



# GIANTCRAFT



# Advanced **Dungeons & Dragons**



# GIANTCRAFT

by Ray Winninger



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## The Colossal Kingdom



**THE COMMOTION OUTSIDE** her door reminded Illyra of an ancient elven riddle: What is the only gem shattered as easily as glass? The answer, of course, is silence.

"Come, come! Open this door at once! My master would speak with you!"

Illyra shouted something unintelligible ("Nowhere to roam?") and refocused her concentration upon the scroll spread out before her.

"If you do not open this door immediately, I shall boot it down!"

Illyra's tormentor paused before making good on his threat, allowing her to re-immers herself in the scroll and its secrets.

"Once again, I warn you, madam. If you do not open up at once, I shall kick this door to splinters." Another long pause.

When the first sharp kick shook her tiny library to its foundation, Illyra finally rose from her bench, opened the window beside her long reading table, and thrust her head out over the street. From this new vantage, she recognized the several men who stood before her doorway as the merchant Borabel and his bodyguards.

"Oh, it's you. Why are you still here? I told you. . . nobody's home!" Illyra relatched the window and returned to her studies.

When the second loud kick clinked and rattled her collection of Askavarian pottery, she finally relented and ordered her page to fetch the cretins into the sanctum, where she joined them a few moments later.

"All right, Borabel, you finally have my attention. Why don't you tell me what coaxed you from your hole?"

"You should take care, Illyra," Borabel sniveled. "My brother-in-law personally serves the earl and he . . ."

". . . is a fat, ill-mannered toad, just like yourself. My time is precious, peddler. Quickly now, what brings you here?"

Visibly fuming, Borabel reached beneath his

voluminous purple robes and produced a thick disk of tarnished gold. The disk was so large that it filled his entire hand, fingertip to thumb. "I need you to examine this amulet."

Illyra took the heavy disk in her own hand and rubbed her fingertips along its surface. "Where did you get this?"

"That scoundrel Varvig owes me two hundred dantars. He assures me that this covers his debt, though I can't believe a single word that passes through his cursed lips. He says he found the thing on one of his insipid adventures."

Genuinely interested in the strange object, Illyra stared and scratched her head as Borabel grew evermore impatient. Finally, he could no longer bear the suspense.

"Well?"

"Give my page 25 dantars and I'll tell you what it is."

"You're a thief! I've heard talk that you consult with street rabble for a few scant silvers!"

"I charge what my patrons can afford to pay. Perhaps someone else might help you." Illyra held the disk in her outstretched arms, offering to return it to its owner. Again, Borabel scowled.

"Very well. Twenty five dantars." On cue, one of the merchant's bodyguards stepped forward and presented Illyra's page with a suitably weighty coin purse. "Now speak."

Illyra continued to brush her fingers across the disk's surface. "First of all, it's not an amulet—it's a coin."

"A coin? Rubbish! That thing weighs 2 stone—no man could carry more than a few of those. I want my 25 dantars returned, you charlatan!" Borabel's guards began murmuring amongst themselves.

"You're right—no man could carry an entire purse of such coins. But coins such as this were never carried by men."

Intrigued, Borabel and his guards suddenly grew silent.

"Have you ever heard of Ostoria?"



The unbroken silence from Borabel and his men meant they had not.

“Three thousand years ago, an empire of giants stretched across the mountains of Faerûn. No one knows exactly when, how, or why the colossal kingdom collapsed—some say the collapse came in the wake of an epic struggle against an armada of dragons; others say the empire fell amidst friction between the giant tribes themselves.”

“And this empire of giants was named Ostoria?”

“Yes. This is an Ostorian coin.”

“What’s it worth?”

“Ostorian coins are very rare. I’d say it’s worth perhaps five times Varvig’s debt—to the appropriate parties, of course.”

The flames of greed burned bright in Borabel’s eyes. He spent the next several moments considering how he might spend a thousand dantars of unexpected profit. Once he noticed his guards staring at him, expecting him to speak, he violently shook his head and returned his consciousness to its present surroundings.

“This is absolute rubbish! Giants! Hah! This thing is worth no more than its raw gold value. I want my purse back!”

Illyra couldn’t hide her amusement. “I’ll return triple the fee in exchange for the coin.”

“You’re a thief!” Borabel shouted as he snatched the disk from Illyra’s hands. He hurriedly exited the library with a well-practiced sneer, his guards stumbling to keep up.

“Mistress,” wondered Illyra’s page. “Don’t giants assume that humans bearing Ostorian coins are tomb robbers? Shouldn’t you have warned the merchant? If he foolishly tries to sell that coin to a giant, he’ll be killed!”

Illyra tilted her head skyward and scratched her chin in mock surprise.

“Oh! Did I forget to mention all that? My, I am getting careless in my old age.”



The glory of ancient Ostoria may be gone, but the giants themselves live on; the last of the ancient tribes maintain scattered strongholds near the Endless Ice Sea, a lone and tormented stone giant carves incredible sculptures from the ancient mountains overlooking the Dragon Coast, and fire giant shamans dance along the rims of volcanoes located amidst the Thunder Peaks. Today, the thundering footsteps and ear-splitting taunts of the *Jotunbrud* (Joe-tuhn-brood, as giants refer to themselves in their ancient tongue) are occasionally heard from the wastes of the Savage North to the plains of the Shining South. Although the last great empire of giants was extinguished more than several thousand years ago, the giants continue to flourish and look ahead to a day when the Colossal Kingdom might rise again.

Giants are among the oldest inhabitants of Toril. Their history dates back to long before the collapse of the Raurin Empire and the beginning of recorded history in the Realms. In fact, according to their own ancient lore, the giants were the very first creatures to dominate their environment and gain sentience. Throughout their many centuries of rise and fall, of course, the *Jotunbrud* have acquired many secrets. Now you have an opportunity to share them.

In this sourcebook you’ll read about the collapse of the Colossal Kingdom and the tragic fate of the giant gods, who led their own worshipers into their present state of disarray. You’ll meet the giants and giant-kin themselves and explore their varied cultures and customs. You’ll explore ancient secrets of sorcery with giant-kin runecasters and man the forges alongside legendary fire giant artificers. You’ll visit important landmarks and explore ancient ruins.



## How To Use This Book

Most of the material found in FOR6 *Giantcraft* fits into one of four categories.

- *Historical information*, like the histories of the giant races that compose “Annam’s Legacy,” continues to elaborate upon the historical background of the FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting. As far as actual play is concerned, historical information is best used as inspiration for original adventures. In other words, if a history speaks of an ancient city that was buried beneath an avalanche long ago, DMs should think about crafting an adventure in which the city’s ruins are discovered. Such adventures help provide campaigns with a “sweeping epic feel” and allow players to explore the rich history of the Realms for themselves. This sort of exploration is often half the fun of any AD&D® campaign.
- *Rules* provide new or expanded game information to help DMs integrate giants and their special capabilities into their campaigns.
- *Locales* are detailed locations (often mapped and fully keyed) that can be incorporated into adventures with minimal effort.
- *Cultural information* explores the giants’ customs, attitudes, and beliefs. Cultural information is an excellent source of tidbits DMs can use to effectively role-play giants in their games.

## Other Useful Works

This sourcebook assumes DMs are using the AD&D 2nd Edition game rules, but those who are still playing under the 1st Edition rules should experience few problems when converting this book for their own use.

Use of the *Player’s Handbook*, the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide*, and (especially) the *MONSTROUS MANUAL™* (or the appropriate *MONSTROUS COMENDIUM®* sheets) is necessary for complete enjoyment of this product. In addition to these

indispensable items, the following works may prove useful:

Troy Denning’s “Twilight Trilogy” (*The Ogre’s Pact*, *The Giant Among Us*, and *The Titan of Twilight*) introduced readers to Realmsian giants and giant-kin and their customs, and Mr. Denning’s short story “Twilight” published in the *Realms of Infamy* anthology provides further insight.

2128 *Monstrous Mythology* details some of the giant gods discussed in this work.

2135 *The Complete Book of Humanoids* originally presented the various giant-kin as player character races.

## An Important Note

Note that *Giantcraft* concerns itself only with the giants of the FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting. Giants in other settings may vary from the customs and details presented here.

Although the AL-QADIM® Campaign Setting is an official part of the overall FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting, the giants of Zakhara are not related to the giants detailed in this product in any way. Zakharan giants are enshrouded in mysteries all their own.

Without further ado, then, let us begin at the beginning. . .





**THE SAGA OF THE GIANT** dynasties begins long before the Realms' recorded history, with the great giant god Annam All-Father. According to the giants themselves, Annam was one of the very first gods to take an interest in Toril. The validity of this claim, of course, will remain forever shrouded in the mists of time, though it is undeniable that Annam's progeny—the giants themselves—strode across Toril's dusty steppes centuries before humans, elves, dwarves, or any other humanoid or demihuman race.

Shortly after he was attracted to Toril, Annam married a lesser demigoddess who manifested herself as a vast mountain located on the edge of the region now known as The Cold Lands. Known variously as *Sonnhild* (in ancient Thorass), *Deronain* (in Auld Dwarvish), and *Othea* (in the common tongue of the giants), the demigoddess soon bore Annam several sons. Although he had already sired several immortals (most of whom are still worshiped by giants and giant-kin), Othea's sons were Annam's first *terrestrial* children, and for that reason he was particularly enthralled by them.

When the last of his terrestrial sons came of age, Annam favored them all by establishing a great kingdom in their honor. This kingdom, ultimately known as *Ostoria* ("father's seat" in the language of the giants), stretched across Faerûn from the Cold Lands to the Vilhon Reach.

As Ostoria grew, Annam subdivided the kingdom into several regions, one for each of his favorite sons: Vilmos claimed dominion over the seas and lakes, Nicias was ceded the skies, Ruk claimed the kingdom's rolling hills, Ottar was granted the cold wastes to the north, Masud received the fiery peaks to the south, and Obadai claimed the cold caverns of the Underdark. Lanaxis, the eldest son of Annam

and Othea, claimed the cold, vast plains as his own and was accepted as a natural leader by the others due to his great size and strength. Shortly after the kingdom was subdivided, Lanaxis constructed Voninheim (also known as the "Bleak Palace"), a sturdy citadel that served as the Ostorian capital for the next thousand years.

Over the course of the next several centuries, Annam's sons founded the dynasties that became the hill giants (Ruk), stone giants (Obadai), frost giants (Ottar), fire giants (Masud), cloud giants (Nicias), storm giants (Vilmos), wood giants (Dunmore) and titans (Lanaxis). The twisted brood of Annam's two-headed son, Arno/Julian, were ultimately known as *ettin* ("runt" in the ancient form of the giant tongue).

## War With the Dragons

At almost the same time Ostoria was founded—or so say the giants—the first dragons started hatching all across Faerûn. Of course, no one knows the exact origins of dragonkind, but the venerable legends of the giants speak of dragon eggs raining down upon Toril like meteors. To this day, some of the less enlightened giant tribes believe the stars in the sky are dragon queens preparing to scatter their eggs across the heavens.

At first, the giants paid little attention to the few drakelings they discovered in icy caverns and secluded valleys. But within a few centuries, after some of the dragons reached maturity, the giants recognized the great reptiles as powerful and cunning interlopers who threatened Ostoria's very existence. Soon, open warfare raged between giants and dragonkind with the rich resources of Faerûn awaiting the victor. These epic clashes are well documented in the classical ballads of dwarves, elves, and the giants themselves.





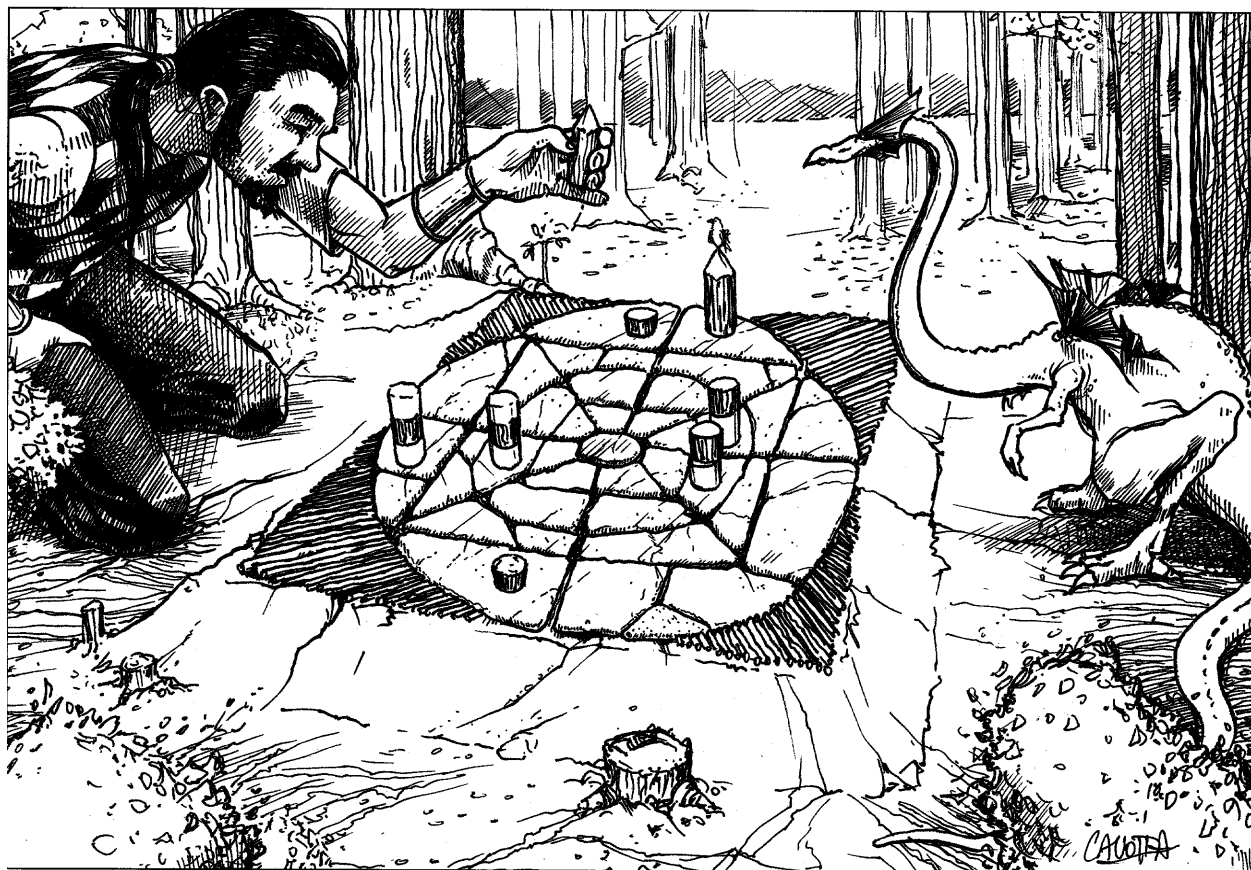
One such ballad still heard in the mead halls of giant steadings was composed by Hrotun, son of Ottar and the first of the frost giant *skalds*. It dramatizes the saga of Hjurnur Wyrmever, a notorious giant hero.

The Opening Stanza<sup>1</sup> of the “Saga of the Dragon Queller” (“*Sal Hotun Wyrmever*”), as interpreted and annotated by Learned Rundi-gast, Sage of Waterdeep:

I pour mead<sup>2</sup> to the All-Father for  
Hrjurnur, son of Hjurgen,  
leveler of Ranauroch<sup>3</sup>,  
son of Ottar,

Jarl of the northern wind-teeth<sup>4</sup>,  
son of grand Annam,  
All Seeing, All Knowing, All Quelling,  
All Father<sup>5</sup> –  
Fireheart<sup>6</sup>,  
Mighty reaver of the wyrm’s core<sup>7</sup>,  
He who howled at the sun<sup>8</sup>,  
He of the quenched heart<sup>9</sup>,  
He who drowned in the river of swords<sup>10</sup>, . . .

<sup>1</sup>This fragment beautifully illustrates the classical construction of the Jotunbrud saga. The first stanza always establishes the identity and lineage of the hero before moving on to a summary of the work to follow.





<sup>2</sup>“pour mead”: frost giant skalds describe their sagas as the “mead (or drink) of Annam.” Here, the skald is announcing that Hrotun is the subject of the saga.

<sup>3</sup>From contextual clues, it seems that “Ranauroch” was an ancient kingdom or citadel. So far, to the best of my knowledge, no one has uncovered the ruins of such a city. For obvious reasons, many scholars theorize that these ruins lie somewhere beneath the desert of Anauroch.

<sup>4</sup>“wind teeth”: mountains

<sup>5</sup>These first eight lines establish the lineage of Hjurnur. Each line describes the figure most recently introduced. Thus, Hjurgen is the “leveler of Ranauroch,” Ottar is the “Jarl of the northern wind teeth,” and Annam is the “All Seeing, All Knowing, All Quelling, All Father.” The lineage is separated from the summary of the saga by a distinctive musical cue, depicted here as a dash.

<sup>6</sup>“Fireheart”: brave warrior

<sup>7</sup>“the wyrm’s core”: the dragon’s backbone. Later in the saga, Hrotun demonstrates his strength by snapping a dragon’s backbone over his knee.

As an unrelated matter of interest, it now appears likely that the word “wurm”—used as a synonym for “dragon” in a wide variety of languages spoken throughout the Realms—was originally derived from Jotun, the tongue of the ancient giants.

<sup>8</sup>According to ancient giant legends, the sun is home to a great fiery dragon god that led dragonkind in the war against the giants.

<sup>9</sup>“quenched heart”: broken heart. Later in the

saga, after losing a contest of riddles, Hrotun is forced to allow the Queen of Dragons to devour his own child.

<sup>10</sup>“the river of swords”: blood. At the saga’s conclusion, Hrotun strikes down a dragon king and drowns in its spilt blood.

After more than a thousand years of warfare, Ostoria finally reached a truce with dragonkind. Accounts of the truce and its origins vary. According to ancient dwarven manuscripts, the dragons sued for peace in order to prepare for a great civil war that led to the separation of the chromatic and metallic orders. According to the texts and ballads of the giants, on the other hand, Annam and the dragon god played a game of *wah-ree* to settle the war, the game ending in stalemate.

By the time the war against dragonkind concluded, Ostoria had shrunk to only a shadow of its former self. On the day the truce was declared, the nation of giants occupied only the northernmost edge of Faerûn—the areas now known as the Savage North and the Cold Lands.

## Annam Betrayed

Shortly before the giants’ war with dragonkind came to its bitter conclusion, Othea, Annam’s wife, developed an interest in a minor sea god known as Ulutiu. (This was hardly her first adulterous foray; long before this, she had betrayed Annam with Vaprak—resulting in the creation of the ogre race.) During the last few years of the war, while Annam was preoccupied, the pair carried on a passionate affair they hoped to conceal from the jealous All-Father. Ultimately, the union of Othea and Ulutiu produced four sons, who later founded the four giant-kin dynasties: firbolg, verbeeg, voadkyn, and fomorian. (Actually, there is some dispute about whether the



voadkyn are actually the sons of Annam or Ulutiu as noted in “The Kin.” For their part, the giants themselves place the voadkyn in the latter category.) To this day, the enmity between giant and giant-kin stems from the illegitimacy of Ulutiu’s offspring in the eyes of Annam and his sons.

Despite Othea’s best efforts, Annam eventually discovered her dalliance and sought revenge upon Ulutiu. Although accounts of the All-Father’s retribution vary, most giants accept the version of events popularized by the vast friezes at Hotun-Shûl, an enormous underground temple located somewhere beneath the Ice Spires. Fabled for their artistry and expanse (no human artist could possibly hew such colossal masterpieces from the living rock of the caverns), the friezes were sculpted by Illsenstaad, second son of Obadai and one of the earliest stone giants. Although the friezes themselves haven’t been glimpsed since Hotun-Shûl was razed by mysterious subterranean marauders more than 400 years ago, sketches and interpretations crafted by artisans who once visited the temple are available in the Realms’ larger libraries.

A Fragment From “The Meanderings Upon the Friezes of Hotun-Shûl” by Skrom Jek, Master Builder of Thay, as translated and annotated by Learned Rundigast, Sage of Waterdeep:

*Ulutiu’s final breath is depicted as a violent tempest that shatters the ziggurat at Sheol-Div (panel #77).*

*His corpse is said to land on an icy death-barge located in the Cold Ocean (panel #81).*

*Once the barge sinks beneath the ocean, Ulutiu’s enchanted amulet begins to freeze the surrounding waters, creating the Great Glacier and Endless Ice Sea (panel #83).*

After the war against dragonkind ended,

Annam planned to sire another son capable of restoring Ostoria to its former greatness. Othea was so distressed by Ulutiu’s death, however, that she refused to bear the All-Father more children. Refusing to be denied, Annam tricked the demigoddess by appearing to her in the form of a divine wind that blew uninvited across her rocky slopes.

