs, Sunset Leap); **Wind** 5w (Call Clouds, Call Wind, Change Wind Strength, Drive Away Clouds, Hear Words on the Wind, Carrying Voice).

**Feat:** **Whirlwind Combat\*** 17; **Blizzard** 13 (in Horn of Valind).

**Relationships:** Member of the Red Cow Clan 13, Loyal to Hidden Gale 17, Devotee of Orlanth Adventurous 17, Initiate of Barantaros 17, Follower 13 (Aelu), Warrior 17, Wind affinity 13, Follower 13 (Erthul, Wind affinity 17, Mythology of Orlanth 13), Love Heortlings.

**Wealth:** 15.

**Equipment:** Spear 13, Leather Armor and Shield 12, Horn of Valind.

**Combat Tactics:** Volr usually stands back from combat and uses his wind magic to batter opponents. In desperate fights he sounds the Horn of Valind, which augments his wind magic by blowing a gale of ice and snow across the battlefield. Volr always conducts his debates in public and uses his Carrying Voice feat and oration skill to augment his debating.

### Gunnar the Smooth

*Gunnar the Smooth is a hunter from the Shadow Cat clan of the Tres Tribe in northern Sartar. Like the alynx he was smitten with wanderlust, and lust in general. He has traveled through most of the north staying until troubles with husbands and fathers convinced him that it was prudent to move on again. Gunnar is a lazy hunter preferring to snooze on a high branch until some prey passes below him. The only thing that he is active and energetic about is his unending pursuit of women; he is currently sought in Jonstown, Alone and by the Culbri clan for adultery.*

**Keywords:** Heortling, Hunter, Devotee of Yinkin.

**Physical Skills:** Archery 17, Stalk 1w, Close Combat 17 (Spear & Shield, Claw & Bite), Climb 17, Jump 17, Attractive 13.

**Mental Skills:** Mimic Animal Sounds 17, Track 17, Listen, Flirt 17, Light Sleeper 17, Smooth Talker 13, Womanize 17, Knowledge of Dragon Pass Geography 13.

**Affinities:** **Hunting** 1w (Grow Claws, Leap from Hiding, Move without Sound, Paralyzing Bite, Scent Foe); **Sensuality** 5w (Feel No Guilt, Seduce, Sleep Anywhere); **Wilderness Survival** 17 (Cat's Leap, Evaluate Food Quality, Land Safely, Recognize Threats Nearby, Squeeze through Narrow Place).

**Relationships:** Member of the Shadow Cat Clan 13, Devoted to Yinkin 17, Contacts in Rebel Groups Across Sartar 13.

**Flaws:** Hunted in Alone 13, Hunted in Jonstown 13, Hunted in Culbriland 13.

## Hero Wars: Role-playing in Glorantha

**Wealth:** 15.

**Equipment:** Bow and Arrows<sup>Λ3</sup>, Spear <sup>Λ3</sup>, Shield <sup>Λ1</sup>

**Combat Tactics:** Gunnar uses his smooth talking, attractive and sensuality magic to augment his womanizing skill. When hunting he will climb a tree and sleep until something passes under him. When he attacks, be it food or foe, he augments his close combat with cat's leap and grow claws and will attack with claws and teeth.

### Cutrid the Black

*Cutrid is a warrior from the Black Tusk clan of the Torkani. He is a towering man with massive muscles and a protruding jaw-line. Cutrid's appearance is intimidating to those around him, which he uses to good effect in his quest to find the Spear of Karteg that was taken by the Lunars from his tribe. Cutrid can see in the dark but is sensitive to bright light. When he undertook his quest, his Queen gave him a magical lead mace and a suit of midnight-black chainmail.*

**Keywords:** Heortling, Warrior, Devotee of Orlanth Adventurous.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat 5<sup>W</sup> (Spear and Shield, Mace and Shield, Bar Stool), Acute Hearing 17, Hide in Cover 17, Quick to Heal 13, Rippling Muscles 13, Running 17.