Othea knew immediately that the son she carried in her womb was sired by Annam; she initially refused to bear the child. Eventually, she and Annam ended their struggle in a stalemate: In return for the All-Father’s promise to turn his back on Toril until the day the child called his name, Othea promised not to expel her unborn child prematurely and allow the ogres to feast on its flesh and blood. Although the compromise would delay the child’s birth for a very long time, this delay became a part of Othea’s plan. According to some giant scholars, Othea wanted time for her children to rebuild their numbers and regroup. Others believe that Othea used the lengthy delay to her advantage because she was wise enough to foresee the coming of the humans, elves, dwarves, orcs, goblins, and the remainder of Toril’s humanoid and demihuman races. Her strategy for rebuilding Ostoria looked forward to an era in which these new inhabitants would war amongst themselves, depleting their strength. Only then would the giants’ king emerge to rebuild Ostoria and restore the glory of the colossal kingdom.

## **The Fall of Voninheim**

After Annam slew Ulutiu and cast his body down into the Cold Sea, the sea god’s enchanted amulet started to freeze the waters around him, eventually forming the Great Glacier and the Endless Ice Sea. From this point on, the legends of the giants dovetail well with those of the Innugaakalikurit, the





tribe of arctic dwarves who now inhabit the glacier and its surroundings.

In total, it took approximately 75 years for Ulutiu's amulet to reach the limit of its powers and freeze over the several hundred miles of sea that composed the Ice Sea at its height. As the frozen wastes expanded during this era, countless dwellings, villages, and strongholds were destroyed all across the region now known as the Cold Lands. In its last few years of expansion, the glacier even threatened to engulf Lanaxis' citadel at Voninheim, the remains of Ostoria's capital.

Although Annam's sons quickly uncovered the secret of the creeping ice and learned how they might halt its progress, Othea forbade her children to set foot upon the glacier. To her, the ice was Ulutiu's just revenge upon a cold-blooded murderer. Though the ice doomed Ostoria, Othea loved Ulutiu's children better than Annam's. All the ice really threatened was Annam's dream of a Toril ruled entirely by giantkind.

But Lanaxis, de facto "leader" of the giants, was so devoted to his father and Ostoria that he refused to accept his mother's will. As the glacier drew uncomfortably close to Voninheim, he summoned all of Annam's sons to his citadel and urged them to help mount an expedition after Ulutiu's amulet in defiance of Othea. When Dunmore, progenitor of the wood giants and Othea's final son (born of Ulutiu, not Annam, though Annam *believed* he fathered the wood giant), refused to disobey the demigoddess and threw the meeting into chaos, Lanaxis was forced to modify his plan. This time, he resolved to poison Othea, removing the only obstacle to Ostoria's salvation. Unfortunately, his plans went awry. Lanaxis poisoned not only Othea, but all his brothers (save Dunmore and Arno/Julian) as well. Just after she drank his poison, Othea cursed Lanaxis and the ettin, saying that should

Lanaxis leave her shadow, he would lose his immortality. Seeing this measure as the probable end of Ostoria, Lanaxis' progeny, the titans, fled Toril altogether for the plane of Arborea. Exactly what happened to Lanaxis himself remains something of a mystery.

As for Othea, the moment Lanaxis' poison touched her lips, the mountain that served as her manifestation on Toril grew craggy, brittle, and moss-covered. For the next several weeks, Annam's final son remained trapped in the womb caves located far beneath the mountain's surface.

With its capital in ruins and the heads of the giant tribes dead, Ostoria quickly became little more than a memory.

## The War of the Hart

Several weeks after the Great Glacier swallowed Voninheim, Annam's last son finally freed himself from Othea's lifeless womb caves. Somehow, the instant he emerged, he immediately understood his destiny and set about reviving Ostoria. Known as Hartkiller (his first action was killing and eating a deer), the young king parlayed with the giant tribes descended from each of his brothers in turn, asking for their assistance. To his amazement, he was rejected by them all. Born a runt (only 12 feet tall), Hartkiller had a difficult time convincing his brothers that he was Annam's chosen ruler.

Unwilling to turn his back on his destiny, Hartkiller turned to each of the scattered segments of humans that lived on the fringe of the Endless Ice Sea. If the giants were unwilling to help rebuild his father's kingdom, then perhaps mankind would oblige. In exchange for their fealty, Hartkiller promised to help the humans drive the giants out of the valley known as Hartsvale to establish a glorious kingdom free from the threat of the giants and



their pillage.

At first, the humans were somewhat reluctant to accept the proposal. But after Hartkiller's half brothers, the giant-kin, rallied together to stand at Hartkiller's side against the giants, a call to arms was issued, sparking off the so-called War of the Hart.

Ultimately, Hartkiller did force the giants to leave the Valley and begrudgingly respect the territory of his kingdom. Today, this kingdom—Hartsvale—enjoys close ties with some of the giant tribes that once occupied its lands.

## The Legend of the Twilight Spirit

Hartkiller was killed at the conclusion of the War of the Hart. In fact, the war ended in an epic personal combat between Hartkiller and the paramount of the storm giants. This battle was said to have raged for 100 days, and it ended in death for both combatants. The first true king of Hartsvale was Brun, Hartkiller's half-human son.

Just after the War of the Hart ended, all the giants in the vicinity of Hartsvale were visited by a mysterious being of purple mist. The presence told each of the giants that by refusing to accept Hartkiller as their king, they rejected the will of Annam. The new kingdom of humans would serve as their punishment and a constant reminder of their insolence. According to the presence, however, the punishment would not last forever. Eventually, a young king born of Hartsvale's royal line would claim Hartkiller's legacy and re-establish Ostoria, paving the way for Annam's return.

To this day, the giants still aren't sure who or what appeared to their forefathers. Some believed the mist being was Hartkiller's restless spirit, others believed the being was an avatar of Annam (breaking his promise to

Othea), while still others believed the mist being was a mischievous tanar'ri trying to seduce the giants down the path of ruin. Within the last few centuries, a being calling itself the "Twilight Spirit" has started summoning the Jotunbrud to a sacred valley known as Twilight's Vale in order to enlist their aid in seeing the prophecies of the Hartkiller's heir to fruition. Once per year, the chiefs of most of Faerûn's largest giant tribes make a pilgrimage to the Vale to consult with the Spirit, who appears to them in the form of an exceptionally large giant with features cloaked in shadow. Exactly who this giant might be remains something of a mystery.



**N** ~~IF YOU'RE A RUDNY RAMP~~, the giants of Toril are a venerable people with a tragic history, but a strong sense of optimism. To most civilized peoples of the Realms (all save for those who live in the few areas frequented by the Jotunbrud), they are frightening enigmas, known mostly through legends and tavern tall tales. Some inhabitants of Faerûn (mostly city dwellers and listless halflings) refuse to believe the giants exist at all.

Essential characteristics and game statistics for the various giants and giant-kin can be found in either the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* or Volume 1 of the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*. This chapter supplements (and, in some cases, replaces) that information and presents a basic overview of giantkind. Note that most of the cultural information presented in this chapter and elsewhere applies chiefly to the giants who now reside among the Ice Spires (the location of ancient Ostoria's capital; see "The Ice Spires and their Environs"). Over the centuries, various bands of giants and kin have strayed from the Spires to form societies of their own in other far-flung corners of Faerûn. Cut off from their brethren, it's quite likely that these individual giant tribes have formed detailed customs and rituals of their own.

Perhaps it's easiest to start with generally accepted untruths about giants.

## Ten Myths About Giantkind

### 1. Giants are not properly classified as an individual race like humans, dwarves, and orcs.

For some reason, many of the Realms' residents believe that the giants are not a proper race at all, just a group of humans who have been magically altered.

This belief is far from the truth. Although the giants' accounts of their own origins

almost certainly take at least minor liberties with the truth, learned scholars agree that: 1) the giants have been on Toril far longer than humankind, and 2) the giants' fabled kingdom of Ostoria did exist. These conclusions are supported by literary, anecdotal, and archaeological evidence.

Furthermore, alchemists have discovered profound differences between the anatomies of giants and humans. For the most part, giants boast a heavier bone structure, boosting overall resilience but decreasing speed and cranial capacity. Some undertakers claim that giants possess a bizarre vestigial organ in their abdomens. Speculation on the purpose of this organ ranges from the mundane (it is somehow responsible for the giants' great height) to the supernatural (the organ acts as a "cage" for Annam's spirit, allowing him to possess any of his progeny).

### 2. Giants are stupid.

This is perhaps the most often repeated fallacy surrounding giantkind. Although it's true that some of the giant breeds (particularly, hill giants) aren't very bright, most are no less intelligent than humans, elves, or dwarves. Some giant breeds are even noteworthy for their exceptional intellect. Of course, as in the case of humans, intelligence varies wildly from giant to giant. Exceptionally intelligent (and exceptionally deficient) individuals can be found in any giant tribe. Most likely, rumors of the giants' mythical ignorance are kept alive by the fact that humans and demihumans encounter ogres, hill giants, and frost giants far more often than the other giant breeds.

To help DMs and players get a handle on their role-playing, they can generate Intelligence ability scores for giants and giant-kin using the following guidelines:





**Hill giants:** 3d4. Final range is 3-12 with an average result of 7 (Low Intelligence).

**Ettins:** Same as hill giants.

**Ogres:** 3d5 (d5: roll 1d10; 1-2 is a result of 1, 3-4 is a result of 2, 5-6 is a result of 3, 7-8 is a result of 4, and 9-0 is a result of 5). Final range is 3-15 with an average result of 9 (Average Intelligence).

**Frost giants:** 2d6+1d4. Final range is 3-16 with an average result of 10 (Average Intelligence).

**Fire giants:** Same as frost giants.

**Stone giants:** 3d6, or whatever system you use to generate player character ability scores (Average Intelligence).

**Fomorians:** Same as stone giants.

**Cloud giants:** 2d5+5. Final range is 7-15 with an average result of 11 (Average to Very Intelligent).

**Verbeegs:** Same as cloud giants.

**Voadkyn:** 1d6+1d5+6. Final range is 8-17 with an average result of 12 (Average to Exceptional Intelligence).

**Firbolgs:** 2d6+6. Final range is 8-18 with an average result of 13 (Average to Genius Intelligence).

**Storm giants:** 2d6+8. Final range is 10-20 with an average result of 15 (Exceptional Intelligence).

**Titans:** 2d4+15. Final range is 17-23 with an average result of 19 (Supra-genius Intelligence).

When referring to these figures, remember that the Intelligence ability score measures a very specific type of intellectual activity—mainly, memory, reasoning, and book learning. Characters with a low Intelligence score can demonstrate high aptitudes in other areas. For instance, though stupid by most standards, hill giants and ogres are exceptionally cunning. Although they are easily fooled themselves, both races are capable of crafting surprisingly clever schemes in pursuit of their limited goals.

### 3. Giants are evil.

This is another myth that is probably kept alive by the fact that humans and demihumans most frequently encounter ogres, hill giants, and frost giants. Some giant breeds are noted for their benevolence—storm giants, voadkyn, and firbolgs, for instance. Alignment variations from breed to breed stem from cultural differences that arose after Annam's sons parted ways in ancient Ostorla and moved into their own geographical fiefdoms.

Note that each of the giant breeds has its own concept of good and evil that stands outside the "absolute" alignment scale of the AD&D game. For instance, to a hill giant, the most *maug* ("evil" in Jotun) act one can commit is the betrayal of the tribe. If a tribe of hill giants is planning to kidnap an elf princess, and one of the giants flees to warn the elves (a "good" act in AD&D game terms), he is branded as *maug* by his fellow giants (even those of a good alignment) and is shunned or punished.

In play, this subtle difference between the philosophy of the giants and the philosophy of the AD&D game is important for two reasons. First, giants fear and abhor *maug* just as humans, elves, and dwarves fear and abhor evil. If a party of adventurers can bring a threat to the attention of a giant tribe and identify that threat as *maug*, they can probably secure the



giants' assistance, regardless of any alignment difference between the giants and themselves. In other words, if a band of "good" adventurers can convince a tribe of hill giants that the rogue giant terrorizing the local village once betrayed his breed, the tribe will put a stop to the giant's activities, despite the fact that the tribesmen are chaotic evil.

Second, giant magics (such as those employed by shamans or runecasters) do not detect the presence of "good" or "evil." These terms are meaningless to giants. Instead, the magics are attuned to *maat* (Jotun for "good") and *maug*. A *detect maug* cast by a giant shaman will not register the presence of most hill, frost, and fire giants, despite the fact that these creatures are all evil in AD&D terms. To help the DM differentiate *maat* from *maug* during play, here are some guidelines. Note that these behaviors are ranked in order from "most *maat* (or *maug*)" to "least *maat* (or *maug*)."

**Maat Behaviors:**

- Honoring Annam
- Bravery<sup>1</sup>
- Honoring Othea
- Showing a *maat* giant mercy or charity
- Honoring any of the other giant gods
- Honoring family members.
- Showing another sentient being mercy or charity<sup>2</sup>

**Maug Behaviors:**

- Betraying Annam
- Violating the ordning (see "Giant Society")
- Betraying one's tribe
- Betraying one's family
- Cowardice
- Killing another giant<sup>3</sup>
- Betraying a trust
- Stealing from another giant
- Forcing another giant to leave his or her geographical domain<sup>4</sup>

Being giant-kin or ogre<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This trait is considered particularly virtuous by frost giants and fire giants. Most other giant tribes rank it just above "honoring family members."

<sup>2</sup>Storm giants only.

<sup>3</sup>Note that it is only *maug* to kill another giant, and a *maat* giant at that. Though many giant breeds (that is, those with a "good" AD&D alignment) refuse to kill for a variety of philosophical reasons, giants don't necessarily see the act of killing as inherently *maug*. This attitude largely stems from the fact that giants (even those of a good alignment) tend to regard themselves as superior to other creatures.

<sup>4</sup>In other words, it is *maug* to forcibly separate a hill giant from the hills or a frost giant from icy regions. Giants believe their right to live in their accepted surroundings was issued by Annam himself when he divided Ostoria amongst his sons.

<sup>5</sup>Firbolgs, verbeegs, voadkyn, and fomorians are automatically *maug*. They are stained by Othea's sin of betrayal.

This is a good place to point out that a full range of AD&D alignments is typically encountered within each giant breed, though most giants of a given breed tend to conform to the breed's listed alignment. In other words, although most hill giants are chaotic evil, true neutral and even chaotic good hill giants are not totally unheard of.

The mistaken belief that all giants are evil was probably responsible for the formation of the Blood Riders, a fiercely determined order of giant killers that once operated out of Cold Woods. Although the Riders haven't been very active in the last couple of centuries, the tradi-



tions of the order are kept alive by a few stalwarts. The few remaining Blood Riders are rangers who have chosen the giantkiller kit (see 2136 *The Complete Ranger's Handbook*).

#### 4. Giants eat only humans and demihumans.

This myth is totally false. Hill giants and ettins are the only breeds that would even think of eating a human or demihuman—and hill giants, of course, will eat almost anything! Most other giant breeds consume the same basic foodstuffs as humans and elves, only in much larger quantities. The amount of food required by the average giant is summed up below. The listed multiple is the amount of food the given breed must consume in relation to an average human. Thus, ettins require four times as much food, on average, as humans, while a fire giant requires nine times as much food as a human.

Giant-kin (all): ×2  
Ettin: ×4 (each head requires ×2)  
Hill giants: ×10  
Stone giants: ×9  
Frost giants: ×11  
Fire giants: ×9  
Cloud giants: ×16  
Storm giants: ×18  
Titans: ×21

Hill giants require a disproportionately large quantity of food for their size because, over the years, they have developed inordinately high metabolisms.

The tremendous amount of food they require is one of the biggest problems confronting most giants and is certainly a factor that has kept the numbers of giants in Faerûn in check. The average frost giant might eat half a cow almost every day. You can imagine the size of the herd necessary to keep an entire tribe of frost giants fed. In

fact, few geographic areas can support a quantity of food large enough to feed an entire tribe of giants. This is why large groupings of giantkind are so rare.

#### 5. Verbeegs, firbolgs, and voadkyn are giants. Ettins are not giants.

The giants themselves regard the creatures who can trace their lineage back to the union of Annam and Othea as “true” giants. This group primarily includes: ettins, hill giants, stone giants, frost giants, fire giants, cloud giants, storm giants, and titans. Mountain giants descended from hill giants and fog giants are an off-shoot of the cloud giants (both breeds broke off from their ancestors in the aftermath of civil wars that occurred thousands of years ago). Because they can still trace their lineage back to Annam and Othea, both of these rogue breeds are considered true giants.

Breeds that trace their heritage back to the union of Othea and Ulutiu are known as giant-kin. This group includes firbolgs, verbeegs, fomorians, and voadkyn. (Originally, voadkyn were thought to be the product of Annam and Othea and thus accepted as true giants, though the Jotunbrud now know otherwise.) Because they are still ashamed of their mother's betrayal, the true giants look down upon the giant-kin and would be extremely offended by a well-meaning human who mistakes a kin for a true giant.

Ogres trace their lineage back to an illicit affair between Othea and Vaprak, the minor deity who later became their patron. In the eyes of the giants, they are no better than kin.

Not even the giants know what to make of the cyclopes and cyclopskin. Though these unfortunates have tried to claim the legacy of Annam for thousands of years, most giants believe the one-eyed brutes stem from another of Othea's dalliances.





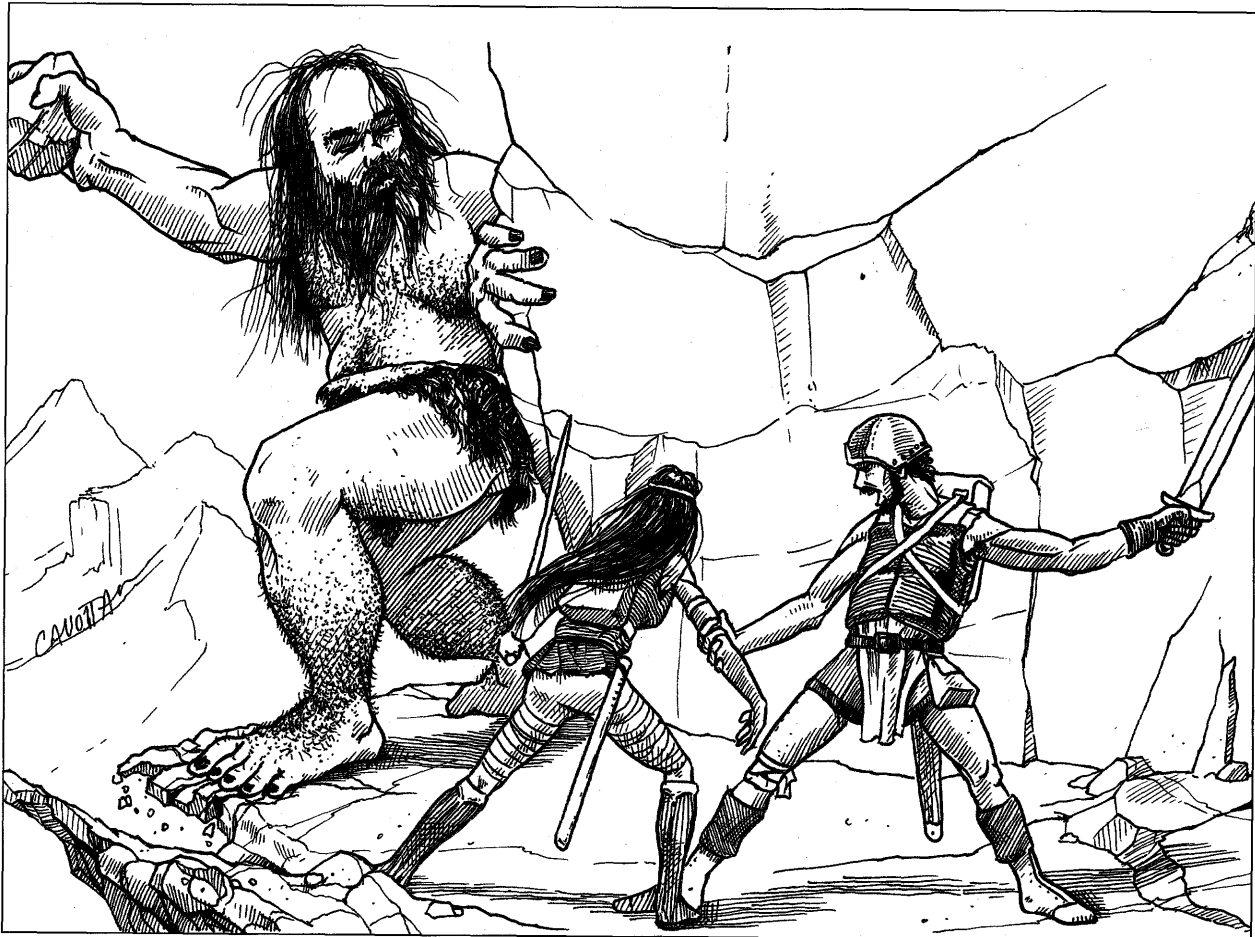
## 6. Giants are nearly extinct.