**Mental Skills:** Boast 17, Intimidating 13, Speak with Uz 13, Knowledge of Uz customs 13, Stay Awake 17.

**Affinities:** **Combat** 1<sup>W</sup> (Armor of Woad, Enchant Iron, Enchant Silver, Leaping Shield, Overbear Foe, Bludgeon Foe); **Movement** 1<sup>W</sup> (Burst of Speed, Lift Objects with Wind, Rock-jumping, Run over Mud, Run up Cliffs, Sunset Leap); **Wind** 17 (Call Clouds, Call Wind, Change Wind Strength, Drive Away Clouds, Hear Words on the Wind).

**Feat:** **See in Dark** 13; **Light Stealer** (enchanted into mace).

**Relationships:** Member of the Black Tusk Clan 13, Devoted to Orlanth Adventurous 17, Patron 13 (Blorgul Spear-Eater), Uz Friend 13.

**Flaws:** Sensitive Eyes 13 (bright light can dazzle him).

**Wealth:** 15.

**Equipment:** Enchanted lead mace <sup>Λ7</sup>, Black chainmail and shield <sup>Λ4</sup>, sun glasses.

**Combat Tactics:** Cutrid will augment his Close Combat with his Strength (automatic, does not take an action) and Bludgeon Foe feat. If inside, his mace will attempt to lower the light in the room by eating it, the difficulty should depend on the source of light and size of the room. If surprised, he charges into combat without his other augmentations.

### Alfrejd the Broken

*Alfrejd was a young Culbrea tribesman from the Stirlgon clan, barely out of his initiation, when he joined the ill fated Starbrow rebellion. After the defeat of the rebels, Alfrejd was one of those caught in the rout and tortured by Imperial Cossacks for information on the location of other rebels. Alfrejd was only a boy but his dour courage and refusal to talk impressed the strange horsemen from the far north. Rather than killing him, they crippled him as a sign of respect and let him go as a warning to others. Living a desperate life as a refugee, he met the Hidden Gale and their unifying hatred of the oppression gave him a new home.*

**Keywords:** Heortling, Warrior, Initiate of Vangath, Initiate of Hedkoranth.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat 17 (Spear and Shield, Sword and Shield), Ranged Combat 17 (Javelin), Keen Eyes 13, Hide in Cover 17.

**Mental Skills:** Boast 17, Cunning Mind 13, Fearless 13, Speak with Wind Children 13, Knowledge of Wind Children Customs 13, Warband Tactics 1<sup>W</sup>, Stubborn 2<sup>W</sup>.

**Affinities:** **Clouds/Rain** 17, **Combat** 17, **Flying** 5<sup>W</sup>, **Wind** 1<sup>W</sup>.

**Relationships:** Member of the Fox Hollow Clan 13, Initiate of Vangath 17, Initiate of Hedkoranth 17, Follower 13 (Wind Child, Warrior 17, Fly 13), Loyal to the Hidden Gale 13.

**Flaws:** Crippled Legs 13.

**Wealth:** 15.

**Equipment:** Sheaf of Javelins <sup>Λ3</sup>, spear <sup>Λ3</sup>, sword <sup>Λ3</sup>, leather armor and shield <sup>Λ2</sup>, large horse with very comfortable saddle, sack of smooth river stones to enchant.

**Combat Tactics:** Alfrejd can barely walk so always uses his flying magic to get around. When attacked he flies out of range of physical attacks and improvises feats such as Snatch Breath and Howling Wind with his wind magics, and will enchant the stones with his improvised Enchant Thunder Stone feat from combat magic. If he is forced into melee combat he will improvise the feat Lightning Sword and fight like a demon who is intent on dying; he always bids lots of AP in close combat. His Wind Child body-guard fights at his side.