Although certainly not present in the numbers they once enjoyed, giants are hardly nearing extinction. This rumor persists because many of Toril's remaining giants have gathered in the regions surrounding the kingdom of Hartsvale, just south of the Endless Ice Sea and west of the Great Desert of Anauroch. Since Hartsvale has relatively little contact with the outside world, most residents of the Realms hear only the tales of the few rogue giants who have scattered themselves across Faerûn. In toto, there are probably at least 500 giants of each major breed currently active in the Realms. Although such a

population is hardly worthy of boasts, it is certainly stable.

## 7. Giants are immortal.

Many humans, demihumans, and humanoids (particularly dwarves and orcs) believe that giants are immortal. Some even regard the giants as minor deities. Although such rumors are unfounded, it is true that most giants have extremely long lifespans due to the divine blood of Annam coursing through their veins. Annam's sons were immortal. Thereafter, the life span of each successive generation of giants has grown shorter and





shorter as Annam's blood is diluted. The average giant born today (usually seventh or eighth generation) can expect to live between 300 and 400 hundred years. The oldest giants still active in Faerûn were born more than a thousand years ago.

Annam's divine blood also confers a superhuman vitality upon his children. For all practical purposes (ability checks, etc.), assume that all true giants have a Constitution score of 19. In addition, true giants are immune to all but the most virulent diseases (save vs. nonmagical diseases at +3) and enjoy a natural resistance to poison (save at +1).

#### **8. Giants once enslaved dragonkind. Giants still know an arcane secret that allows them to subdue and control a dragon brood.**

For some reason, this persistent rumor still circulates throughout the Realms. Even a few otherwise learned scholars have been known to assist in its spread.

It is true that there is an age-old enmity between giants and dragonkind, but this intolerance stems from the great war between the two races that took place over a thousand years prior to the beginning of recorded history. Note that for the most part, the ill will between giants and dragons extends to *all* giants (and giant-kin) and *all* dragons. A few enlightened storm giants are said to be on good terms with dragons of the metallic order, but such individuals are rare indeed. Even good-aligned giants generally harbor an irrational dislike of dragonkind.

The rocky relationship between dragons and giants makes the latest rumor sweeping across Faerûn even more ironic. Some now contend that giants and chromatic dragons have forged a secret alliance and intend to cleanse the whole of Faerûn of human and demihuman populations.

#### **9. Giants are isolationists.**

Although giants tend to look down upon other races, the situation in Hartsvale demonstrates that they are more than capable of cooperation. There, a few of the giant tribes have formed a special bond with Hartsvale's royal family.

Elsewhere in the Realms, giants have been known to cooperate with elves, gnomes, and various humanoid races.

#### **10. Giants are linked to the geography they inhabit.**

Many humans and demihumans believe that giants are magically confined to the geographical domains they inhabit. Some believe, for instance, that giants lose their great strength when separated from their homes, while others hold that giants removed from their domains quickly wither and turn to stone. None of these beliefs hold any water.

The giants' affinity for their environments stems from the fact that Annam used environment as the basis upon which he divided ancient Ostoria among his sons. Because each giant breed has inhabited its allotted surroundings for many thousands of years, all of the various breeds have developed a natural mastery of their environment so absolute it is often mistaken for magic (in fact, sometimes it *is* magical). Frost giants, for instance, can cross snow covered peaks and valleys without leaving a trail. Fire giants have mastered fire in all its forms. Hill giants are invariably aware of secret passes and cuts that crisscross their steadings. The same is true for other races.



## General Physical Features

Obviously, the physical characteristic that immediately distinguishes giants from the other intelligent races of Faerûn is their great height. Giants range in height from approximately 10 feet to 25 feet or higher, depending upon breed and gender.

Complete instructions for using these tables can be found under "Other Characteristics" in the "Races" chapter of the *Player's Handbook*.

A natural byproduct of the giants' great size is their superhuman strength. Unlike other intelligent races, strength does not vary greatly among individuals of a particular breed. Average AD&D game strengths for each of the giant breeds are presented below. You can assume that 80% of any true giant population has the average strength listed for its breed, while 10% falls a point or two above average and another 10% falls a point or two below average.

## Average Giant Strengths

Race	Average Strength
Verbeeg	18/76
Ogre	18/85
Ettin	18/00
Voadkyn	18/00
Firbolg	19
Hill giant	19
Fomorian	20
Stone giant	20
Frost giant	21
Fire giant	22
Mtn. giant	22
Fog giant	23
Cloud giant	23
Storm giant	24
Titan	25

Such formidable Strengths allow many giants to perform an astounding variety of superhuman feats. To get the maximum mileage out of giants during play, DMs should allow them to

## Average Height and Weight of Giants

Race	Height in Inches: Base (M/F)	Modifier	Race	Weight in Pounds: Base (M/F)	Modifier
Verbeeg	108/100	1d8	Verbeeg	450/300	8d10
Voadkyn	112/106	1d10	Voadkyn	500/380	8d10
Ogre	120/110	1d10	Ogre	590/545	10d10
Firbolg	126/118	1d10	Firbolg	610/460	10d10
Ettin	156/148	1d10	Ettin	930/600	10d10
Fomorian	162/156	1d10	Fomorian	1,000/660	10d20
Mtn. giant	168/160	1d12	Mtn. giant	1,100/720	10d20
Hill giant	192/184	1d12	Hill giant	1,400/940	10d20
Fire giant	216/208	2d10	Fire giant	1,800/1,200	12d20
Stone giant	216/208	2d10	Stone giant	1,700/1,050	12d20
Frost giant	252/238	3d10	Frost giant	2,400/1,600	2d100
Cloud giant	288/268	4d8	Cloud giant	3,200/2,100	2d100
Fog giant	288/268	4d8	Fog giant	3,300/2,150	2d100
Storm giant	312/280	4d10	Storm giant	3,750/2,500	4d100
Titan	360/325	4d10	Titan	5,000/3,500	4d100



use their Strength to its full advantage. Since it's difficult to imagine exactly what a character with a particularly high Strength can accomplish from glancing at the table that appears in the *Players Handbook*, here are some useful guidelines that should help you adjudicate spectacular feats of brawn.

**18/00:** When bound, characters with an 18/00 Strength can burst free from ropes with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll. A successful rope use proficiency check while binding a character prevents that character from breaking free in this fashion.

**19:** At this Strength level, bound characters automatically burst free from normal ropes. With a successful bend bars/lift gates roll, they can burst chains or ropes tied with a successful rope use proficiency check.

**20:** At this point, characters gain the potential to smash down walls with their fists. See the Structural Saving Throw Table, below, and the rules that appears in the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*.

Characters with a Strength of 20 or higher automatically burst any normal bond (rope or chain), regardless of any proficiency checks passed by their captors.

**21:** With a Strength of 21, a character can drag a 10' × 10' × 10' stone block across the ground at a rate of 10 feet per melee round.

**22:** Characters with a Strength of 22 are strong enough to drag a coach pulled by two horses to a complete stop.

**23:** At this Strength level, a character can uproot a small tree with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll and lift a horse over his head. Such characters can also burst adamantine bonds with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll.

**24:** Given a stout enough tether (such as an adamantine chain), characters with a Strength of 24 can pull all but the strongest dragons out of flight and down to the ground.

**25:** At this Strength level, a character can automatically uproot a small tree and uproot a large tree with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll. Such characters can also burst magical bonds with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll.

### Structural Saving Throw Table

See the "Combat—Unusual Combat Situations" chapter of the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*.

Str.	Hard Stone	Soft Stone	Earth	Thin Wood	Thick Wood
20	Auto	2	5	14	7
21	2	3	6	15	8
22	3	4	7	16	9
23	4	5	6	17	10
24	5	6	7	18	11
25	6	7	8	19	12

Auto: Save is automatically successful

Note that these figures assume that a giant is doing the smashing. If a smaller character is attacking the structure (such as a human wearing a *girdle of giant strength*), all structural saves are at +2.

### Giant Combat

In combat, their vast size and strength bestow several advantages upon giants.

First and foremost, giants are capable of hurling boulders and other heavy missiles at their opponents. In all cases, such missiles have a maximum range of 200 yards and cannot be thrown at targets closer than 3 yards. The maximum diameter and weight of such missiles as well as the damage they inflict all depend upon the breed of the giant.





<b>Breed</b>	<b>Boulder Diameter</b>	<b>Boulder Weight</b>	<b>Boulder Damage</b>
Hill	3 ft.	325 lbs.	2d8
Stone	4 ft.	360 lbs.	2d10
Frost	5 ft.	400 lbs.	2d12
Mntn.	6 ft.	440 lbs.	2d12
Fire	7 ft.	475 lbs.	2d12
Fog	8 ft.	550 lbs.	3d10
Cloud	9 ft.	600 lbs.	3d10
Storm	10 ft.	725 lbs.	3d12
Titan	11 ft.	850 lbs	4d10

Note that the exact size of the missile doesn't have much of a bearing upon the damage it inflicts so long as the boulder is generally large and bulky. Whenever a giant flings a boulder, remember to consult the rules for "Boulders as Missile Weapons" in the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*. Boulders that miss their targets have an opportunity to "scatter" and strike another character. Any boulder with a diameter of 8 feet or greater that strikes a target might also strike any character(s) or creature(s) locked in melee with that target. All such characters and creatures must successfully save vs. breath weapon to avoid being struck by the boulder themselves.

Any giant capable of throwing boulders is also capable of catching similar missiles thrown back at him. Giants cannot make an attack during a round in which they are attempting to catch a boulder. Giants' chances of successfully catching a boulder depend upon their breed:

<b>Breed</b>	<b>Catch Chance</b>
Hill	30%
Stone	60%
Frost	40%
Mountain	30%
Fire	50%
Fog	55%
Cloud	55%
Storm	55%
Titan	55%

Although man-size characters with unnaturally high Strengths (such as fighters wearing *girdles of giant strength*) can throw heavy missiles the same as giants, such characters can never attempt to catch such missiles.

Like hurling boulders, grabbing man-sized opponents and lifting them off the ground is another favorite giant tactic. Any giant with two free hands can grab a size M or S opponent with a single successful attack roll. Once grabbed, the target can be flung, subjecting it to damage equal to the flinger's thrown-boulder damage. Grabbed targets can even be used as boulders themselves (that is, flung at other enemies), though they inflict only half damage upon the targets they strike (though the "flingee" still suffers full boulder damage appropriate to the flinger's breed).

Frost, fog, cloud, and storm giants and titans need only a single empty hand to grab a size M or S opponent. These giants tend to hang on to an opponent in one hand while battling more opponents with the other hand. Then, when the time is right, the held opponent can be flung or slammed into a wall. Extremely large giants can automatically squeeze held opponents, inflicting damage equal to the giant's Strength bonus (for example, a frost giant inflicts 9 points). Such an attack does not prevent the giant from making a normal attack during the round. Also, giants can use held opponents like clubs against other opponents, inflicting damage equal to that of an appropriately sized club upon both the clubee and the clubber.

Any character held by a giant (in either one or two hands) suffers a 4 penalty to all attack rolls and breaks free in one of two ways: inflicting at least 15 points of damage in a single blow or passing a bend bars/lift gates roll. Particularly nasty giants grasp a target with one hand and then skewer it with a sword held in the other hand. Because the target is held fast, such attacks automatically hit.

Even without resorting to the special attacks at their disposal, giants are very formidable



combatants. Most giants can inflict considerable damage with their fists alone (see the appropriate entries in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*, and giant-sized weapons obviously inflict more damage per attack than their man-sized counterparts. The additional damage caused by such weapons is a function of the weapon's size and therefore a function of the giant's size:

Breed	Damage Multiple
Hill, Stone	×2
Frost, Fire, Mntn.	×2.5
Cloud, Fog	×3
Storm	×4
Titan	×5

Thus, a battle axe scaled for frost giants inflicts  $1d8 \times 2.5$  (round fractions up), while an enormous two-handed sword wielded by a storm giant inflicts  $1d10 \times 4$  on size M opponents. Giants add their Strength bonuses to the damage they inflict when fighting with weapons but are never allowed a Strength bonus on their attack rolls.

Note that a giant attempting to wield a weapon that is too large for him (such as a hill giant trying to use a broad sword forged for a storm giant) fights at a -2 penalty but still inflicts damage equal to his own damage multiple. In these cases, the weapon's extra size and power are more than offset by the wielder's clumsiness. Furthermore, size M characters are



always incapable of fighting with giant-sized weapons, regardless of their Strength scores. Even a warrior decked out in a *girdle of storm giant strength* finds a storm giant-sized sword just too unwieldy for combat.

The AC of a giant wearing armor is equal to the giant's natural AC minus 1, so long as the armor in question has a lower base AC than the giant's natural AC. Although some giants carry shields scaled to their height, such instruments are useless against M-sized and smaller opponents (it's just too hard for the giant to block such low blows). Against L-sized and larger opponents, giant shields grant their user the traditional +1 bonus to his or her Armor Class.

One last peril associated with fighting giants is the danger their falling bodies pose once they have been vanquished. Anyone locked in melee with a giant that dies must save vs. breath weapon to avoid being crushed beneath the giant's falling body and suffering damage equal to the giant's Strength bonus.

## Senses

As a general rule, most giants' senses are far superior to those of mankind. The average giant can see and hear twice as well as the average man, a result of their oversize sensory organs. Some breeds are well known for their incredible sense of smell: Hill giants, stone giants, and cloud giants can detect and identify living creatures via scent alone at a range of 30 feet.

In addition to these general capabilities, individual giant breeds have developed special sensory abilities related to their natural environments.

**Stone giants'** superior infravision operates at a range of 200 feet.

**Frost giants'** eyes are particularly sensitive to the higher end of the visible spectrum, helping

them navigate and identify friends/foes in blinding snowstorms.

**Fire giants'** senses are well adjusted to operating in high temperatures. Their eyes easily penetrate the hazes and shimmers associated with such temperatures.

**Cloud giants'/fog giants'** vision detects subtle emissions in the infrared spectrum even during broad daylight and in the presence of powerful heat/light sources. This ability allows them to see through mists and fogs easily.

**Storm giants'** senses are adapted to both dry land and underwater operation. Storm giants face no penalties associated with sensory restrictions when operating under the seas.

## Birth, Growth, and Development

Most giant tribes are loosely organized into *huslyder*, or families, that take on the responsibility of child rearing. Typically, a full third of any giant tribe comprises young giants who have yet to reach maturity. Naturally, the huslyder take on different forms within the tribes of each breed. For example, hill giant huslyder are large and communal, while fire giant huslyder are smaller and more isolated. Furthermore, the exact importance of the huslyder relationship also varies from tribe to tribe. Among frost giants, a huslyder bond is more important than any connection save ordning ("the order," see below), while the stone giants are more interested in their "master-pupil" huslyder structure than blood relationships.

For the most part, giant females bear their young in the same fashion as their human counterparts. Gestation periods range from 9 months (for hill giants) to 15 months (for storm giants).

Giant babies of all breeds are between 3 and 4 feet tall at birth, with 2 Hit Dice. It takes most









breeds approximately 50 years to reach maturity. Over the course of this development, the giant grows in height and Hit Dice proportionately. In other words, a 25-year-old giant has half his final Hit Dice and stands half his final height.

Kin babies are born roughly the same size as human children and mature at approximately the same rate.

## Giant Society

Although each giant breed has its own unique customs and social habits, a few special customs are shared by all breeds. Most of these traditions date back to the ancient empire of Ostoria and its residents.

For example, all giant breeds believe in the sanctity of the *ordning* — the order. True giant societies are always organized around a stringent pecking order that stretches from the tribe's leader or chieftain all the way down to its lowliest runt. Unlike most other civilized societies, the ordning is not based upon classes or castes, but upon single individuals. There are no equals in giant society, just inferiors and superiors. Every giant is always aware of his or her exact rank within the ordning: the chieftain is *et* (or "one"), his closest adviser is *to* (or "two"), etc. all the way down to the lowliest member of the tribe.

Each of the various breeds and tribes bases its ordning around a different quantity, skill, or commodity. Among hill giants, for instance, the ordning is based around an odd combination of physical strength and gustatory prowess. Frost giant ordnings are typically based around wrestling, reveling, and boasting. Stone giant ordnings are based upon artistic prowess. In any case, the basis of the ordning is always concrete and easily quantifiable to the tribesmen, making ordning disputes easy to resolve. To rise in the ordning, one simply challenges a superior to a contest appropriate to the ordning's basis. Challengers who win change ordning rankings

with the superiors they bested. Some tribes place no restrictions upon such contests, while others have devised special rules dictating when and if challenges may be issued.

Violating the ordning is an especially *maug* act. Violations include: refusing to show respect for a superior, refusing to share resources (treasure, food, etc.) with superiors, mocking/belittling superiors, refusing to obey valid orders, granting inferiors access to things beneath their station, etc.

Although their ordning ranks measure the giants' station only within their own tribes, the customary greeting between giants of two different tribes of the same breed includes an oral exchange of ranks. Though a giant is under no obligation to treat a higher ranking giant from another tribe as a superior, any other reaction is a blatant insult. Two giants of different breeds always ignore their respective inter-tribal ranks since the breeds themselves are ranked in a grand ordning, as follows (from highest to lowest):

- Titans
- Storm giants
- Cloud giants
- Fog giants
- Fire giants
- Frost giants
- Stone giants
- Mountain giants
- Hill giants
- Ettins
- Kin
- Ogres

Thus, the runt of a frost giant tribe is automatically of a higher station than the chieftain of a stone, mountain, or hill giant tribe. In any case, giants' obligation to their own tribal superiors is always stronger than their obligation to a superior from another tribe or breed. Failure to respect the ordning rank of an outsider is merely an insult or faux pas, not a *maug* act.



It may seem odd that some giant tribes base their chain of command upon such seemingly strange skills: gustatory skill in the case of hill giants, or wrestling skill in the case of frost giants. To the breeds in question, however, these skills are synonymous with virtue. Hill giants, for example, believe that the development of skills to satisfy the appetite is the true purpose of life. Thus, the giant with the very best such skills is obviously the most fit to lead.

Sitting atop all ordnings, of course, is Annam All-Father, the great giant god. Each tribe tends to personify Annam as the ultimate champion of its chosen virtue. Hill giants see Annam as a master glutton, frost giants view him as a wild reveler and unbeatable wrestler, etc.

Naturally, the giants' unshakable belief in the ordning is one of the reasons they tend to look down upon other races. Many giants see the entirety of creation as one large ordning with the giants themselves on top.

## Lineage

Virtually all of the true giants and kin hold their own direct ancestors in especially high esteem. Just about every single giant or kin is capable of reciting his or her male lineage all the way back to Annam (or Ulutiu, as the case may be). It is the responsibility of all parents to begin drilling this information into the heads of their children as soon as possible.

Customarily, two giants who meet for the first time recite their lineages for each other. This tradition serves two purposes: It keeps the memory of revered ancestors alive and helps the giants decide if they are friends or enemies owing to familial obligations. Once a giant has befriended (or spurned) another, all of the descendants of those two giants will tend to instantly accept each other as friends (or enemies).

Properly stated, a lineage sounds something like this:

I am Murg, et  
Son of Haug, et, wyrm-eater  
Son of Grom, et, conqueror  
Son of Morg, to, wyrm-eater  
Son of Ruk, et, progenitor  
Son of Annam, et, All-Father

Note that each ancestor's name is followed by his current ordning rank (or the rank he held when he died) and a noteworthy accomplishment.

Even more elaborate recitations of lineage have become an important part of the sagas crafted by frost giant *skalds* (bards). Traditionally, each new character is introduced to the saga with a full lineage recitation keyed to appropriate music.

## Clerical Parley

Although giant priests and shamans rarely occupy the top spot within their tribes, an old Ostorian custom allows two priests of different tribes to band together and temporarily overrule both their chieftains. Whenever two tribes stand in conflict, the highest ranking holy men on each side have the authority to jointly call a parley to resolve the situation. During such a parley, the holy men work together to discuss the will of Annam. If they reach a consensus, their decision is traditionally binding upon both tribal leaders. This custom is said to have originated with the titan Lanaxis, who forced it upon his subjects.

Though many priests like to perpetuate the myth that clerical parleys are solved through complex religious rites and magical divination, the simple truth is that they are usually little more than power-brokering sessions. In fact, rival clerics have been known to maneuver their tribes into conflict just to give themselves the opportunity to hold a binding parley. Implementing such a scheme isn't necessarily *maug*, so long as the cleric believes the best interests of the tribe are served.

These days, clerical parleys are quite uncom-



mon. After all, since there are so few active giant tribes on Toril, tribal conflicts are rare indeed. Furthermore, most modern Jotun tribes are far more cohesive than their ancient ancestors. The “splitting of ranks” that generally accompanies a parley would seem a bit out of place in the giant societies of today. Most contemporary priests and shamans stand in absolute accord with their chieftains.