### Dorhilla the Gleeful

*Dorhilla is a solid Malani woman of endless good cheer. The Poss clan outlawed her to avoid Imperial reprisals after she stole into the camp of a patrol and killed them in their sleep as vengeance for the death of her husband. She still laughs about it to this day. Dorhilla is a devoted aid to her friends and a fierce foe to her enemies but is best known for her constant quiet singing and contagious laugh which sounds even in the tumult of battle.*

**Keywords:** Heortling, Healer, Devotee of Bevara.

**Physical Skills:** Close Combat (Dagger, Staff, Spear & Shield) 13, First Aid 5<sup>W</sup>, Gentle Touch 17, Restrain Patient 17, Splint and Bandage 17.

**Mental Skills:** Calm Patient 17, Herbalism 17, Recognize Illness 17, Brew Healing Potion 17, Mythology of Bevara 17, Laugh 13, Sing 1<sup>W</sup>.

**Affinities:** **Healing** 1<sup>W</sup> (Diminish Injury, Heal Self Fully [*D+20W*], Remove Hurt, Stop Dying); **Self Defense** 17 (Carry Patient to Safety, Earsplitting Scream, Evade Pursuers, Hide Self).

**Feat:** **Bring Joy** (in hickory staff).

**Relationships:** Member of the Hidden Gale Clan 13, Devoted to Bevara 17, Loyal to Gyffur Ulfsson 13, Loyal to Friends 13.

**Flaws:** Fugitive from the Empire 13, Hate Lunars 13.

**Wealth:** 15.

**Equipment:** First aid kit, dagger <sup>Λ1</sup>, hickory staff with bells <sup>Λ4</sup>.

**Combat Tactics:** Dorhilla tries to avoid combat. If she has to fight she does so with a joyful song on her lips. She augment her Close Combat with Earsplitting Scream and Dodge feats. Any skill used against Lunars can be augmented by her hate for the Lunars. She learned long ago that laughter is a great healer, and augments healing with laughter and Bring Joy.

# The Hound Tower

## Narrator Information

**Benchmark:** This episode is designed for heroes whose best ability is 5W. It emphasizes physical combat.

**Premise:** A band of dog-headed raiders has been harassing farms near the players' home community. They raid for livestock, gorge themselves, and move on to the next district. Lately they have holed up in an old, ruined watchtower near the village of Oakling Nest. There are about as many raiders as player heroes and a controlled spirit-hound at the tower. Player heroes will fight the hound-men at a farmstead in *Scene 1*, and track them to their lair in *Scene 2*.

**Relationships:** Jistin, a crippled soldier, hires the heroes to defend his prize sheep. He provides minimal support in the adventure. Neighboring farmers doubt the wisdom of hiring cut-throats to fight the raiders, and will withhold support.

**Secret:** These raiders are the remnants of a small clan of Sedrali dog-folk; beastmen like fauns and minotaurs. The last enclave of the Sedrali is the Ballid Forest and the foothills of the Nidan Mountains in Ralios. Male Sedrali have human bodies with dog-heads, while females have dog bodies with human heads. They are not broos, and do not register as chaotic in any way. A person who has traveled to Ralios or who has studied Ralian people might have heard of the dog-headed people of the Nidan mountains.

### Contest Notation

To save space, we use the following notation to describe tests. We try to give you enough information to run the test as any type which fits the needs of the story, whether it is an ability test or a simple, extended or group contest.

**Objective of test (resistance):** Relevant skills (with modifiers). Other modifiers.

**Objective of Test (resistance):** This tells what the hero is trying to accomplish. It is followed by the resistance (if other than the default of 14) that he will face.

**Relevant Skills:** We list up to three abilities (in order of appropriateness) that might be relevant to the test, with modifiers to the character's ability rating, if any.

**Other Modifiers:** Any additional penalties will be listed at the end of the entry. If the entry says "physical risk," defeated characters may end up hurt, injured, or dying.

### Example

**Convince the king (3W):** Politics, Humility, Boastfulness (-3); Penalty: -3 if foreigner, -7 if from the Lunar Empire.

## Scene 1: The Pack

**Key Points:** From Jistin, retired soldier turned prosperous rancher: "That's right -- dog-headed men. I bet they're stinking dog-broos \*ptooie\*. They are faster than hares, jet-black, and damned clever. There are about as many of them as there are of you. These beasts have been moving south for weeks, and my holding is next in their path. Some people say they are guided by spells \*ach, ptooiie\*, so nobody confronts them. My neighbors put their trust in the Vigilant Idols, but I say, better living eyes than painted ones, and better offense than defense. Why, if the wars hadn't taken my two sons and my right foot, I'd face 'em myself.

"I want you to patrol around my stead. When they come tonight, as I know they will, chase them and wipe them all out. There is a leg of mutton and a keg of beer for each head you bring back. And before you go, a hearty dinner -- I insist."

### Setting: Jistin's Stead

Jistin's stone cottage sits in a grassy meadow amid dense woods and thickets. His fifty-odd sheep have been gathered into the pen. His two farmhands are supervising his apple orchard, about a mile away. At dusk, his elderly wife serves thick stew and bread; she and her husband will hide when the fighting starts. Outside, it is gloomy, cold, and raining heavily.

### The Action

Dining with Jistin and his wife, the heroes can speculate about the upcoming fight. Should they be prepared for a running battle? Will spears be better than swords? Is magic at work (storm, lunar, sorcerous, or whatever kind the heroes don't like)? Who will bag the first broo? The heroes should make a provisional plan; competing ideas can be resolved by contests between Mental or Personality abilities. Jistin has no useful advice, just loud opinions.

Jistin is delivering such an opinion when crashes and bleating interrupt him. The raiders have invaded his sheep-pen, even though it is still dusk! They are truly dog-headed men -- with their matted, wiry black hair and blazing eyes, they resemble Irish or Russian Wolfhounds. Instead of fleeing, they leap across the fence and attack, too fast for most heroes to modify their earlier plans.

**Change plans (2W):** Quick Thinking, Tactics, Other mental abilities (-5); (losers must follow plans announced earlier, at least at first).

See the end of the episode for statistics for the Sedrali. To illustrate **combat**, we present suggestions for the tactics of

## Hero Wars: Role-playing in Glorantha

the dog-men in an **extended contest**, but you might resolve the fights as **simple contests** instead.

### 1. What kind of contest?

*We suggest that you run the fight as **concurrent extended contests**, because each dog-man pairs off with a hero and tries to isolate him or her.*

### 2. Pre-Contest Augmentation/Edges; Calculate AP

The Sedrali will use their Run Fast to augment their Spear Fighting. They may also use their Combat Fetish, possibly gaining an additional 12 APs. *Rather than rolling for the augmentation, we suggest the narrator assume that their surprise attack indicates an automatic success.* Thus, the beast-men each start with 21 AP + any APs receive from the fetish (*which we suggest you roll separately for each*).

The heroes' initial augmentation choices are limited by their earlier plans, as noted above. Armed heroes have some **edge** against the beast-men's lack of armor.

### 3. Rounds

The beast-men go first. As the **actor**, each beast-man pits Spear Attack against the target's chosen ability; *we suggest each bid 7 AP in the initial attack.*

Each hero should explain his or her tactics each round. Tear forward and attack? Hold the attacker at bay? Wind up a mighty axe-stroke? Gain higher ground? Drive the attacker back over the fence, or away from it? *If successful, an unusual tactic might gain a point or two of edge, or cancel a foe's augmentation.*

A hero who tries to **withdraw** from a contest or move to aid a friend must use an **unrelated action** defeating the beast-man's Corner Foe with his Tactics or a similar ability in a simple contest; success lets the hero withdraw or join his buddy on his or her next round. The dog-man will follow if the heroes get together, leading to a **group extended contest** with the four opponents.

In any case, wagering more than a third of your AP at once should reflect a dangerous but potentially rewarding tactic. Don't let players risk high AP on actions that are not, in fact, risky.