## Language

Giants all speak a common tongue known as *Jotun*, one of the oldest languages still active in the Realms. In fact, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that Jotun shares a lingual base with both Thorass and the Common tongue of humanity. It is likely that these later languages were partially derived from older incarnations of the giant tongue.

Giant clerical rites are usually composed in *Jotunaldar* (“old Jotun”), a formalized version of the familiar tongue that has remained unchanged for over 5,000 years. Although few giants can actually speak *Jotunaldar*, the tongue bears enough similarities to modern Jotun to enable most giants to comprehend it.

In addition to Jotun, most breeds speak their own specialized language as well as the common tongue of humanity. These specialized languages are listed and classified below. Of course, giants who operate in the vicinity of a nonhuman civi-

lization are likely to speak at least a smattering of that civilization’s language. For instance, most stone giants speak dwarvish and most hill giants speak a little ogre and gnoll.

## Specialized Giant Languages

hill/mountain giants: *Jotunhaug* (closely related to Jotunise)

stone giants: *Jotunstein* (partially derived from Auld Dwarvish)

frost giants: *Jotunise* (closely related to Jotunhaug)

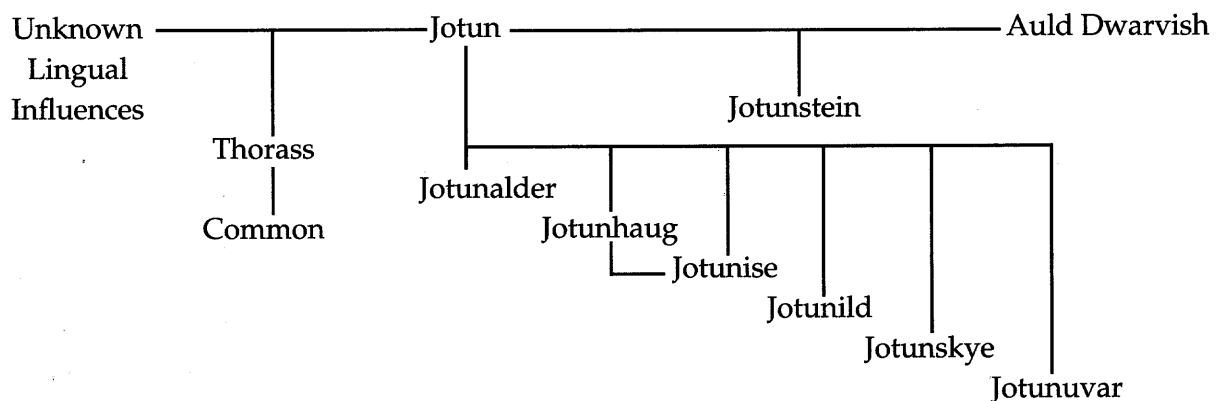
fire giants: *Jotunild*

cloud/fog giants: *Jotunskye*

storm giants: *Jotunuvar*

## Classification of Giant Languages

The “genealogy” chart above depicts the relationships between all the various giant tongues. A character who speaks a language that has predecessors or descendants depicted on the chart can understand approximately 25% of any communication in those related languages with a successful Intelligence ability check. In other words, a character who speaks Jotun might comprehend bits and pieces of Thorass or any specialized giant tongue, while a character who speaks Auld Dwarvish might comprehend simple statements in Jotunstein. Since all giants speak Jotun, they all have limited comprehension of all specialized tongues.





## A Selected Glossary of Jotun Terms

above:	glang	fool:	tosk
ale:	engel	fog:	skod
ancestry/lineage:	linje	fog giant:	skodjotun
armor:	harbunad	forge:	esse
arrow:	pil	fortress:	festing
art:	kunst	friend:	venn
attack:	anfal	frost giant:	isejotun
axe:	oks	garbage:	garasje
battle:	slag	giant:	jotun
bed chamber:	sengrom	giants:	jotunen
birth:	byrd	gift:	gave
black:	sort	give:	gi
blade:	blad	go:	fer
blood:	blod	gold:	gill
blue:	bla	god:	gud
bow:	boye	good:	maat
bravery:	prakt	goodbye:	farvel
brother:	bror	green:	grun
cloak:	kappe	greetings:	helsingen (hels)
cloud:	skye	have:	ha
cloud giant:	skyejotun	heart:	hjerte
cold:	kalt	helmet:	hjelm
come:	kom	hill:	haug
copper:	blodbok	hill giant:	haugjotun
cow:	kue	holy, sacred:	hellig
chieftain:	forer	home:	heim
danger:	fare	honor:	rang
death:	dod	horse:	hest
defeat:	overin	hot:	het
defend:	forvar	hour:	tid
dispute:	drofte	ice:	ise
down:	nede	intruder:	ubuden
dragon:	wyrm	is:	er
dwarf:	dverg	journey:	ferd
effort:	strev	human:	van
enemy:	uven	king:	kong
elf:	alv	kingdom:	kongerike
evil:	maug	life:	liv
family:	huslyd	light:	stig
far:	lang	magic:	magisk
father:	vader	mage:	magere
fear:	otte	meat:	kjott
fire:	ild	minute:	minutt
fire giant:	ildjotun	money:	mynt
food:	fode	mother:	hild
		mountain:	fjell
		mountain giant:	fjelljotun





name:	nom
near:	nar
order:	ordning
platinum:	platina
priest:	mazîn
priestcraft:	mazînmagisk
rank:	rad
red:	rod
river:	flod
room, chamber:	rom
runt:	ettin
second:	stot
shield:	skold
silver:	solv
sister:	soster
spear:	spyd
stone:	steîn
stone giant:	steinjotun
storm:	uvar
storm giant:	uvarjotun
surprise:	forbaus
sword:	sverd
take:	fange
teeth:	tenner
temple:	bapart
thief:	tuv
thought:	tanke
titan:	vonin
trail:	treke
treasure:	skat
treaty:	traktat
tribe:	stomm
up:	opp
victory:	sêir
war:	krig
warrior:	krigga
weather:	vaer
white:	kvit
wind:	vind
yellow:	gul

**Pronouns:**

I:	Am
it:	den
he:	han
me:	meg
she:	hûn

that:	det
this:	1
you:	du
you (plural):	deg

**Numbers:**

one:	et
two:	to
three:	tre
four:	fir
five:	fem
six:	sek
seven:	sju
eight:	att
nine:	ni
ten:	tier
eleven:	tier et
twelve:	tier to
twenty:	to tier
twenty-one:	to tier et
twenty-two:	to tier to
thirty:	tre tier
one hundred:	hund
two hundred:	to hund
two hundred eleven:	to hund tier et
one thousand:	tusen

**Representative Phrases:**

*Wo dun rad?* What is your rank?  
*Wo dun stomm?* What tribe are you from?  
*Wer dun forer?* Who is your leader?  
*Am du paart.* I honor you.  
*Wer fers dir?* Who goes there?  
*Oric er meg nom.* My name is Oric.  
*Anfel su uvenir!* Attack our enemies!  
*Fang meg zo dun kong.* Lead me to your king.  
*Wie ferst du?* Where are you going?  
*Am du rad tier fir.* I am of the 14th rank.

**General Role-Playing Tips**

The first and most important rule to follow when role-playing giants is to instill the sense of awe they so richly deserve. Think about it for a minute—a 22-foot-tall man isn't something player characters are likely to see everyday! If the giants in a campaign are little more than orcs



with more hit points, DMs and players are missing out on a boatload of opportunities.

Here are some specific techniques DMs can use to accomplish this goal and establish the proper atmosphere:

- Giants are LOUD! Foreshadow their appearance with a series of crashing thuds that rattle the floor. If you're in an appropriate setting, stamp your own feet in place of the giant's quaking footfalls. When the giant finally arrives, SHOUT his dialogue to make sure your players get the idea ("WHO DARES TO ENTER MY BEDCHAMBER?").
- Giants are BIG! Get up and stand on your chair to loom over the players. Try to invent little behaviors that emphasize the giant's enormity. For example, "Before he speaks, the hill giant pauses to snatch up a live cow in his right hand. As he cups the cow close to his mouth you hear a horrible bleating sound followed by ravenous crunching and popping. When you finally manage another glimpse, you notice that he's now picking clean the cow's spine as easily as any of you might clean a chicken bone. 'OH! RUDE OF ME,' he says, noting your disgust and dangling the twisted spine in front of your faces. 'CAN I OFFER YOU A SNACK?'"

Or:

DM: A storm giant blocks your way  
"WHAT IS YOUR NAME, LITTLE ONE?"

PLAYER: I tell the giant my name.

DM: The giant can't quite hear you over the sound of the forges' clanking metal. I CAN'T HEAR YOU, LITTLE ONE! SPEAK UP!

PLAYER: I shout my name. I AM RANDORR!

DM: The giant picks you up in his left

hand and holds your head to his ear.

DID YOU SAY ANDORR?

PLAYER: I shout directly into his ear. NO!

RANDORR . . . WITH AN R!

DM: AHHHHH! THAT'S BETTER. He puts you down. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, RANDORR WITH AN R?

- Giants are old. Many have lived for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. As a consequence, they just aren't very interested in the passage of time. They speak very slowly and never rush to make a judgment or decision. Go ahead and allow players to become a little impatient with the giant and remember to allow the giant to rebuke them if they try to rush him.
- Giants are vain, a direct consequence of their enormousness. Many tend to regard humans and demihumans as humans regard mice: amusing little creatures to be killed or ignored. Even the very kindest giants typically can't be bothered to help a mere man. Try to begin any giant encounter with the appropriate amount of condescension and patronizing.

Again, none of this is meant to imply that giants are stupid. Instead, they merely tend toward disinterest in human affairs. This fact, coupled with their vanity, might make them seem a bit less than bright, at times, but woe to those who try to take advantage of this perceived "weakness."

Finally, a word of general advice that applies to role-playing any "monster" is worth repeating here: Try to make giants into unique individuals. In other words, not all storm giants have the exact same personality and mannerisms. Immediately after the adventurers encounter a loud and boisterous giant, think about making the next giant cold and aloof, or warm and carefree.



**↑** THE SO-CALLED "GINN-KIN" are the children of Ulutiu and Othea and the half-brothers of the true giants. Although the various kin breeds have built their own societies all over Faerûn, they have never exhibited the sort of loyalty to their fellow tribes that has kept the Jotunbrud relatively strong over the last several thousand years. In most areas, communication and cooperation between the various kin breeds are almost nonexistent.

Although most kin are as fiercely independent as their half-brothers, there are a few who spend their whole lives on the fringe of the various giant societies. These kin still believe that they can one day win acceptance from their powerful half-brothers, a goal most kin abandoned thousands of years ago.

Recently, with the coming of the Twilight Spirit and the increased activity among the true giant tribes, the kin of the Spires have taken their first steps toward consolidation and unification, fearing attack. As a consequence, some of the more adventurous kin are beginning to organize and fight back. In fact, it is rumored that a band of verbeegs occupying the northern arm of the Ice Spires has taken to raiding the frost giant steadings in the area and gathering supplies for battle. Surprisingly, these verbeegs are said to have the support of fomorians and even a few voadkyn. According to rumors spreading throughout the various kin steadings in the region, the verbeegs aim for nothing less than clearing all the Jotunbrud from their quarter of the valley.

## Firbolgs

Firbolgs are the most intelligent of the kin. Of all the various giant races, only the firbolgs reject the concept of ordning. Instead, they value free will over all, and the restrictions of rank have no place in their clannish societies. In fact, firbolgs

pioneered a crude form of democracy known as "the cast." Whenever a decision affecting the clan is necessary, a call goes out to all able members of the tribe to assemble and vote on the issue. To cast their ballots, the firbolgs use flat rocks engraved with their own personal runes. The actual casting of the stones differs from area to area and clan to clan, with some clans throwing the stones into holes dug in the ground and others simply holding the stones over their heads when called to vote. In a large firbolg settlement located in the Cold Mountains, there is said to exist a 50-foot-tall balance scale that the firbolgs use to dramatically display the results of a cast. The kin of this steading vote by placing their stones upon one of the huge pans on either side of the scale, with the heavier side winning the issue.

## The Code

Long ago, the firbolgs developed a stringent code of conduct that governs their actions. Although the code is obviously thousands of years old, its exact origins are now obscured by the mists of time. At the heart of the code is the idea that individuals should be judged based upon their actions rather than upon their birth; to the firbolgs, people's deeds are the truth of their being. Another of the code's important concepts is the idea that the individual is nothing without society, and the preservation of society must be of the highest priority of all individuals. Every firbolg clan reacts differently to the code, but all see it as vital to their survival and elevation. Most firbolgs keep the code to themselves, believing it is virtuous to simply live the code rather than preach it. Merely talking about deeds and philosophies rather than living them is sometimes looked upon as a form of cowardice.

A firbolg who breaks the code faces grave retribution. Minor transgressions might be settled by spending a period of time as a slave to the



tribe. Major transgressions inevitably require banishment. Of course, few of these penalties are ever necessary since the code is so indelibly ingrained into most firbolgs from birth that few could even think of straying.

Most firbolg clans require their members to carry the code with them in a written form. For example, the members of one clan (the Kappebror) write copies of the code on fine parchment and seal them in amulets they wear around their necks, while another (the Helligbror) tattoo the code upon their chests in red dye, and yet another (the Kriggabror) etch the words upon finely made bracers they swear never to remove.

The Firbolg Code (in the original):  
*Prakt, Strev, Rang, glang byrd.*  
(Bravery, Effort, and Honor over birth.)

This dictum illustrates the firbolgs' disdain for the concept of ordning and all it represents. To the firbolgs, actions make the individual.

Also, firbolgs see the honor and mettle of an individual as representative of the honor and mettle of a tribe. This is why the concept of bravery is so important to them. If observers should notice a firbolg acting weak or cowardly, they would probably assume the firbolg's entire clan to be weak and cowardly, perhaps prompting an attack on the clan. The firbolgs believe that the only way to avoid unnecessary wars and battles is to convince all observers that all firbolgs are fiercely brave and capable.

*Stomm rang glang du.*  
(The tribe's honor above your honor.)

The whole of the clan is more important than an individual member. To honor the tribe or clan, the firbolg must do great deeds and, when given praise, explain that the deed would have been impossible if not for the sup-







port, education, and resources of the clan. This provision has also been interpreted to mean that the will of the individual is secondary to the will of the clan. Some renegade firbolgs contend that this is not the case, and that the will of the individual is more important than the will of the clan.

*Blod ettin er blod kong.*  
(The blood of a runt is the blood of a king.)

This provision reminds the firbolgs to treat all intelligent creatures equally. Just as Hartkiller was a runt himself, so may the lowest beggar be elevated to the throne.

*Gi tusen val nul.*  
(Give one thousand for nothing.)

Firbolgs prize charity as a virtue, though they feel that any charitable act is nullified if the recipient is aware of the contributor's identity. The act itself is the virtue, not the glory associated with the act. Allowing oneself to take credit for a virtuous action opens the spirit to harm. For that reason, while gregarious with friends, most firbolgs are quiet in public, not wishing to call attention to their often heroic deeds.

*Trut zund stommpaart.*  
(Truth is the honor of the tribe.)

Much of firbolg society is built around a backbone of truthful communication. Without such communication, the firbolgs believe their entire society will topple. As a consequence, firbolgs don't lie, by either omission or commission. In fact, a firbolg who lies breaks out in a cold sweat; his voice cracks, his limbs tremble. The very act of dissembling causes great physical discomfort.

## Firbolg Settlements

Most of the countless clans of firbolgs have created settlements of their own, away from the giants, in remote regions of Faerûn. These settlements generally prove inhospitable to visitors since the firbolgs tend to distrust outsiders. After time, however, the firbolgs tend to warm toward any individuals of a good alignment whom they consider honorable (that is, individuals who wittingly or unwittingly tend to follow the dictums of the code).

Most firbolg clans build their settlements amidst low rolling hills or thick forests. Such settlements usually consist of a collection of grand wooden halls with thatched roofs built among a series of defensive catwalks and observation towers. Always attuned to their environment (though not nearly so much as the voadkyn), firbolgs usually know visitors are approaching their encampment as long as two days before they arrive.

In the Spires, a few firbolgs have chosen to live among Hartsvale's humans, who extend them a great deal more hospitality than the giants of the region. Although most of these firbolgs still operate as "loners" by human standards (many are forest guides and independent scouts in the king's army), a few have truly urbanized. One particularly extroverted firbolg now owns and operates an inn that lies along the main trail connecting Hartwick and the Ice Spires. See Tavis Burdun's entry under "Important Figures" in the "Hartsvale" entry of the chapter titled "The Ice Spires and Their Environs."

## Firbolgs as Player Characters

Firbolg player characters' ability scores are modified by a +2 bonus to Strength and a -2 penalty to Charisma. Players of firbolgs with 18 Strength are allowed to generate an exceptional Strength regardless of the class chosen.



Ability	Ability Score Range	
	Minimum	Maximum
Strength	15	20
Dexterity	8	15
Constitution	12	18
Intelligence	8	18
Wisdom	8	18
Charisma	3	14

### Class Restrictions

Class	Max. Level
Warrior	
Fighter	1
Ranger	1
Paladin	N
Wizard	
Mage	N
Illusionist	N
Runecaster	7
Priest	
Cleric	No
Druid	No
Shaman	6
Witch Doctor	No
Rogue	
Thief	7
Bard	No

**Hit Dice:** Player character firbolgs receive Hit Dice by class. In addition they receive 13 bonus hit points at first level.

**Alignment:** The firbolgs are almost without question lawful and good in the human sense. It is an extraordinary individual who breaks this pattern. Firbolg PCs have a distinct disadvantage (even more so than other kin) when dealing with the Jotunbrud, who see them as inherently *maug*.

**Natural Armor Class:** 3.

**Languages:** Common, any of the specialized giant tongues.

**Special Advantages:** Firbolgs are capable of using large human-sized weapons (such as two-

handed swords and great spears) in one hand without penalty.

**Special Disadvantages:** Firbolgs can never wear armor of any sort. It is seen as cowardly

**Monstrous Traits:** Size.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** Club, all giant-kin weapons, two-handed sword.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Ancient history, animal training, artistic ability, blacksmithing, cooking, eating, gaming, herbalism, hunting, intimidation, reading/writing, set snares, survival, weaponsmithing, weather sense.

## Verbeegs

Verbeegs are notorious mercenaries and rogues. Though they have their own settlements and societies, they are frequently encountered alongside giants and ogres. In fact, outside of the Ice Spires, some verbeegs have been known to actually claw their way to dominion over small hill or frost giant tribes—an obvious byproduct of their unrivaled cunning.

Although the firbolgs speak loudest of kin unity, the verbeegs tend to make their half-brothers, the giants, the most uncomfortable. Their omnipresence in giant society, obvious intelligence, and penchant for underhandedness add up to make some of the more skittish members of the Jotunbrud a bit neurotic. A few particularly addled giants have convinced themselves that the verbeegs have already united all the kin and are carrying out a plan of infiltration aimed at conquering and enslaving all the giant races. Usually, such paranoiacs also spread rumors of a vast, unseen population of verbeegs and a huge underground verbeeg kingdom that is connected to a network of tunnels that criss-crosses the Ice Spires.

Of course, it's extremely doubtful that any of these rumors contain more than the smallest kernel of truth, though the Jotunbrud still



have plenty to worry about. Many of the verbeeg servants and laborers have been planted in the various giant steadings as spies at the behest of a mysterious figure who is actually no less than an avatar of the giant god Karantor himself. Years ago, Karantor actively recruited followers in all the largest verbeeg tribes and directed his priests to force the verbeegs to follow the dictums of the mysterious stranger who occasionally came to visit bearing treasure in exchange for promises of fealty. Only the priests are aware that the stranger—who takes a slightly different form in each settlement he visits—is actually Karantor’s avatar. For hundreds of years now, spies dispatched by the avatar have been keeping Karantor informed of the comings and goings in many of Faerûn’s most prominent Jotunbrud settlements. Recently, the avatar has also started dispatching some of his verbeeg servants to collect specific artifacts scattered all across Toril’s surface. Exactly what Karantor has in mind for the verbeegs and how they are assisting him remains a mystery.

Unlike firbolgs, verbeegs are firm believers in the concept of ordning. Through treachery—the greatest of their skills—the verbeegs have designed a unique process for bettering themselves in their society. To ascend in the ordning, a verbeeg must plot to discredit or defeat a superior. Such disposals are not necessarily violent. In fact, ousting a superior via a slow, subtle scheme brings far more glory than crude brute force. One popular tale concerns two verbeegs who played a single game of *wah-ree* for more than 40 years. Throughout the course of the game, the rivals often spent months planning and measuring their moves. Eventually, one of the verbeegs sent his daughter to tempt his rival, a ploy that ultimately resulted in a marriage. The verbeeg then lived happily with his rival’s daughter for 30 years and raised a large family. As the

end of the *wah-ree* game approached, however, the daughter started to behave strangely, acting the shrew and refusing to tend to her children. This broke her husband’s concentration, allowing his rival to win the game and seize the higher ordning rank. Only after the game was over did the loser discover that his entire marriage was merely another facet of the plot.