### 4. Ending

The dog-men will withdraw when all of the heroes are injured or fleeing, or when one beast-man is defeated (whether or not it is killed). Heroes who want to pursue them must finish the contest, pitting movement abilities against the beast-men's Run Fast. After one round of pursuit, the beast-men will enter the darkening woods, where they gain a +6 edge to withdraw unless their pursuers have abilities appropriate to operating in the woods. If feasible, the dog-men might use their Set Ambush skill to double back and ambush a recklessly pursuing hero.

### 5. Aftermath

Tracking the survivors through rainy woods at night has a **resistance** of 10W. Success brings the heroes to **Scene 2** in the dead of night, with penalties if the heroes don't have

some way to see in the dark (see The Food Thief, pg 4). Otherwise, they can pick up the trail in the morning.

## Scene 2: The Tower

**Key Points:** By daylight, tracking the beast-men across muddy ground is an **automatic success**, though the trail is long, requiring about five hours' travel on foot. The trail runs due south and passes near Oakling Nest, a village as yet untouched by the attacks. Heroes can detour to Oakling Nest, or move on to the ruined tower.

### Setting -- Oakling Nest

A cluster of huts protected by a wattle fence with guardian deities carved into its posts. The villagers shuffle out to greet the heroes, hesitantly brandishing sticks and rakes; they fear the hounds they've heard about, but they also fear powerful strangers. They "don't know nuthin'" unless the heroes overcome their Fear Outsiders 10 by gaining their respect (appropriate Community or shared Religion abilities), or putting them at ease (Entertainment skills, Farm Knowledge). In that case, they admit to noticing a band of human ne'er-do-wells, dressed in skins and feathers with dog hats or dog masks, who have been passing through the woods lately. They seem to be living in a ruined tower, barely visible in the distance on the crest of a ridge. The villagers avoid these folk, whom they suspect are soulless sorcerers, "like we thought you was before we knew you was decent." Assured of the heroes' intentions, the villagers give them bread and fruit for the rest of the journey.

### Setting -- The Ruined Tower

Both the tracks and the villagers' information lead here. The tower perches on the end of a gentle ridge. The ridge is forested along its crest and has scattered trees along its wide slopes, while the narrow north slope below the tower is bare and grassy. The ground for 150' around the tower is cleared of trees, but overgrown with scrub. The rain has stopped, but a moderate breeze blows from east to west (the same direction as the trail).

Some long-ago king built this circular watchtower from rough-hewn stones. The upper stories have collapsed, leaving only the bottom floor with its rotted plank ceiling, lightly maintained as a shelter by local hunters. The walls are 10' high, with a gaping doorway facing Oakling Nest to the east, and another facing west. The interior is a 30' wide circle of bare earth, into which the hound folk have dug a few shallow pits.

Inside the tower are several late-adolescent dog-headed boys, dressed in hound hides, their skin dyed black with berry juice and animal grease. There are also five dogs with human heads and a hound spirit, Old Sideways Bite, who helps the beast-men. Close examination will reveal that all the dog-headed men are male, and all the human-headed dogs are female.

## Hero Wars: Role-playing in Glorantha

### The Action

The heroes can see both “men” and “hounds” leaving the tower periodically to throw out waste or look for rabbits, then returning. If they have appropriate abilities, they may be able to see that the “men” have dog heads, and that the “dogs” have human heads. They may be able to detect a spirit within the tower, too.

Two hours before dusk the males go to raid another stead, leaving behind the spirit, the females, and any injured comrades. They will return after midnight to move their pack to a new hideout. If they ever sense intruders the beast-men will fall back to the tower and defend it.

Player heroes must decide how to approach the tower and gain an advantage over the dog-men. They will likely use Stealth abilities, so remember that heroes suffer a -2 Stealth handicap per **rank** of armor they wear. *The heroes might use some or all of these options, and narrators may want to suggest them to heroes who seem unsure of what to do.*

### 1. Scouting

Before making their attack, the heroes may want to detach scouts or send some warriors to circle the tower and cut off escape,. Splitting the party in the face of uncertain foes requires an **ability test** (Bravery or a military skill like Scout or Skirmishing). Losers must remain with the majority of the group or suffer a -3 handicap due to their nervousness.