Besides treachery, verbeegs are well known for their skill as thieves. Verbeegs are particularly well suited to this role since they have no concept of private property. To them, all things are owned by all people. Anything they can steal they feel they deserve to own. Visitors foolish enough to sleep in verbeeg settlements often awake to find their supplies, equipment, and sometimes even their clothing missing.

### Verbeegs as Player Characters

Verbeeg player characters receive a bonus of +2 to Strength, +1 to Constitution, -1 to Wisdom, and -2 to Charisma. Players of verbeeg characters with 18 Strength are allowed to generate an exceptional Strength regardless of the class chosen.

Ability	Ability Score Range	
	Minimum	Maximum
Strength	13	18/00
Dexterity	6	14
Constitution	12	18
Intelligence	6	18
Wisdom	6	18
Charisma	3	14







### Class Restrictions

Class	Maximum Level
Warrior	
Fighter	8
Ranger	No
Paladin	No
Wizard	
Mage	6
Illusionist	No
Runecaster	12
Priest	
Cleric	No
Druid	No
Shaman	7
Witch Doctor	No
Rogue	
Thief	10
Bard	No

**Hit Dice:** Player character verbeegs receive Hit Dice by class. In addition they receive 5 bonus hit points at 1st level.

**Alignment:** Verbeegs tend toward the neutral and evil alignments. PC Verbeegs may be of any alignment.

**Natural Armor Class:** 5.

**Languages:** Common, any of the specialized giant tongues.

**Special Advantages:** Verbeegs are capable of using large human-sized weapons (such as two-handed swords and great spears) in one hand without penalty.

**Special Disadvantages:** Verbeegs can never wear armor better than splint mail.

**Monstrous Traits:** Size.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** Club, *giant-kin spear*, *giant-kin two-handed sword*, two-handed sword.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Animal handling, animal training, blacksmithing, eating, hunting, intimidation, reading/writing, set snares, survival, weaponsmithing, weather sense.

## Voadkyn

Voadkyn all but abandoned most contact with their half brothers long ago. According to their own legends, the voadkyn noticed that Annam had not allocated Ostoria's forests to any of his sons and seized them as their own more than six thousand years ago. Today, few voadkyn live near the giant steadings and the Ice Spires. Rumor has it that an unusually large number of wood giants (as the voadkyn sometimes refer to themselves) can be found living with treants and wood elves deep in the Cold Wood.

For many years, the Jotunbrud accepted the voadkyn as equals. Ultimately though, one of the earliest giant stormazins discovered that Dunmore, the progenitor of the voadkyn, was actually sired by Ulutiu and not Annam. Apparently, Othea tricked Annam into accepting Dunmore as his own so she'd always have a sort of "spy" among the elders of the Jotunbrud. Despite the evidence uncovered by the stormazin, however, the voadkyn continue to claim Annam's parentage. This fervent belief makes the wood giants an aloof and haughty race, who see themselves as far removed from the verbeegs and firbolgs. As for the giants, voadkyn believe themselves superior to most of the Jotunbrud, whom they still regard as the betrayers of Othea.

Believing themselves to be unjustly placed near the bottom of the ordning, the voadkyn are an unhappy, brooding bunch. While they live comfortably and in peace with the elves and fairies of the forests, there is no frolic in a voadkyn settlement. Jocularly, in fact, is distinctly frowned upon and can make for long, long silences in a conversation with these kin.

While the voadkyn are deeply unhappy with their station in life, they are just as deeply pleased with their life in the forests. Seeing the wooded area as their property to tend, the voadkyn are not content to simply



let things grow as they may. They wish to increase the natural beauty around them with advanced gardening techniques designed to both appear natural and transcendent at the same time. To this end, scores of giant-kin under the direction of a voadkyn “architect” construct elaborate walking gardens and sculpted labyrinths. While the latter are monuments to nature’s beauty, it should be noted that more than a few of the voadkyn’s enemies have entered these labyrinths, never to be heard from again. Many legends exist in the Ice Spires describing vast mazes of enchanted shrub sculptures in the Forgotten Forest and the wondrous treasures located at their center. What these treasures might be changes with each storyteller and skald, though most agree that one such trove could buy a kingdom.

### Voadkyn as Player Characters

Voadkyn player characters receive a +2 bonus to Strength, a +2 bonus to Dexterity, a -2 penalty to Wisdom, and a -2 penalty to Charisma. Players of voadkyn with 18 Strength are allowed to generate an exceptional Strength regardless of the class chosen.

Ability	Ability Score Range	
	Minimum	Maximum
Strength	14	19
Dexterity	6	14
Constitution	12	18
Intelligence	6	18
Wisdom	6	18
Charisma	3	14







### Class Restrictions

Class	Maximum Level
Warrior	
Fighter	11
Ranger	13
Paladin	No
Wizard	
Mage	5
Illusionist	No
Runecaster	9
Priest	
Cleric	No
Druid	No
Shaman	6
Witch Doctor	No
Rogue	
Thief	7
Bard	No

**Hit Dice:** Player character voadkyn receive Hit Dice by class. In addition they receive 6 bonus hit points at 1st level.

**Alignment:** Voadkyn tend toward the neutral alignments. PC Voadkyn may be of any alignment.

**Natural Armor Class:** 7.

**Languages:** Common, any of the specialized giant tongues.

**Special Advantages:** Voadkyn are capable of using large human-sized weapons (such as two-handed swords and great spears) in one hand without penalty.

**Special Disadvantages:** Voadkyn can never wear armor better than leather armor.

**Monstrous Traits:** Size.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** Club, *giant-kin spear*, *giant-kin long bow*, *giant-kin two-handed sword*, *giant-kin halberd*, two-handed sword.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Agriculture, alertness, animal noise, animal training, direction sense, eating, hiding, hunting, intimidation, reading/writing, set snares, survival (forests), weather sense.





## Fomorians

Fomorians are so abominable that they are not tolerated by any but ogres, hill giants, and frost giants. Although all-fomorian settlements exist, a large percentage of Toril's fomorian population can be found working as manual laborers in the ogre encampments and giant steadings in and around the Ice Spires. Most hold particularly dangerous or distasteful jobs (kennel minder, dust sweeper, butcher, torturer) and work in exchange for table scraps and warm (though often filthy) bedding. Although the beasts' deformed physiques and complete lack of coordination tend to make them ill-suited for even these miserable tasks, the giants seem to enjoy bullying them, so their place in Jotunbrud society remains secure.

For some reason, most fomorians are certain

that the giant king who was prophesied in the wake of Hartkiller's death will be born as one of their brethren. They believe that one cannot reunite the giants and reform their society without first seeing the ills of that society through twisted, fomorian eyes. Such prophets predict that at first, as a fomorian, the king will have no memory of his identity or purpose. Then, after he realizes his true destiny, he will metamorphose into a grand giant larger than the tallest titan. Once this transformation is complete, he will accept the fomorians as his chosen, transforming them in his own image.

All in all, such prophecies compose a remarkably sophisticated bit of spiritual theorizing for creatures as dull-witted as the fomorians. Exactly how these rumors started remains a mystery.





**WHAT MAKES THE RELIGION** of the Jotunbrud particularly interesting is its unusual multi-faceted nature. Although all of the giant breeds worship the same few gods, each has its own unique idea of what each god represents. Thus, there is often as much difference of opinion between the faithful of a single sect as between the devotees of two rival sects. In fact, in the past, entire wars have been fought among rival worshipers of a single divine being.

The one thing that all giants agree upon is that Annam stands over all other gods in the Ordning (when capitalized in this fashion, Ordning refers to the entire pantheon of giant deities, itself an ordning of the sort described in “The Nature of Giantkind”). Almost as widely accepted is the belief that taller giants are inherently more holy and powerful than smaller giants. According to the general ethos of the Jotunbrud, Annam made sure his sons towered above the other races of Faerûn in order to insure that they would always stand closer to their Father’s heavenly throne than any of their rivals. In fact, Hartkiller’s relatively small stature is almost certainly one of the reasons why the various giant tribes found it impossible to accept him as their king.

Although each giant tribe confines the bulk of its active worship to one or two patron deities, most giants revere all the various giant gods. Giants routinely enter shrines dedicated to their tribe’s patron deity and offer prayers to another member of the Ordning. Such conduct is perfectly acceptable—any giant temple can be used as a place of worship for any legitimate giant god. In fact, all giant priests are educated together and receive almost no indoctrination that extends beyond general beliefs and customs pertaining to the whole of the Ordning. When it comes to specific festivals and practices linked to a patron deity, giant priests are called upon to invent their own, using their general

training as a rigid guideline.

Sitting atop the entire hierarchy of giant priests and shamans is the *stormazîn*, the Great Priest of Annam. The *stormazîn* is always a male priest of the highest level. His duties include tending to Annam’s grand temple (currently located in the Ice Spire Mountains), traveling to each of the giant steadings to participate in important rituals and ceremonies, resolving disputes between priests, maintaining and revising the code of conduct for the clergy, and training new priests. Although the *stormazîn* has no official sanction to establish policy that falls outside the religious arena, he is always a highly respected figure within giant society. Most chieftains tend to accept his advice, particularly since he traditionally offers it so sparingly.

Stormazîns hold the title for life. When the *stormazîn* dies, the high priests of all the giant tribes gather to elect one of themselves to the office.

The current *stormazîn* of the Jotunbrud is an aging cloud giant named Xephras.

**Xephras**  
(ZEF-frus)  
Stormazîn of the Jotunbrud  
NG cloud giant P13  
Ice Spires

Xephras is an unusually short cloud giant with flowing white hair and a long white beard. Several hundred years old, he is now quite sickly and walks with a pronounced stoop in his back. For these reasons, Xephras is unable to visit the various giant steadings scattered throughout the Spires nearly so often as he feels he should. He is currently looking for a worthy successor so he can step down, though so far no appropriate candidates have emerged.

Unlike most of the other giants of the Ice Spires, Xephras doesn’t trust in the teachings of



the Twilight Spirit. Although he has no clues to the Spirit's identity, he does not believe that the Spirit is a true representative of Annam's will.

Xephras and his two disciples (both stone giants) reside in a marble temple located northeast of Hartsvale and constructed during the last years of the war against dragonkind.

## Priests and Shamans

In general terms, giant priests are limited to the 12th level of advancement (the one exception to this rule, the Jotunbrud stormazîn, is always a 13th-level priest). Giant priests never gain additional Hit Dice through level advancement and always use the Creature Table (Table 39 in the DUNGEON MASTER Guide) for calculating their THAC0s. Priests are trained by the stormazîn himself. There are rarely more than

two of them living among any given tribe.

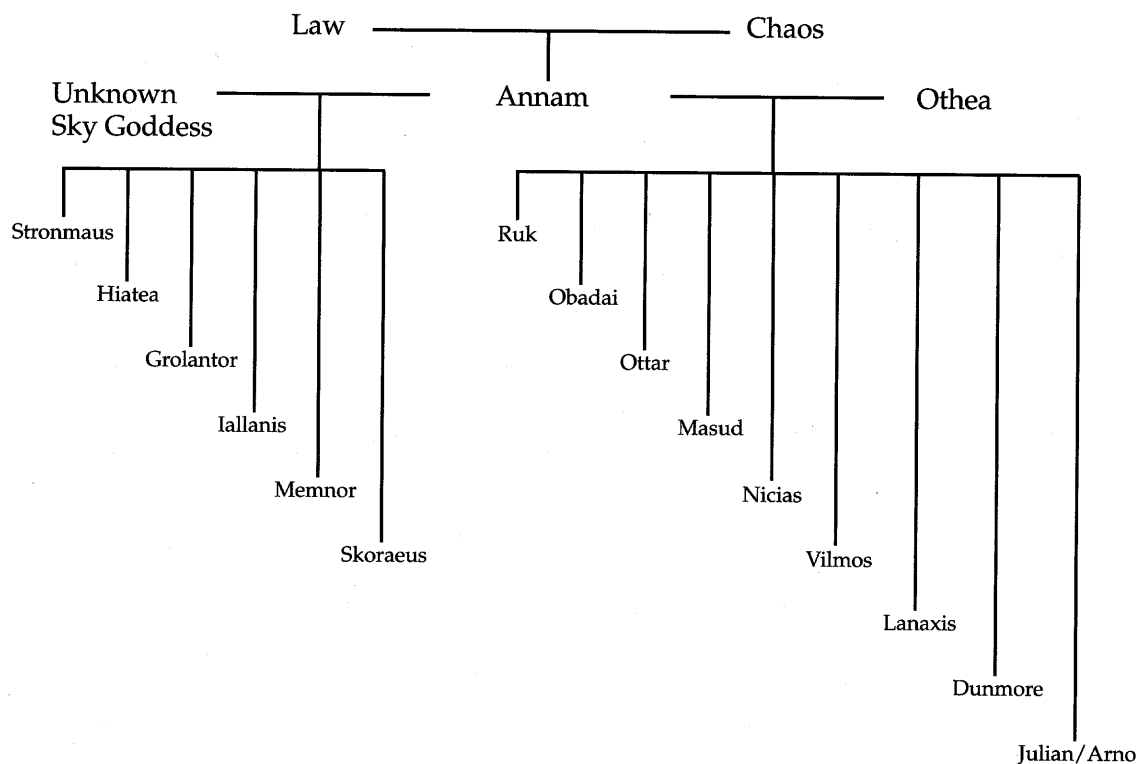
Giant shamans are lesser clergymen who assist and serve the priests. They are limited to the 7th level of advancement and can select their spells from only two of the spheres listed for the patron deity of the priest they serve. Shamans are typically recruited and trained by their priests.

In the Realms, there are no witch doctors worshipping members of the Ordning. Giant witch doctors can sometimes be found within the brethren of a few unusual cults, however.

Note that all giant priests and shamans can use any weapon but never wear armor.

## Ordning Family Tree

Virtually all the gods worshiped by the giants are related to Annam. Together, the members of





the Ordning compose one large family tree. On the chart below, marriages or unions are depicted by horizontal lines; offspring are connected to their parents by vertical lines. Note that this diagram is not all inclusive. Over the years, several other beings have claimed Annam as a direct ancestor, and at least some of these claims are certainly genuine.

## Giant Deities

The descriptions that appear on the next several pages use the format employed by the *Legends & Lore* tome and include additional campaign notes about each god's followers.

Abbreviations:

AB\* required attributes for priests accepting the god as a patron deity

AL Alignment

ALL allowable alignment of priests and shamans who accept the god as a patron

AoC Area of Control

PW special powers granted to priests (only) who have accepted the deity as a patron.

Numbers following PW indicate the level at which these powers are acquired.

SP spheres of spells granted by the deity

SY symbol

TU denotes the ability to turn undead

WAL worshiper's alignment

\*"standard" means the requirements are the same as those listed in the *Player's Handbook*. Generally, the requirements for becoming a shaman are two points lower than those for priesthood.

### Annam (Greater God)

Annam All-Father (ON-urn) sits atop the Ordning. Rumored to be the son of a conjunction of Chaos and Law, he is the progenitor of the Ordning and all the giant breeds. All that giants are

and will become is owed to his influence. All that giants do is in his service.

Annam has a dual nature. On the one hand he is wise, learned, and philosophical. On the other, he is lustful, instinctive, and unpredictable. Equally notorious are his insight and jealousy, wit and impatience—he is proud of what his sons have accomplished but still yearns for the day they will accomplish even more. He foresees the future but cannot prepare for it.

Like most of the giant gods, Annam is seen in a different light by each of his worshipers. Hill giants imagine him as an enormous glutton and master of the grandest pantry in the multiverse. Stone giants envision him as an unparalleled artist. Frost giants see him as a glorious reveler and warrior.

**Role-playing Notes:** Annam personifies his sons' defining traits to an almost unbelievable extreme. He is remarkably selfish, sees all others as hopelessly inferior to himself, and remains wholly uninterested in the passage of time. (He has been known to take a thousand years to ponder the simplest of queries.) Once he has made up his mind, he will never change his opinion, even in the face of new evidence or further developments.

**Statistics:** AL N; WAL any; AoC magic, knowledge, fertility, philosophy; SY crossed hands, held palms together with fingers facing downward.

### Annam's Avatar (F20/W18/P20)

Annam's avatar is an enormous (100'+ tall) giant with flowing white hair and a regal beard, wearing deep blue robes. The avatar uses spells from all spheres. DMs should note: Annam's avatar *never* comes to Toril.





Str 25	Dex 18	Con 24
Int 22	Wis 23	Cha 23
MV 21,	SZ G	MR 70%
Fl 36, SW 18		
AC -6	HD 25	hp 200
#AT 2	THAC0 2	DMG 7d8+14

**Special Att/Def:** Annam's avatar is immune to all of the following attack forms: energy drain, mind-control magic, petrification, paralysis, death magic, and any weapon of less than +3 enchantment. The avatar does have a peculiar weakness, however: Any blow landed directly atop its head (a called shot with a -8 penalty to the attack roll) stuns the giant for one round plus one half round for each point of the striker's Strength damage bonus, rounding down.

At will, the avatar can use the following powers twice per day at a range of 200 feet: *Bigby's crushing hand*, *earthquake*, *telekinesis* (up to 1,000 pounds), and a *wall of force* of double normal size. All of these effects are rated at the 20th level of spell use.

Annam's avatar rarely carries magical items, though the All-Father has an enormous store of them at his disposal. One exception is the avatar's ever-present *staff of power*, charged with 1d4 *wishes* (in addition to its normal complement of charges).

The avatar has a base THAC0 of 2 but hits any AC on a roll of 8 or better.

### **Annam's Disappearance**

Several thousand years ago, Annam promised Othea that he would leave Toril and his Ysgardian palace until his sons restored the glory of Ostoria. So far, he has honored this agreement. As a consequence, he cannot grant spells to his priests, he is usually unavailable for commune, and he cannot normally manifest omens.

So great is Annam's power, however, that he is sometimes capable of reaching out to his flock

from his distant realm of exile (believed to be located among the tranquil landscapes of the Outlands). All giant priests (not only those dedicated to Annam) who attain at least the 10th level of experience will receive a single precognitive vision from the All-Father at some point in their lives. Normally, this vision comes during a holy festival and reveals a coming truth of great importance to the giants as a whole. Priests who experience the vision have no doubt as to where it came from and why it is significant.

### **Gudheim**

Gudheim is Annam's vast crystal palace located on the plane of Ysgard. At its center is a splendid orrery, a model of the planes, stars, and planets that endlessly spins in silent perfection. The model was crafted by the sons of Masud, the first fire giant, to honor the All-Father at the outset of the war against dragonkind.

Although Annam has not set foot in Gudheim since he made his pact with Othea, the palace is still occupied by his celestial children, the remaining members of the Ordning. Although it certainly lost something of its luster with the All-Father's departure, the mighty crystal palace is still a sight of almost unimaginable beauty and majesty. Giant priests believe that just before their deaths, particularly pious clergymen are invited to visit Gudheim for one evening to share a repast with the Ordning.

Surrounding Gudheim is Jotunheim, the home of the giant heroes. According to ancient legends, the spirits of all giants who die in battle are carried off to Jotunheim by Muspel and Muznir, a pair of Annam's servants who often take the shape of enormous owls. There, they are allowed to pursue their chosen virtues and defend the Ordning for all eternity.

### **Duties of the Priesthood**

Since he disappeared from Gudheim, few giants are directly devoted to the worship of Annam,



though all giants revere him. One notable exception is the stormazîn, who acts as a spiritual father to the priests dedicated to all other giant deities.

**Requirements:** AB Wis 14 Cha 14; AL any; SP any; TU yes; PW 3) Cha automatically raised to 18; 10) precognitive vision (see “Annam’s Disappearance,” above).

**Aims, Credo, Ethos:** The giants are destined to rule Faerûn; Honor the Ordning and your ordning; Never raise your hand against a brother giant—there must be peace between breeds to see Annam’s prophecies to their fruition; Ostoria is the only hope for Toril.

Do not fear time; it is the bane of your enemies. Do not underestimate other peoples, but do not allow them to distract you from your destiny

**Rituals:** Annam is directly honored in three ceremonies still practiced by the giants.

The first day of the first month of each year sees the Grand Feast of the All-Father. During this celebration, all giants temporarily abrogate their other responsibilities to partake of vast quantities of food and to celebrate the eventual return of Ostorian glory. Although the ceremony differs somewhat from breed to breed (based largely upon each breed’s view of Annam), most tribes demonstrate their unity by dispatching ambassadors to attend each other’s celebrations. Typically, the stormazîn honors a favored chieftain by attending the feast held at that chieftain’s steading.

Once every two years, the stormazîn holds a special ceremony in Annam’s honor to invest new clergymen. This ceremony is typically held in one of the larger tribes’ dedicated temples and attended by the chieftains of all the various tribes. A tribe whose temple is so selected by the stormazîn is greatly honored.

Once per month, the stormazîn holds a spe-

cial prayer vigil to honor the All-Father and ask his guidance. Particularly troubled members of the Jotunbrud often visit the stormazîn’s shrine in order to attend this ceremony

**Customs, Rules, Taboos:** Any priest or shaman of Annam who strikes another giant (willingly or unwillingly) must forfeit his position and undergo divestiture. Anyone who speaks Ulutiu’s name at a ceremony honoring Annam must die.

### The Twilight Spirit

Twilight’s Vale is a barren valley located on the northern fringe of the Ice Spires. Because it was used as a meeting place by Annam’s sons in the time of ancient Ostoria, the Jotunbrud have long considered the Vale sacred ground. To this day, the giants of the Spires actively defend its valley against interlopers and trespassers.

Centuries ago, giants all over the steadings began to hear a mysterious voice that even today occasionally directs them to assemble in the Vale. There, they receive counsel from a giant cloaked in shadow the giants came to call the Twilight Spirit. The Spirit claims to be a prophet of the true will of Annam. With the aid of the Jotunbrud it has attracted into its service, the Spirit aims to see the prophecy of the giant king and the return of Ostoria fulfilled. To accomplish these aims, the Spirit sometimes hatches elaborate schemes meant to establish the groundwork for Ostoria’s return. Several years ago (during the War of the Twins), for instance, the Spirit directed a group of giants to engage a tribe of ogres to help King Camden defeat his brother Dunstan. In exchange for their help, Camden promised the ogres his first-born daughter, a boon that the Spirit has directed his servants to deliver to him. Exactly what the Spirit wants with Camden’s daughter is still something of a mystery.

Although not all the Jotunbrud are willing to



accept the Twilight Spirit at its word (in fact, the current stormazîn is a vocal opponent of the Spirit and its teachings), the Spirit's presence has unquestionably invigorated the giants of the Spires with a new sense of purpose. For the first time in eons, the Jotunbrud believe the rebirth of Ostoria is within their grasp.

### Legacy Omens

Ever since Hartkiller died, the giant communities located near the Ice Spires have been plagued by inexplicable coincidences and strange phenomena. Ghostly apparitions, messages written by no one, items appearing and disappearing, and bizarre weather patterns have all been reported in and around the steadings.

Most giants see these strange occurrences as omens foreshadowing the coming of the giant king that was prophesied in Hartkiller's wake. According to the lore that has grown up around the phenomena, each new omen signifies another of the king's failed attempts to enter the physical world. The fact that these attempts are beginning to manifest themselves in reality signify that the king is nearing freedom. One day soon, say the faithful, he (or she) will emerge to fulfill the age-old prophecies.

Of course, not everyone is in complete agreement as to the cause of the manifestations. A few of the more paranoid giants insist that the "omens" are not linked with Hartkiller's legacy in any way. Instead, these renegades believe that the apparitions and odd occurrences are "scouting attacks" undertaken by an army of undead who hope to destroy the steadings. Some have even tried to link this threat with the fabled verbeeg uprising rumored to soon rock the Spires. So ridiculous are some of the latest arguments offered by the renegades that a few of the more prominent giants are beginning to suspect them of implementing some sort of plot. Exactly what the renegades might hope to gain

by their antics remains a mystery.

In recent years, the strange omens have become particularly common near Twilight Vale. Visitors to the Vale are frequently plagued by strange apparitions and mysterious voices. Although some of these voices undoubtedly issue forth from the Twilight Spirit himself, others are of more questionable origin. More than one giant has been driven to madness in the Vale's unforgiving valley.

### Duties of the Priesthood

Devotees of the Twilight Spirit aren't exact analogs for the priests of the AD&D game. They hold no organized services, maintain no temples, and don't fall under any organized hierarchy. Instead, they are wandering prophets who move throughout the steadings spreading the teachings of the Spirit and enlisting the aid of the Jotunbrud in carrying out the Spirit's schemes. In fact, some of the Spirit's devotees are also priests of another deity.

The Twilight Spirit is capable of bestowing spells upon its followers, but only spells of the first three levels. Devotees of the Spirit who are already priests of other deities receive these spells in addition to those granted by their patron. Clerics of the Twilight Spirit cannot advance further than 6th level (unless they are also priests of another deity).

Note that most servants of the Twilight Spirit chose their paths after being summoned to the Vale to hear the voice of the Spirit for themselves.

**Requirements:** AB any; AL any giant; SP charm, combat, divination, healing; TU yes; PW 3) Cha automatically raised to 18; 6) able to cast a *charm giant* one time per day (same as *charm person*, but affects only true giants and is only usable to enlist the giant's aid in one of the Spirit's schemes).



**Aims, Credo, Ethos:** The prophesied king shall come soon and restore the glory of ancient Ostoria; all true giants must unite if they are to inherit their father's kingdom.

### Stronmaus (Greater God)

Stronmaus (STRAWN-mawz) is the eldest son of Annam and brother to Hiatea, Grolantor, Memnor, Skoraesus, and Iallanis. Shortly after he came of age, Stronmaus adopted the skies as his purview. With Annam gone, however, he is now responsible for the affairs of the entire Ordning, though he certainly doesn't covet his father's power. The moment Annam returns, Stronmaus will happily relinquish the throne.

Though he is often encountered among the mountains of the Beastlands, Stronmaus is believed to inhabit a spectacular cloud palace attached to Annam's steading in Gudheim. At the center of this palace is a magical opal pool some 500' long to a viewer, but of endless size to anyone swimming it. The waters of this pool *heal* any creature who bathes in them and effect both a *restoration* and a *regeneration*. Many thousands of years ago, after the titan Lanaxis finally united all of Annam's sons on Toril, Stronmaus gave Lanaxis a sample of his waters as a gift, allowing the titan to create a smaller version of the pond at the center of Voninheim. In fact, Lanaxis delivered his poison to Othea by fouling waters drawn from this magical font. Whether or not the fountain still exists at the heart of Voninheim's ruins, of course, is unknown.

Like all members of the Ordning, each of the giant breeds tends to see Stronmaus in a different light. To the hill giants he is a mighty fisherman. To the frost giants he is a bold sailor/explorer. To the cloud giants he is a thundering god of storms. In any case, all see him as far more youthful, vigorous, and carefree than the All-Father. Stronmaus is frequently depicted smiling or reveling, and he certainly seems to

enjoy crafting his powerful rainstorms and lightning bolts.

**Role-playing Notes:** Because he is so adventurous, Stronmaus tends to send more avatars to visit Toril than many of his divine peers. Often, these avatars are disguised as ordinary storm giants traveling between the steadings. Though he would never dream of blatantly and directly intervening in the affairs of the Jotunbrud (he and his siblings made certain rules against such vulgar interventions eons ago), he frequently intervenes indirectly to enjoy adventures aside his favored nephews. Stronmaus also dispatches his avatars simply to take pleasure in Toril's idyllic forests and isolated mountains.

Stronmaus has befriended many of the other deities who lord over Toril, particularly the lesser power Eldath (see the *Running the Realms* booklet found in the FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting box); Trishina, the dolphin goddess; Surminare, the selkie queen; and Syranita, mistress of the aarakocra.

**Statistics:** AL NG (CG); WAL any but mostly good; AoC sun, sky, weather, seas; SY forked lightning bolt descending from a cloud partly obscuring the sun.

### Stronmaus's Avatar (Pal20/P16)

Stronmaus's avatar appears as an enormous (80' tall) giant with blue eyes and flowing red hair, wearing a simple white robe. He uses priest spells from all spheres.

Str 25	Dex 21	Con 24
Int 19	Wis 22	Cha 24
MV 18	SZ G	MR 70%
Fl 48, SW 18		
AC -5	HD 24	hp 192
# AT 2	THAC0 2	Dmg 6d8+19





**Special Att/Def:** Stronmaus controls weather in a 10-mile radius at will and may *call lightning* once per turn. He is immune to weapons of less than +3 enchantment as well as all mind-affecting, blinding, deafening, death, energy drain, and electrical magic. Three times per day, he can cast a 20-die *lightning bolt* that is 10' wide, up to 160' long, and exhibits the *chain lightning* effect. No nonevil avian or aquatic creature will ever attack Stronmaus, and any attempt to magically coerce such a creature to attack automatically breaks the magical effect (*charm, domination, etc.*). Stronmaus always carries a *hammer of thunderbolts* with all available special powers (+5 enchantment, strikes any evil giant dead with no saving throw, etc.). Stronmaus's base THAC0 is 2, but he hits any AC on a roll of 8 or better.

### Duties of the Priesthood

Stronmaus is worshiped as a patron in both the cloud giant and storm giant steadings located near the Ice Spires.

The cloud giant priests are skilled in music and the arts. They wear fine jewelry and maintain large personal fortunes.

Storm giant priests of Stronmaus, on the other hand, are shabbily dressed ascetics. Before they are accepted into the order, they must sit atop a cold, deserted peak for 100 days and nights without food.

**Requirements:** AB Wis 13; AL NG, CG; SP animal, charm, combat, creation, divination, elemental (all), guardian, healing, necromantic, summoning, sun, weather; PW 1) *fly*, once per day, double duration; 5) *wind wall* once per day; TU as priest two levels lower; Shamans yes.

**Aims, Credo, Ethos:** Ram cleanses and offers salvation; freedom is the greatest bounty one can bestow; good-natured merriment is the milk

of life (cloud giants only); life is a test of will (storm giants only).

**Rituals:** Cloud giants devoted to Stronmaus begin each morning by scattering handfuls of incense and spices to the winds. About twice per year, they worship their patron by declaring a sacred *omjag* ("sky hunt") on an evil air creature such as a chimera, wyvern, or chromatic dragon. The beast is then ritually hunted, killed, and offered to Stronmaus.

In stark contrast to their brothers, the storm giant followers of Stronmaus view the god's ever-present smile as a form of mockery. They worship their patron by organizing great ceremonies designed to demonstrate their ability to overcome earthly obstacles (such as a great quest, hunt, or survival walk). Often, these rituals press the giants to the limits of their abilities and place them in great mortal danger. Storm giant followers of Stronmaus also preach that all sins require atonement and offer absolution to their brethren in the form of mild physical punishment.

**Customs, Rules, Taboos:** Regardless of their breed, priests of Stronmaus always stop to pray during or immediately after a rainstorm or thunderstorm (even such a storm summoned by the priests themselves). Devotees are also forbidden to build fires, though there are no restrictions against them warming themselves at fires built by others.

**Specialty Magic:** Priests of Stronmaus may select *lightning bolt* (3rd-level wizard spell) as a 4th-level priest spell.

### Hiatea (Greater Goddess)

Hiatea (hee-AH-tee-uh) is the daughter of Annam and sister to Stronmaus, Grolantor, Iallanis, Memnor, and Skoraesus. After she and her siblings developed an interest in the Jotun-



brud, she claimed dominion over its hearths and fields, developing a strong influence over both agriculture and family life in the Jotunbrud society

Just after the war with the dragons reached its bitter conclusion, Stronmaus taunted Hiatea about her uselessness during the affair, prompting her to undergo a stunning transformation. To establish the might of her domain, Hiatea reinvented herself as an avenging huntress, capable of employing nature as a powerful weapon of destruction as well as a peaceful source of bounty. Though Stronmaus has since apologized for the incident, Hiatea has never forgotten it. She is now fiercely committed to maintaining a dual nature: nurturer and destroyer, reaper and sower.

Hiatea is the only member of the Ordning still worshiped by the voadkyn, the giant-kin who fled the Ice Spires several centuries ago (see “Annam’s Legacy”).

**Role-playing Notes:** Unlike her brother Stronmaus, Hiatea rarely sends avatars to the Prime Material Plane. Very rarely she’ll dispatch direct assistance to her devotees, and from time to time she manifests herself on Toril to hunt some notoriously ferocious creature. (To this day, she is still forcing Stronmaus to eat his words.) She does, however, communicate unusually often with her priests and shamans in the form of distinctive omens, most of which are somehow linked with fire. Burning buildings, flaming spears, fiery auras encircling familiar objects, and flame beetles are all commonly employed. Such omens are usually dispatched to warn the wicked.

**Statistics:** AL N; WAL any; AoC nature, agriculture, hunting, fire, females, children; SY flaming spear.

#### Hiatea’s Avatar (R16/D10/B12)

Hiatea’s avatar appears as a tanned, long-legged giantess (approximately 70’ tall) wearing leather armor and carrying a spear and a bow. Her golden-red hair is tied back from her face, clearly exposing her hazel eyes. The avatar uses the priest spells from the druidic spheres and all schools of magic.

Str 23	Dex 20	Con 24
Int 20	Wis 19	Cha 24
MV 18	SZ G	MR 70%
AC -4	HD 20	hp 160
#AT 2	THAC0 4	Dmg 3d8+15 (spear,) or 2d8+6 (arrow)

**Special Att/Def:** Hiatea’s avatar is not affected by weapons of less than +2 enchantment or spells that restrict her movement in any way. She can cast *entangle*, *plant growth*, and *plant door* at will. Her *spear* +3 is a *flametongue* weapon and her *long bow* +5 has triple the normal range. She also carries a quiver of *arrows* +3. In addition to these formidable weapons, the avatar also employs a number of magical nets which she can throw at ranges up to 120’; victims caught in these nets must successfully save vs. spell at 4 or suffer the nets’ enchantments (among others, the avatar carries nets of *feeblemind*, *weakness*, and *petrification*).

#### Duties of the Priesthood

Hiatea’s priests are usually, though not always, female. She has devoted followings among the fire giants and stone giants of the Ice Spires.

Generally, priests of Hiatea assume one of two roles. Some spend most of their time in the steadings and function as family counselors and spiritual advisers. Others live alone (or in small groups) in the wilderness, where they act as sentries and guardians for the kingdom of Hartsvale and the various giant



steadings. Though there is no disgrace in joining the “urban” faction, the wilderness priests are considered closer to the goddess. Hiatea is said to select these sentry priests herself, subtly steering them into her service. The highest priests of her sect are always outsiders who visit the steadings only to issue orders to the home clerics.

**Requirements:** AB Dex 13, Wis 13; AL any; SP animal, combat, creation, divination, elemental, guardian, healing, necromantic, plant, protection, summoning, sun, travelers, wards, weather; PW 1) *pass without trace* once per day; 3) *speak with animals* three times per day; 5) identify natural plants/animals as druid; 9) turn spear into a *flametongue* weapon once per day, 1 turn duration, +2 to attack rolls with the weapon; TU as priest four levels lower; Shamans yes.

**Aims, Credo, Ethos:** Nature is both creator and destroyer; though the reawakening of Ostoria is the destiny of the Jotunbrud, there are some prices too high to pay for even this lofty goal; the admission of defeat is the very worst fate that can befall a true child of the Ordning; though kin are not of the blood and can never claim an equal status in Jotunbrud society, they are of the faith and should always be welcome in the steadings.

**Rituals:** Approximately once per month, the priests of the steadings accompany the sentinel priests and the faithful on a ceremonial hunt. Once per year (usually in the spring), the party selects a particularly challenging creature to hunt in this fashion.

The priests of Hiatea who live in the steadings strongly recommend that all the tribe’s huslyder keep the priests well advised of developments in their family lives. Making important family decisions without the coun-

sel of a priest is considered a minor sin by the faithful.

**Customs, Rules, Taboos:** All of Hiatea’s priests must be capable of hunting and surviving in the wilderness. Any priest who loses these capabilities due to age, injury, etc. must immediately stand down.

### Grolantor (Intermediate God)

Grolantor (GRO-lan-tor) is yet another son of Annam and the unnamed sky goddess. Many years ago, the pair’s treachery prompted Annam to prohibit Grolantor and his brother Memnor from involving themselves in the affairs of the Jotunbrud. Now that the All-Father has fled Gudheim, however, his decree is no longer applicable.

Once free to roam Toril in the wake of his father’s exile, Grolantor started sending his avatar amongst the Jotunbrud, hoping to persuade the giants to accompany him on his mischievous outings. Naturally, he received the warmest response from the hill giants and frost giants, who most admire the godling’s pride, courage, and skill in battle. Neither Stronmaus nor Hiatea is very pleased with Grolantor’s activities, though neither feels empowered to put a stop to them.

Grolantor is wholly dedicated to his own conceit. He absolutely refuses to admit that any other being or deity is his superior and tries to instill this attitude in his followers. Without such pride, he believes, Ostoria can never be reborn. Needless to say, such impetuosity has made him a number of enemies, particularly the gods of the dwarven pantheon, most of whom attack Grolantor on sight.

**Role-playing Notes:** Grolantor frequently sends his avatar amongst his followers in an effort to goad them into venturing out in search of military glory. Unfortunately for the faithful,



however, the god is known to lose interest in these battles just as they are reaching their climax, withdrawing the avatar and abandoning his followers in their time of greatest need. Of course, to a true devotee of Grolantor, such occasions are not desertions at all but glorious opportunities to prove one's own mettle.

**Statistics:** AL CE; WAL any evil (mostly hill giants, frost giants, and ettins); AoC battle, war; SY wooden club with sharp spikes protruding from its head.

#### **Grolantor's Avatar (P18)**

Grolantor's avatar appears as a huge (25-foot-tall) hill giant (or frost giant, depending upon whom he is visiting) clad in dragon hides. He uses spells from the spheres listed for his priests.

Str 21	Dex 17	Con 18
Int 12	Wis 8	Cha 19
MV 15	SZ H	MR 20%
AC 0	HD 18	hp 144
#AT 2	THAC0 4	Dmg 2d12+10 (club)

**Special Att/Def:** The avatar receives a +3 bonus on all surprise rolls. He can hurl rocks as a frost giant and fights with a *club* +2 that automatically inflicts double damage upon dwarves.

#### **Duties of the Priesthood**

Grolantor's priests take it upon themselves to search for and eradicate perceived weaknesses in their societies. Wherever they hold positions of respect, they are constantly urging their chieftains to launch invasions and raiding parties, sometimes in the face of astronomical odds. Favorite targets of Grolantor's clergy include dwarves, dragons, and goblins.

**Requirements:** AB std; AL CE, NE; SP animal, combat, elemental (earth), healing, necromantic, summoning, sun (reverse only), war; TU no; Shamans yes.

**Aims, Credo, Ethos:** Never admit weakness! Crush the weak underfoot! The Jotunbrud are destined to rule Faerûn! Annam's sons stand above all others in the grand ordning!

**Rituals:** Grolantor's priests are typically undisciplined and loosely organized. The only thing close to a formalized ritual they regularly observe is their unrivaled penchant for gluttonous revelry. Grolantor's hill giant clerics feel it is their duty to regularly prove that they are capable of out-eating any member of the tribe, while the frost giant clerics routinely attempt to outdrink the tribe.

**Customs, Rules, Taboos:** A priest of Grolantor is never allowed to back down from a battle or challenge. Failure to observe this dictum divests the priest of all powers until he or she undergoes *atonement* (which usually involves plunging oneself headlong into an even more dangerous battle).

**Specialty Magic:** Priests of Grolantor have access to a unique spell.

#### **Fourth-Level Spell**

##### **Berserk Fury (Enchantment/Charm)**

Sphere: Combat

Range: 5 yards /level

Components: V

Duration: One round/level

Casting Time: Special

Area of Effect: One creature/character  
per level

Saving Throw: Special

A priest of Grolantor who casts *berserk fury* immediately enters into a berserk rage and begins





shouting an odd combination of encouragements and insults at his allies, possibly prompting them to enter into berserk rages of their own.

Once the casting has begun, the priest can continue to shout for a number of rounds equal to his own level. While shouting, the caster may still launch attacks and defend against incoming attacks without penalty. Even if the priest is successfully attacked while casting, the spell is not interrupted unless the priest wills it so.

At the end of each round of shouting, all of the priest's allies within the spell's normal range (and earshot of the shouts), must save vs. death magic. There is no consequence for missing this save; a successful throw indicates that the ally has turned berserker. He or she immediately begins duplicating the priest's shouts, subjecting all allies within the normal range of these new shouts to the saving throw vs. death magic, beginning at the end of the next round. Regardless of the number of shouting characters, each ally within range of the shouts makes only a single saving throw each round. Once the number of affected characters is equal to the caster's level, no more allies are subject to the spell's effects.

Characters who have succumbed to the spell's berserk fury add +2 to their Strength scores (entitling them to higher Strength bonuses, greater rock hurling damage, etc.), subtract 2 from their ACs, and receive a +2 bonus to all their saving throws for as long as the fury lasts. While under the spell's influence, berserkers *must* remain in melee combat as long as possible. They cannot retreat, and the moment they run out of enemies, they must begin attacking their own allies.

Once the priest stops shouting or the spell's duration expires, all berserkers may attempt another saving throw vs. death magic to recover from their state of rage. If this save is unsuccessful, the berserker can attempt additional saves at the end of each subsequent round, but must continue to fight until one of these saves succeeds.