By deciding to “get close,” the scout can gain a **bump** on his scouting roll. However, if he does so, any failure is bumped down instead because of his closeness.

A victorious scout can outflank the tower instead of reporting back to the main force. Each flanker penalizes the beast-men’s withdrawal attempts by -2 per level of scouting success, but may not participate in any combat.

***Scout the tower** (17, 2W if the scout goes upwind or “gets close”): Tracking, Woods Lore.*

**Complete Victory:** The scout sees all there is to see in “Setting -- The Ruined Tower” above, and can lead the main party by a secret approach that gives a +5 bonus to Stealth abilities.

**Major Victory:** The scout sees all there is to see.

**Minor Victory:** The scout sees about half the things in the setting before retreating.

**Marginal Victory:** The scout sees about a third of the information in setting before being forced to retreat.

**Marginal Defeat:** The scout learns nothing, but raises no alarms.

**Minor Defeat:** The scout learns nothing and the beast-men grow wary, gaining a +5 bonus to Perception abilities.

**Major Defeat:** The scout learns nothing, plus he must defeat a beast-man guard in close combat before returning. Any failure in the combat means that the scout is captured in addition to contest results. Even if the scout

succeeds, the beast-men gain +10 to their Perception abilities because of the skirmish.

**Complete Defeat:** As **major defeat**, above, but the scout must beat three beast-men at once (getting a **multiple attacker penalty**).

### 2. Divide and Conquer

The heroes might improvise tactics to draw off some of the defenders.

***Draw off defenders** (12): Tactics, Imitate Animal Sounds, Hunting (-3; +3 to an attempt involving food smells, because the beast-men are hungry.*

**Complete/Major Victory:** Half of the human-headed dogs and dog-headed men leave the tower.

**Marginal/Minor Victory:** Half of the human-headed dogs leave the tower.

**Failure:** As above under **Scouting**.

### 3. Sneak Attack

When the heroes decide to assault the tower, they will probably try to sneak up on it. *We suggest treating this as a group simple contest.*

***Sneak up on the tower** (17, 1W if the heroes are upwind): Sneak, Hide, Camouflage.*

**Marginal:** Winners surprise the losers at under 50 yards, allowing losers only one round of ranged attacks at a -3 penalty before close combat.

**Minor:** Winners attack losers at close range, allowing no defensive missiles. Losers also suffer a -2 penalty in the coming fight. If the beast-men win at this level, they can use their Set Ambush ability to augment their Throw Spear.

**Major:** As **minor victory**, plus losers must spend the first round of combat either withdrawing or being shocked (an unrelated action).

**Complete:** As **major victory**, but for the first three rounds.

Ultimately, the heroes will face the beast-men in combat, perhaps in a **group extended contest**. Such combats are modified by the tactics noted above, and the individual capabilities noted below. Also, any dog-man defending a tower doorway gains a +3 edge, while any creature fighting upslope of its opponent gains a +1 edge.

**Combat Tactics:** If they are able (narrator’s discretion), the beast-men will augment Throw Spear with Set Ambush before battle, throw spears on the first two rounds, then close to attack with spear. They will fight until half of their starting number is defeated; then withdraw if they can.

## Aftermath

If the beast-men win, they will strip and bind any defeated heroes (resistance 13), then argue amongst themselves in their strange tongue. In the end they leave injured or dying heroes to their fates, and sell the others into slavery. They don't know local ways well enough to seek ransoms.

If the heroes win, they will find that the defeated beast-men are dying, having squandered their lives in reckless fighting. There is a chilling, drawn-out howl from Old Sideways Bite, which slowly fades in volume as his spirit recedes from Glorantha. The beast-men leave behind mostly bone and twig fetishes that, at best, only a shaman could find useful. The tower is an unremarkable ruin.