## Iallanis (lesser Goddess)

One of her father's favorite children, Iallanis (EE-uh-lan-is) was introduced to the Jotunbrud and their struggles while still an adolescent. She assumed her spot in the Ordning shortly thereafter.

Iallanis advocates love, forgiveness, beauty, and mercy. She never turns a giant of a good nature from her flock. Her ultimate ambition is to reunite all of the Jotunbrud and reestablish Ostorla as a kingdom of benevolence, ambition, and learning.

Iallanis is particularly beloved by the stone giants, cloud giants, storm giants, and kin of the Ice Spires. She is said to have befriended Fionnghuala, queen of the swanmay.

**Role-playing Notes:** Iallanis often dispatches an avatar to celebrate an occasion of great joy alongside the Jotunbrud: the wedding of a chieftain, the consecration of a great temple, the completion of a grand work of art, or the end of a war. She sometimes sends omens to her faithful in the form of tinkling winds, pleasant scents, and rare flowers.

**Statistics:** AL NG; WAL any nonevil; AoC love, mercy, beauty; SY a garland of flowers.

### Iallanis's Avatar (D16)

Iallanis's avatar appears as a graceful, fair-skinned giantess (25' tall) wearing a bright dress of living flowers. The avatar uses spells from the spheres allowed druids, plus sun and time.

Str 19	Dex 21	Con 19
Int 16	Wis 23	Cha 24
MV 21	SZ G	MR 20%
AC 0	HD 16	hp 128
#AT 1	THAC0 5	DMG 1d12+7 (fists)

**Special Att/Def:** Iallanis's avatar is immune to energy drains, diseases, poisons, blindness,



*cause wounds*, and *harm* spells. She can *charm person* or *giant* at will. All victims of this ability save at -4, except for giants who save at -8. The avatar can also *remove curse* from any mortal three times per day.

### **Duties of the Priesthood**

Iallanis will accept any good-aligned true giant as a priest or shaman on equal terms. Given her choice, she'd even accept kin as equals, though her father and Stronmaus have both forbidden such a policy as a violation of ordning. (Kin serving Iallanis are limited to lower levels of advancement, just like the servants of the other Ordning members.)

Iallanis's priests chiefly concern themselves with keeping the Jotunbrud united, dispersing mercy and absolution to those in need, and creating things of beauty.

No priests of Iallanis can advance higher than the 3rd level unless they are happily married.

**Requirements:** AB std; AL any Good; SP animal, creation, guarding, healing, necromantic, plant, protection, sun, time, wards; PW 1) *charm person or giant* once per day; 5) *charm monster* once per day; 9) *symbol of persuasion* once per day; TU as a priest two levels lower; Shamans yes.

**Aims, Credo, Ethos:** Honor mercy above all save the gods; honor beauty above all save mercy; an evil deed never goes unpunished nor a good deed unrewarded; kindness is the milk of might; passion is the milk of life.

**Rituals:** Priests of Iallanis always say a prayer over any gift or meal they receive. They also conduct nearly all of the marriage ceremonies that take place between two members of the Jotunbrud, even those involving priests of other deities or giants of evil alignment.

Each year, on the first day of spring, all of Iallanis' priests assemble in one of the giant

steadings for a grand revelry. If possible, a marriage is performed at the height of this celebration. Since a marriage performed under these circumstances is considered a great honor among the Jotunbrud, most of the important members of Jotunbrud society wait until the spring ceremony to wed.

**Customs, Rules, Taboos:** Iallanis's priests forego any worldly possessions beyond those necessary to maintain their own modest existences.

### **Memnor (Intermediate God)**

When Memnor and his brother Grolantor were just children, their "play" resulted in a mischievous plot that ultimately thrust the Jotunbrud into a minor war against the ogres. As a consequence, Annam forbade the children from interfering in the affairs of the giants for as long as he sat atop the Ordning.

Once Annam exiled himself from Gudheim, however, Memnor and Grolantor managed to convince Stronmaus and Hiatea that the All-Father's decree was no longer valid. Since that day, the brothers have incessantly meddled in the affairs of the Jotunbrud, sometimes forcing Stronmaus and Hiatea to put an end to their shenanigans.

Memnor is subtle, charming, intelligent, cultured—and deeply, intensely cruel. His sin is pride, the desire to eventually usurp Annam's throne atop the Ordning and become lord over all the affairs of giantkind. His chosen instruments in executing these plans are the handful of evil cloud giants he has accepted into his priesthood. To most members of the Jotunbrud, Memnor is a proud and determined servant of his father. Only his priests know the truth, and they share his ambition.

**Role-playing Notes:** Memnor is subtle and wily and rarely sends avatars down to Toril to fight, though his avatars will fight rashly if their



pride is challenged. His chief concern is to increase the prestige and power of his strongest priests. His omens frequently take the form of horrible visions and splitting headaches.

**Statistics:** AL NE; WAL any; AoC professed to be pride, honor, and mental prowess; SY a thin black obelisk.

### Memnor's Avatar

Memnor's avatar appears as a kindly, golden-skinned giant (24' tall) with piercing eyes, wearing a deep blue robe. The avatar's priest spells are drawn from all spheres.

Str 21	Dex 19	Con 19
Int 22	Wis 21	Cha 22
MV 18 Fl 36	SZ G	MR 40%
AC 1	HD 20	hp 160
#AT 1	THAC0 4	DMG 4d8+12 (morningstar)

**Special Att/Def:** Memnor's avatar is immune to illusion/phantasm spells but may freely use these among his own spells. He is also immune to nonmagical weapons and mind-affecting spells. Once per day, the avatar may cast: *mass suggestion*, *symbol of persuasion*, and *weather summoning*. The avatar's *morningstar* +3 strikes with a *febleminding* effect three times per day.

### Duties of the Priesthood

Perhaps the most important duty of Memnor's servants is keeping his true ambitions a secret. Just after the stormazin accepts them into the clergy of the Ordning, Memnor's own high priest visits each of the new recruits and subjects them to his own secret ceremony. During this shocking rite, the initiates pledge to aid their master in his bid to seize Annam's throne and swear to keep their true plans secret from the uninitiated.

While operating within the mainstream of Jotunbrud society, Memnor's clerics play the role of wise counselors and advocates for the underprivileged. In reality, they are always looking for an opportunity to ascend the ordnings of the various giant societies, where they'll be more useful to their master.

**Requirements:** AB Wis 15; AL any evil; SP astral, charm, divination, numbers, summoning, sun (reverse only), thought, time; PW 1) *forget* once per day; 3) *suggestion* once per day; 7) *magic jar* once per day; 8) *speak with wyvern* three times per day; 10) permanent *aerial servant*.

**Aims, Credo, Ethos:** Annam has grown old and weak; Ostoria's collapse was due to Annam's own ineptitude; no weapon ever forged is half as sharp as cunning; surprise is half the battle; victory through secrecy.

**Rituals:** Memnor's clerics hold feasts in his honor for the mainstream of giant society three times per year.

Amongst themselves, the clerics meet with Memnor's avatar and his wyvern servants on an isolated crag at midnight on every hundredth day. At these meetings, the faithful discuss strategy and receive their orders from the master.

**Customs, Rules, Taboos:** Memnor's priests employ a special sign—subtly touching the left wrist with the index finger of the right hand—to signal or warn each other. Through context and emphasis alone, this single sign can communicate any number of messages ("This giant is an enemy," "Do not take the action you have just outlined," "Meet me later," etc.).

Memnor customarily bestows a wyvern servant upon any of his priests who attains the maximum experience level. Such priests are given a leather necklace that holds a charm in



the form of a mighty talon. Three times per day, the priest can summon his wyvern servant (from its lair on the isolated tor mentioned above) by grasping this charm and calling the beast. The range of such a summons is infinite, though the wyvern must physically fly from its present location to the priest. Thus, a long-range summoning won't have any noticeable effect for quite some time.

### Skoraeus Stonebones (Intermediate God)

Skoraeus is yet another of Annam's sons. Unlike most of his siblings, he is generally disinterested in the affairs of the Jotunbrud as a whole, though he is obsessed with the stone giants in particular and often intervenes in their affairs in order to guide their development. Skoraeus is knowledgeable about banes, magics, and the legends of great treasures buried in the Underdark. His chosen sphere is artistic achievement.

Although generally expressionless, dour, and something of a loner, Skoraeus has been known to occasionally consort with the gods of the dwarves and the svirfnebli.

**Role-playing Notes:** Although he often intervenes in the affairs of the stone giants, Skoraeus dispatches avatars to Toril only very rarely (stone giant legends speak of Skoraeus occasionally leading stone giants to new homes or fabulous magical treasure). Instead, he prefers to exercise his influence through omens of natural beauty—brightly colored rocks, strange stalactite patterns, and sparkling fountains—that his priests are capable of recognizing and interpreting. In fact, the raw caverns of the Underdark are often alive for Skoraeus' priests, communicating reams of information (location, direction, distance) with their every geographical feature.

**Statistics:** AL N; WAL N; AoC arts and craftsmanship (stone giants only); SY stalactite.

### Skoraeus's Avatar (P14)

Skoraeus's avatar is a huge, granite-skinned stone giant with thick, powerful arms. The avatar uses spells from all the spheres listed for his priests.

Str 21	Dex 15	Con 21
Int 17	Wis 19	Cha 18
MV 9 Br 9	SZ H	MR 40%
AC 0	HD 18	hp 144
#AT 1	THAC0 5	Dmg 3d10+9

**Special Att/Def:** The avatar is immune to earth elemental spells, acid, and petrification. He *regenerates* 3 hp per round if any part of his body is in contact with the stone (5 hp per round if the avatar is underground). The avatar can also: summon 1d4 16HD earth elementals once per day to serve for 12 turns, cast *crystalbrittle* twice per day, and cast *earthquake* once per day. Normally, he carries a *wand of earth or stone* that is automatically recharged at the start of each day.

### Duties of the Priesthood

Skoraeus's priests tend to isolate themselves from the remainder of their tribes, spending most of their time meditating and creating intricate sculptures and friezes. They feel it is their duty to oversee affairs in the stone giant society and guarantee that the stone giants constantly progress to greater works of art and greater intellectual discoveries. In accordance with Skoraeus's teachings, the priests believe the best way to accomplish these aims is to keep the stone giants as isolated as possible from the other intelligent races of Faerûn (save those few representatives of such races that might add to the giants' mastery of craftsmanship and lore). Although contact with other Jotunbrud tribes is tolerated, Skoraeus's priests strongly urge that the tribe shun contact with other peoples, lest such infidels distract them from their purpose.

Lately, Skoraeus's priests have had to work





harder than ever to accomplish their goals. With the coming of the Twilight Spirit and the renewed calls for Jotunbrud unity and Ostoria's return, many stone giants have found it more and more difficult to stay so isolated from the outside world.

**Requirements:** AB Con 15; AL N (stone giants); WP any; AR none; SP all, animal, creation, elemental (earth), guardian, healing, necromantic, protection, summoning, wards; PW 2) *stone shape*; 4) *stoneskin*; 7) *passwall*; 10) *flesh to stone* or *stone tell*; TU no; Shamans yes.

**Aims, Credo, Ethos:** Beauty is truth; knowledge is power; the affairs of outsiders serve only to distract the faithful from the matters of true import; a secret is the ultimate power and the Underdark is a world of secrets.

**Rituals:** Approximately once every three months, the priests of Skoraesus venture down into the Underdark alone and without food. Four days later, they always return, none the worse for wear. These journeys are said to be far-flung vision quests during which Skoraesus supplies his followers with messages and instructions in the form of omens and dreams.

**Customs, Rules, Taboos:** Where they are powerful, the clerics of Skoraesus require any giant who violates the god's teachings to atone through meditation (the amount of meditation necessary for atonement varies with the seriousness of the offense but generally ranges between one and five hours). Even those who have pledged their allegiance to other deities tend to follow this custom whenever they are visiting or occupying one of Skoraesus's strongholds just to humor the god's clergy (Failure to obey the custom often brings loud, frequent, and annoying rebukes from the priests.)

## Baphomet (Lesser God)

Baphomet (BAFF-uh-met) is a great tanar'ri power of the Abyss who secured the loyalty of the Ice Spire ogres by promising to give them the power they need to avenge themselves on their mother's tormentor and his brood. (The ogres are the product of Othea and a twisted demigod named Vaprak; their vengeance is aimed at Annam and the Jotunbrud.) These ogres are in the minority; they avoid all contact with humans. Recently, he has even managed to bring some of the disenfranchised giants under his sway. There is no connection between Baphomet and the Twilight Spirit. Exactly why Baphomet is so interested in destroying the remaining giant tribes remains something of a mystery, though his followers have occasionally heard him rumble about a powerful artifact he expects to find somewhere among the giant steadings.

Baphomet is a hateful, vicious power who delights only in brute force and violence. Perhaps his interest in the affairs of the Ice Spire is somehow connected to his long-running feud with Yeenoghu, tanar'ri lord of the gnolls.

**Role-playing Notes:** Baphomet cannot send avatars to the Prime Material Plane of his own volition; such constructs can only be *gated* in using powerful magics or eldritch items. As a consequence, the tanar'ri lord is often forced to sign pacts with wizards and powerful evil creatures in return for their assistance in his manifestations.

**Statistics:** AL CE; WAL any evil; AoC vengeance, minotaurs; SY stylized maze.

### Baphomet's Avatar (F14/P7)

Baphomet's avatar appears as an enormous ogre with the head of a bull. The avatar uses priest spells from the spheres: all, animal, combat, healing (reverse only), and sun (reverse only).



Str 19	Dex 15	Con 19
Int 16	Wis 16	Cha 19
MV 18	SZ L	MR 20%
AC 0	HD 15	hp 120
#AT 2 (6)	THAC0 7	Dmg 2d10+3 (bardiche); 2d6 (butt); 2d4+4 (bite)

**Special Att/Def:** Baphomet's avatar can *detect good, invisibility, and magic* at will. The avatar can also cast each of the following spells three times per day: *dispel magic* (at 16th level), *maze*, and *wall of stone*. Twice per day, Baphomet can summon 1d4+2 minotaurs to fight alongside the avatar. Baphomet's maze spells are 2% likely to transport their target to the palace the tanar'ri lord maintains in the Abyss. Baphomet's avatar takes half damage from cold, fire-based, and gaseous attacks and is immune to poison and electrical attacks. Only +1 or better weapons can strike the avatar.

#### Duties of the Priesthood

Per the entry in the MONSTROUS MANUAL, Baphomet has no priesthood.

#### Vaprak (Lesser God)

Vaprak is known simply as "The Destroyer." This deity has a quality of elemental savagery well suited to the ogre race, which holds him as a patron—a well-deserved honor, as he fathered the ogre race on Othea in an adulterous affair. Raptacious and violent, Vaprak is nonetheless in awe of the giantish gods and lives in fear that his race may abandon him to worship them. Vaprak's behavior and edicts to his ogre priests and shamans are thus driven and somewhat frenetic; he constantly urges his followers to combat, aggression, and frenzy. Vaprak does not plan, scheme, or contemplate. He simply expends his energies in destruction and uncompromising ferocity.

**Role-playing Notes:** Vaprak sends an avatar

to assist ogres when they are on the verge of conquering a clan, tribe, or race with whom they compete for resources, and also to decimate any group of ogres who have turned to revere any of the evil giantish deities. He does not send omens to his priests.

**Statistics:** AL CE; WAL CE (ogres); AoC combat, greed; SY taloned claw.

#### Vaprak's Avatar (F14)

Str 19	Dex 14	Con 17
Int 13	Wis 9	Cha 18
MV 12	SZ H (15')	MR 15%
AC 0	HD 15	hp 120
#AT 2 (4)	THAC0 5	Dmg 2d10+7 (club) or 2d8+7/2d8+7 (claws)

**Special Attack/Defense:** The avatar *regenerates* 3 hit points per round and can become berserk for the duration of one melee combat (+2 to attack and damage, +2 penalty to AC) three times per day. Vaprak's avatar negates and dispels all spells that directly and adversely affect its own attack and damage rolls (*stone-skins* on enemies are negated by touch, with full damage applying, *prayer* is negated, *ray of enfeeblement* does not work against the avatar, etc.).

#### Duties of the Priesthood

Vaprak's priests must be aggressive, ever seeking combat. They must also eat greedily but must maintain physical fitness so they often exercise in club-bashing rituals.

**Requirements:** AB Str 18 Con 15; AL CEI WP any (club first); AR any; SP all, combat, divination, healing, protection, sun (rev); PW 4) berserk rage 1 turn (as for avatar); TU nil; LL 7; HD d6; Shamans yes.

**Shamans:** AB Str 16 Con 12; AL CE; LL 3



## Rune Magic

**A**~~FTER THE DISASTROUS~~ outcome of the war between the dragons and the Jotunbrud, Annam went off in search of a special gift to bestow upon his sons and bolster their might. His epic quest ended almost a thousand years later in an enormous clockwork palace located at the center of the plane of Mechanus. There, the All-Father won the secret of rune magic by defeating a high modron in an epic game of lots.

The first runecasters were Annam's sons Nicias (the cloud giant) and Vilmos (the storm giant). Over the course of the next several hundred years, these two masters revealed the secret of the runes to many apprentices, who in turn passed the secret down to the generations to come.

Runecasting is related, though not identical, to the wizardry that is commonly practiced across Faerûn. Indeed, rune magic enjoys some powerful advantages over its more common cousin. For a quick description of the theory behind the runes, we turn to the writings of Learned Rundigast, sage of Waterdeep, who spent a great deal of his later life studying the Jotunbrud and their legends.

An Excerpt from "Reflections Upon the Secrets of Old Ostoria" by Learned Rundigast, sage of Waterdeep

*. . . There is still at least one great power the sorcerers of Faerûn have yet to tap – a stable, ancient power that neither ebbs nor flows. A power that radiates from all creatures and things evenly, and has the potential to be grasped and harnessed by us all.*

*I speak, of course, of the power of truth.*

*Truth holds the multiverse together. Truth is what makes a tree a tree and a man a man. In its whole, truth is irrevocable, unalterable, and eternal.*

*The learned know that truth is organized into great patterns and orders ("ordnings," as the giants know them). Nothing is true without a chain of truths to proceed it. The simple statement "I am a man" isn't true unless the statements "My father was a man," "My grandfather was a man," "My great grandfather was a man," and so forth ad infinitum are true as well. More complex chains of truth lie beneath all things that are, and all things that might be.*

*Anyone who comprehends the truth on this level is capable of summoning and controlling enormous power. Such temporary insights into the most simple and secret workings of the universe provide direct access to the godhead and its limitless energies. In fact, the giants of Ostoria theorized that god and mortal were divided only by the extent to which they could accept and harness the truth.*

*This is the theory behind the rune magic of the Jotunbrud. The runes are not letters (as often supposed), but diagrams – scale models of the relationships between ancient and undying cosmic forces. By properly etching a rune, the caster demonstrates his understanding of the truths underpinning these forces and their relationships to each other. Like a trained beast recognizing its master, the truths then bow down to the caster, enabling him to temporarily and subtly alter them and all the truths connected to them in series.*

Perhaps the most important difference between the functioning of rune magic and traditional AD&D sorcery is that runecasters need not memorize their runes. Unlike spells, runes can be employed at will, as often as the caster likes.



## Runecasters

The Runecaster is essentially a subclass of the AD&D wizard.

**Ability Requirements:** Intelligence: 13

Wisdom: 13

Dexterity: 12

**Prime Requisites:** Intelligence,  
Wisdom

**Races Allowed:** Giant, giant-kin

Theoretically, any intelligent being who is physically capable of drawing the runes can work rune magic. Only giants and kin are allowed to select the runecaster class because the customs of the giants forbid them from sharing the secret of the runes with other races. Of course, this doesn't mean such a thing has never happened. The DM may wish to create (or allow a player to create) a unique nongiant or two who have mastered the art of rune magic. It's also possible that some long-lost culture hidden in Toril's unexplored regions has itself unearthed the secrets of the runes.

Unlike traditional wizards, runecasters are not limited in their choice of weapons, and are allowed to wear any armor no bulkier than chain mail. In spite of these advantages, runecasters still fight and save as wizards and roll 4-sided Hit Dice (true giant runecasters fight and save based upon their Hit Dice). Runecasters may choose any Alignment.

### Level Limits for Runecasters

Hill giants	6*
Stone giants	10
Mountain giants	6
Frost giants	6
Fire giants	8
Fog giants	13

Cloud giants	13
Storm giants	15
Firbolgs	7
Verbeegs	12
Voadkyn	no**
Human	U***
Elf	15***
Dwarf	12***

\*Hill giants aren't normally Intelligent enough to pass the Ability Requirements.

\*\*Voadkyn left Jotunbrud society before any of them learned how to work the runes.

\*\*\*Normally impossible, as described above.

### Runecasters in Giant Steadings

In any given stading, only about one percent of the population will be runecasters.