## Denouement: What's the Story?

*Key Points:* If they win, the heroes have slain several men and hounds. But who were they, and why were they here? Are they really broos? They don't detect as chaotic using any criteria that the heroes can come up with.

Gloranthans respond to mysteries by fashioning explanations for them, based on local prejudices and mythologies. The heroes must agree on a story for Jistin. Any surviving dog-men will not explain themselves.

The question of who these men were and what they were doing must be solved by a contest pitting the heroes against each other.

*Explain the dog-men (vs. rival explanations like the broo theory): Animal Lore, Argumentative, Mythology, Rhetoric, General Knowledge (-15); (losing explanations sound wrong, even if true).*

Every hero should offer an idea. People from Dragon Pass know about the Telmori, a tribe of werewolves, but others may point out that these creatures were not wolves or men, but a mix of dogs and men. Everyone knows of broos – chaos creatures who have cloven feet and the head of an animal, but the bodies have regular human or dog bodies, and don't detect as chaos. A Well-Traveled hero might know of the Sedrali dog-men in distant Ralios (-15 improvisational modifier). Finally, heroes can argue from Hate or Fear personality traits: no opportunity to blame Small Bad Things on the Big Bad Thing should be wasted.

The winner of the contest should present the story to Jistin, using a Storytelling ability modified by +3 per level of victory in the contest, and by the narrator's sense of its plausibility. Failure means that Jistin will request a more thorough search before he pays off. ("You say there was only this lot, but there may be more, and I bet they're covered in fleas and disease.")

Otherwise, Jistin pays the beer and mutton as promised. Each hero gains the usual 1-5 hero points, plus a Relationship with the community at 12 and 3 hero points for the reputation they've gained as local trouble-shooters. These last 3 hero points must be spent either to increase the Relationship by +2 or gain training from Jistin in Spear and Shield Fighting.

## Sedrali Beast-men

### Dog-headed Human (male)

*Keywords:* Hunter, Member of Sedrali Tradition.

*Significant Abilities:* Bite 16, Hide 17, Large 16, Listen 17, Run Fast 18, Sedrali Tradition Knowledge 14, Set Ambush 17, Spear Fighting 17, Throw Spear 17, Track by Scent 2w.

*Magic:* 1 fetish useful in combat and 1 fetish useful in hunting, both Might 12.

*Weapons:* Bite ^1, Spear ^3, Thrown Spear ^2.

*Armor:* None.

*Magic:* 1 fetish useful in combat, and 1 fetish useful in hunting, both Might 12 and with an emphasis on abilities that dogs would possess.

*Notes:* Several runes are prominent on their gear and bodies:



### Human-headed Dog (female)

*Keywords:* Hunter, Member of Sedrali Tradition.

*Significant Abilities:* Bite 18, Corner Foe 12, Knock Down Prey 13, Run Fast 2w, Sedrali Tradition Knowledge 14.

*Magic:* 1 fetish useful in combat and 1 fetish useful in hunting, both Might 12.

*Weapons:* Bite ^0.

*Armor:* none

*Combat Tactics:* The females aid the males as **followers** with 13 APs each, pairing up as evenly as possible. This allows males to use the Corner Foe ability. If fighting alone, a female nips at her opponent's lower legs, trying to cripple him (**trading AP for wounds**).

## Old Sideways Bite

*Might:* 20.

*Combat Tactics:* Old Sideways Bite lends APs to whomever needs them most. He can use an unrelated action to go instantly to another beast-man's aid. He will not initiate Spirit Combat, but will fight anyone who attacks him that way. When he is active, non-magical senses can hear a big creature growling and pacing around, but can't see him.

## Secret

These beast-men from Ralios follow dog and darkness spirits. In a dream, Darkness told them to start a heroquest by finding a ruined tower in Dragon Pass, then crossing into Hell to join his army. This band has investigated several ruined towers in its travels, but none of them resembles the dream sent by Deshkorgos.