### Learning Runes

Obviously, a runecaster cannot inscribe a rune he does not know, and learning a new rune is much more difficult than simply memorizing its pattern. Rune magic does not work without a deep understanding of the essential truths and relationships that the pattern of the rune represents.

All 1st-level runecasters automatically know one rune. They may attempt to learn one additional rune each time they advance in level, just as wizards may attempt to learn new spells. To learn a rune, casters must pass a Chance to Learn Spell roll based upon their Intelligence score. (See "The Nature of Giantkind" for information about generating Intelligence scores for the various giant races.) Runecasters who fail this roll may never make another attempt to learn the particular rune in question; it's simply beyond their grasp. Note that it is impossible to learn some runes without first learning the specified "prerequisite"





runes listed in their descriptions.

Runecasters with high Wisdom scores begin play with “bonus” runes, as summarized in the table below. (To determine a Wisdom score for a true giant, use the same method you’d use to determine the giant’s Intelligence; see “The Nature of Giantkind.”)

### Additional Runes Based on Wisdom

Wisdom Score	Additional Runes Known
15	1
16	2
17	3
18	4
19	5
20	6
21	8
22	10
23	12
24	14
25	16

Note that some runes may be learned more than once, allowing the caster to use such runes to greater effect. In essence, he or she has an increased understanding of the truths underpinning the rune and the forces it represents. These special runes are identified in their descriptions.

In any case, the essential truths that power rune magic are remarkably difficult to grasp. In order to learn a new rune, one must either 1) have access to a teacher who already knows the rune, or 2) complete an epic quest that ends with an appropriate revelation or insight. For instance, if a teacher is unavailable, one might learn the *Annam’s Unblinking Eye* rune by somehow traveling to Gudheim to discuss the All-Father’s virtues with the servants of Stronmaus. It is strongly recommended that DMs make any player-character runecasters in their campaigns obey these strictures, even if the prevailing attitude toward wizards learn-

ing spells is rather *laissez-faire*. Without such restrictions, not only do the runecasters lose a great deal of their “flavor,” but they might also upset the balance of the game.

### NPC Runecasters

When generating an NPC runecaster, DMs should assume the NPC knows one rune per level of experience. DMs should select these runes from the lists of those available, just as they select spells for NPC wizards and clerics.

### Using Runes

Actually using a rune, of course, is a much more involved process than simply scribbling it out. To be effective, a rune must be specially modified to fit the circumstances surrounding its use (even a slightly different situation might mean different truths are at stake in the casting). This is yet another reason why anyone can scrawl out a rune, but only a highly trained adept can summon forth its power.

Scribing a rune is a three-step process known as *skapeng* (or “shaping” in Common). The first step is the *gormeng* (or “planning”). During this stage, the caster begins to concentrate upon the necessary essential truths and modifies the rune’s ideal image in his mind’s eye in accordance with the circumstances of the cast. The second step is the *skrapeng* (or “scraping”), during which the rune is actually carved, drawn, or inscribed. The third and final step is the *vircreng* (or “activation”); only now does the caster begin to summon forth the rune’s power. Activating a shaped rune is often a tricky task requiring intense concentration. Some casters write little poems or recitations to speak over their shaped runes and help them maintain the mental fortitude necessary for activation. Others are so experienced or determined that no such aids are



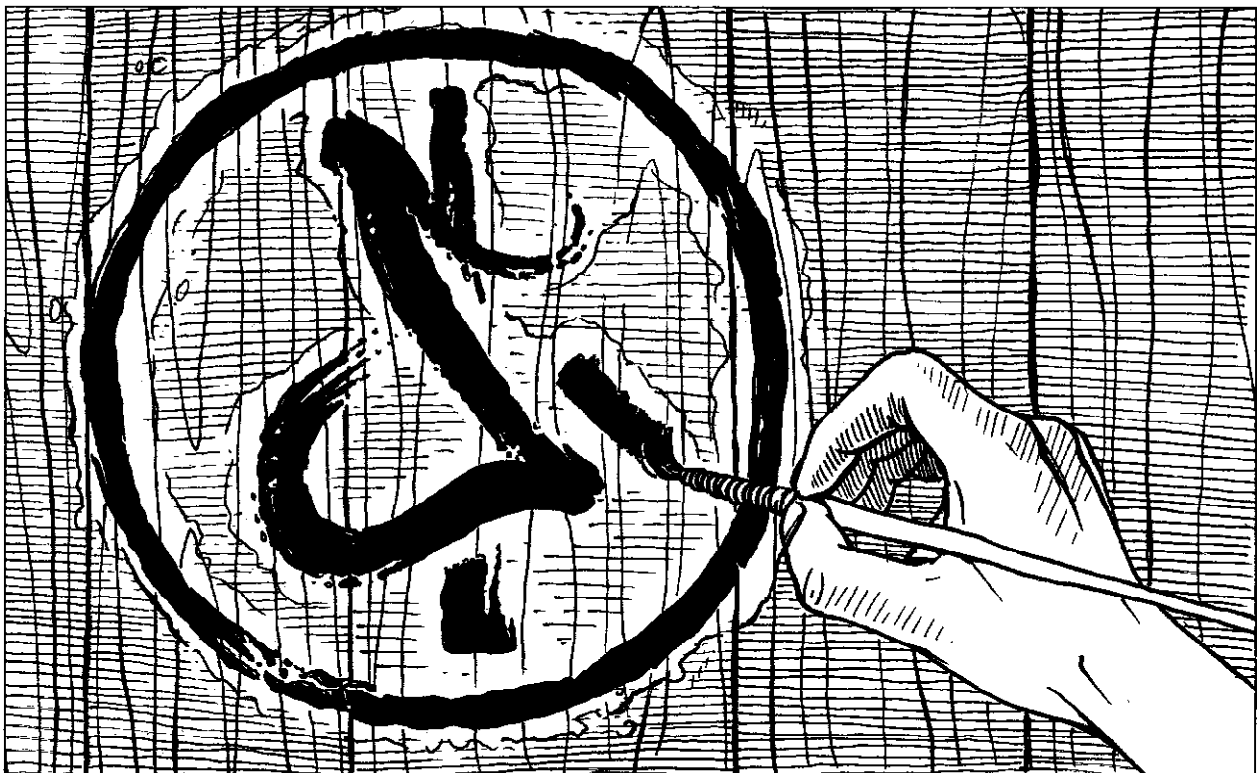
necessary. The final step in any activation is wetting or “baptizing” the rune to release its energies. Any nonpoisonous liquid is quite suitable for this purpose (ale, water, or even saliva will do). Any rune not baptized within five rounds of its shaping loses its potential and becomes useless. After baptism, the caster makes a save vs. spell (known as an “activation roll”). If the save succeeds, the rune is successfully activated. If it fails, the rune’s power fades and the caster must begin all over again.

The exact amount of time it takes to shape a rune varies with the complexities of the forces involved. In some ways, rune shaping is like spellcasting. If the caster is significantly interrupted (surprised, attacked, etc.) during the shaping, all his work is lost and the entire process must begin all over again. While shaping runes that take more than a single day, the

caster is allowed to eat and sleep normally, but any major diversion from his work (such as training, rushing off to adventure, defending his home against attack) is considered an interruption.

No special tools or items are necessary to shape most runes — any old carving knife, stylus, or quill will do. Some runecasters claim that specially enchanted implements add power to their runes, but most runemasters disbelieve such tales.

Unlike other forms of magical writing, once a rune has taken effect, it does not disappear. Once its effects are exhausted, however, the rune becomes an ordinary carving or inscription with no magical capabilities whatsoever. To renew the rune’s power, the caster must shape it all over again. Unless otherwise specified, assume that all runes may be used one time only, though the rune may stand ready in





an activated state for years before its power is called upon.

Note that at any give time, a runecaster may keep a number of active runes equal only to his level. Should the caster shape more runes, the power automatically fades from one or more of the runes he shaped earlier (earliest runes shaped are the first to fade). This means, for instance, that a 10th-level runecaster can shape only 10 *exploding arrow* runes before charging into battle.

## Rune Descriptions

Unlike spells, runes are not ranked by level. Most can be learned by any runecaster, provided he or she has mastered all of the appropriate prerequisite runes.

### Accuracy

**Shaping Time:** 1d4 turns

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Twice

The *accuracy* rune is inscribed upon the haft of a missile weapon such as an arrow or javelin. The next time that weapon is used, the wielder receives a +2 bonus to his or her attack roll. Note that this effect lasts for one attack only.

*Accuracy* runes inscribed by casters who learned the rune twice bestow +4 bonuses to the wielder's attack roll.

### Annam's Unblinking Eye

**Shaping Time:** 3d4 hours

**Prerequisites:** *Transformation*

**Learnable:** Unlimited

This rune is used to duplicate Annam's ability to look down upon any creature in the multiverse. To achieve this effect, the caster must inscribe the true name of a target creature or object upon the bowl's base, shape the

unblinking eye rune three times around the outside of a large, deep bowl (the listed Shaping Time assumes the caster is shaping all three runes), and fill the bowl with water. The three runes must be perfectly and evenly spaced around the bowl's circumference or the bowl shatters upon activation, totally spoiling the cast. (DMs should require the PC runecaster to pass a Wisdom check; success indicates proper positioning and readiness for activation, failure indicates a shattered bowl and wasted time.)

Only one activation roll is needed to activate all three runes. Once the runes are properly activated, a reflection of the target individual appears in the water inside the bowl, allowing all present to scry the target and his/its present surroundings as though using a *crystal ball*. Note that the bowl transmits only visual images – it is impossible to hear any sounds in the target's vicinity. In total, the vision lasts for a number of rounds equal to the caster's level multiplied by the number of times the caster has learned the rune. In other words, a 10th-level caster who has learned the rune twice receives a vision that lasts for 20 rounds.

If the target of the casting is a living being, he or she feels a disturbing chill for the entire duration of the vision, as does the caster. If the target has a higher Wisdom score than the caster, the caster must save vs. paralysis or succumb to fright and upset the bowl, ending the vision.

Rare among runes, *Annam's Unblinking Eye* will not function unless it is inscribed using rare pigments costing no less than 1,000 gp.

### Berserk

**Shaping Time:** 1d4 hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Once



This rune is shaped upon the haft or hilt of a weapon. In battle, the wielder of this weapon can call upon the rune's power to enter into a berserk fury. Assuming the rune was properly shaped, the weapon's wielder may make an attempt to become berserk at the end of any combat round by making a save vs. paralysis. If the save is successful, the wielder enters into the fury. If it is unsuccessful, he must wait and try again next round.

While in his berserk state, the wielder gains +2 points of Strength, a +2 bonus to his AC, and a +2 bonus to all his saving throws. In return for these benefits, however, he must remain in melee combat for the entire duration of the fury. If he manages to vanquish all of his enemies during this period, he must begin fighting his friends.

Once invoked, the berserk state lasts 1d4 rounds (previously determined by the caster as part of the shaping process). At the end of this time period, the berserker may attempt a save vs. paralysis (without the berserker saving throw bonus) to recover from the fury. If this save is unsuccessful, the berserker remains in the fury but makes an additional recovery attempt at the end of each subsequent round.

### Binding

**Shaping Time:** 1d6 hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Once

This rune is shaped upon a collar, a saddle, or any other object potentially worn by an animal. If the caster can place this object upon an appropriate creature (of animal or semi-intelligence), the beast is affected as though the target of an *animal friendship* spell. Like that spell, the total Hit Dice of all the creatures the caster befriends with such runes cannot exceed twice his level.

If the runed object is ever removed from the charmed creature, the spell is instantly broken.

### Blinding light

**Shaping Time:** 1d8 hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Three times

Once activated, this rune turns an undead creature that views it (as a 6th-level priest). If the rune is learned twice, its effectiveness improves to that of an 8th-level priest. If learned three times, the rune is as effective as a 10th-level priest. Regardless of the number of potential targets who stumble across the rune, it turns only the very first undead to see it.

The *blinding light* rune gets its name from the brilliant flash that accompanies its effects. The resulting burst of light (equivalent to a *sunray* spell) illuminates everything within 200' for a single round.

### Control Undead

**Shaping Time:** 1d8 hours

**Prerequisites:** *Blinding*

**Learnable:** Four times

Allows the caster to *control* undead creatures. Up to 3 Hit Dice of undead can be affected for each time the caster has learned the rune (that is, a caster who has learned the rune three times can affect 9 Hit Dice of undead). In all other respects, the effects of the rune are treated as a *charm monster* spell.

### Death

**Shaping Time:** 1d8 hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Three times

This rune is placed upon the blade of a weapon. If the rune was properly shaped, the weapon automatically inflicts double damage against an enemy of a specified race, breed, organization or nationality (determined by the caster at the moment of shaping—the name of





the target group is inscribed upon the weapon next to the rune). This effect lasts only until the weapon has been used to kill a member of the targeted group. Thereafter, the weapon functions normally in all respects.

Learning the *death* rune twice has no additional effects, but a caster who has learned it three times can scribe runes that cause triple damage to their specified targets.

### Dream

**Shaping Time:** 1d12 hours

**Prerequisites:** *Binding*

**Learnable:** Once

This complex rune is shaped upon a broad stone and the stone is placed beneath the caster's pillow. While shaping the rune, the caster frames a single question in his mind and alters the rune accordingly.

The answer to the question presents itself to the caster in the form of a dream 1d6 nights after the alteration. Like most prophetic visions, however, the answer will certainly be couched in strange and mysterious symbols requiring careful interpretation.

A caster who misses his activation roll while shaping the dream rune does not know he has failed until he actually attempts to use the rune. (Ask the caster to make the appropriate saving roll behind a shield, out of his own view.) Instead of bringing the caster a prophetic dream, an improperly shaped rune causes a ghaist (see the MONSTROUS MANUAL, Ghoul) to visit the caster for each of the next six nights.

### Exploding Arrow

**Shaping Time:** 1d4 rounds

**Prerequisites:** *Death*

**Learnable:** Twice

This rune is inscribed upon an arrow. When

fired, this arrow explodes upon impact, inflicting double damage to its target (triple damage if the caster learned the rune more than once).

### Fate

**Shaping Time:** 1d8 rounds

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Once

The *fate* rune is scribed upon one side of a coin. The caster can then toss this coin into the air to divine the general fate of a specified individual for the next day. If the coin lands rune side up, fate is with the individual; he or she receives a +1 bonus to all saves/attack rolls and a -1 bonus to all ability/proficiency checks for the next 24 hours. If the coin lands rune side down, however, fate frowns upon the individual; -1 penalty to saves/attack rolls and a +1 penalty to ability/proficiency checks. If the coin lands on its side (roll a 1% chance of this occurring before tossing the coin), it indicates that something calamitous will befall the subject during the next day (death, serious injury, loss of fortune, etc.).

Note that the subject must be physically present and must consent to a reading for this rune to have any effect.

### Healing

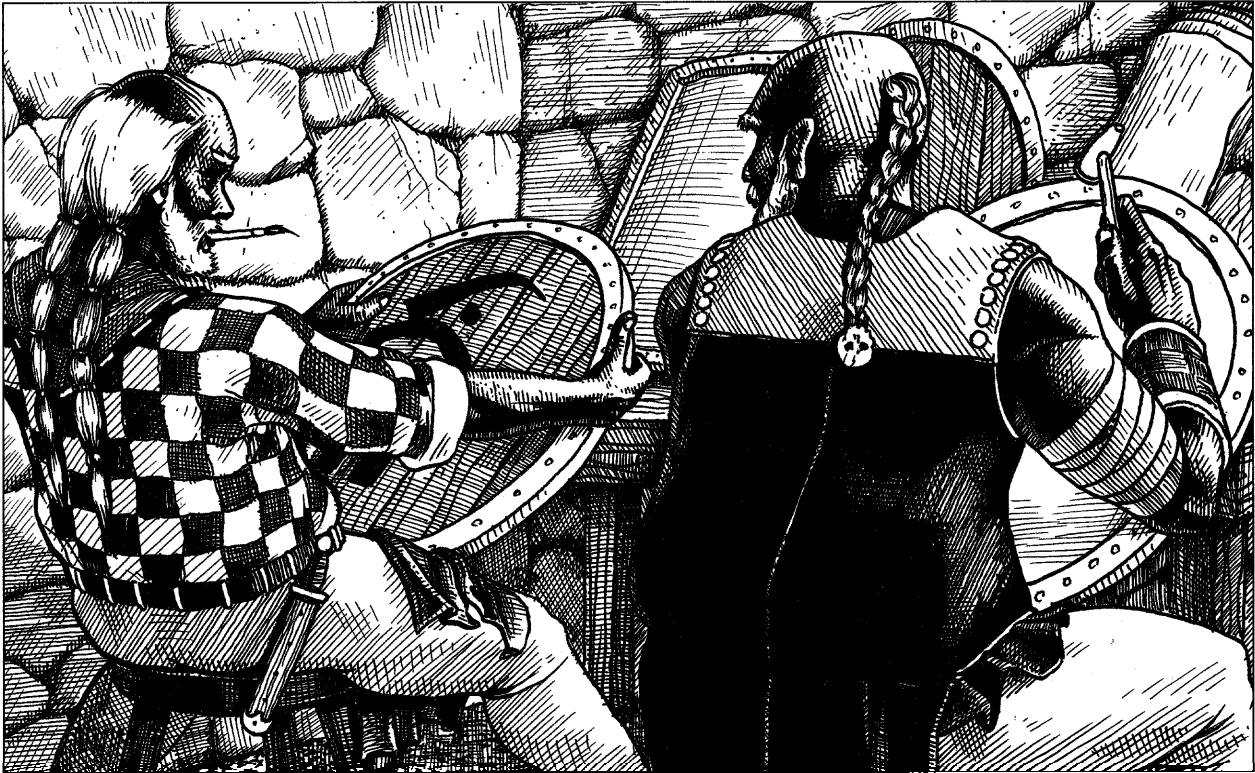
**Shaping Time:** 1d8 hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Twice

This rune is shaped on the side of a cup, goblet, or bottle. (The rune has no effect upon substantially larger quantities of water.) Thereafter, the first time the cup is filled, its contents transmute into a *potion of healing*.

When shaping this rune, the caster must make his activation check behind a shield, out of his own view. If the activation roll is a "1,"



the contents of the cup do not metamorphose into a *potion of healing*, but into a deadly Type J poison that is indistinguishable from a *potion of healing*.

If the caster has learned the *healing* rune more than once, the contents of the runed cup metamorphose into a *potion of extra-healing* (or a particularly deadly Type I poison; save at -2).

Note that any brew created by the cup must be consumed within one hour or it instantly reverts to normal water.

### Imprisonment

**Shaping Time:** 1d12 days

**Prerequisites:** *Triumph*

**Learnable:** Once

This rune is placed upon a door or portal. If successfully activated, a specified creature imprisoned beyond the portal cannot cross it through normal means (though any appropri-

ate wizard spell such as *teleport* or *dimension door* can still be used to exit). Once placed, the rune remains active for a number of days equal to the caster's level.

Every *imprisonment* rune has an associated freedom word incorporated into its shaping. If this word is pronounced by the trapped creature, the rune's power instantly fades. Part of the rune's magic requires the freedom word to be both known to the imprisoned creature and particularly appropriate to the imprisonment. For instance, the freedom word for a character imprisoned for murder might be the name of his victim, the location of the murder, the name of the weapon used to commit the murder, etc.

### Levitation

**Shaping Time:** 1d20 minutes

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Unlimited



Functions as the second-level wizard spell *levitate* for three turns for every time the caster has learned the rune.

### Love

**Shaping Time:** 1d8 hours

**Prerequisites:** *Healing*

**Learnable:** Once

Similar to the *healing* rune, the love rune is inscribed upon a cup or goblet. If properly activated, the first time the cup is filled, its contents will metamorphose into a *philter of love*.

When shaping this rune, the caster must make his activation check behind a shield, out of his own view. If the activation roll fails, the contents of the cup metamorphose into a brew with the exact opposite effects of a *philter of love* (that is, the imbiber *hates* the first creature he or she sees after consuming the draught).

Any waters transmuted by the *love* rune must be consumed within one hour or their power is lost.

### Poison

**Shaping Time:** 1d4 hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Once

The *poison* rune can be inscribed upon any liquid-bearing vessel, plate, bowl, or dish. If the rune is properly activated, the instant the inscribed object comes into contact with poison, it bursts, alerting onlookers to the poison's presence.

Ever vigilant for treacherous plots, many of the important leaders among the Jotunbrud make extensive use of this rune.

### Sanctuary

**Shaping Time:** 1d8 days

**Prerequisites:** *Triumph*

**Learnable:** Once

The *sanctuary* rune is the exact opposite of the *imprisonment* rune. It too is placed upon a door or portal, but instead of preventing an imprisoned creature from leaving through the portal, it prevents all creatures outside the portal from entering. Note that the rune's power bars entrances by normal means — translocation spells such as *teleport*, *dimension door*, etc. are unaffected. After one day per level of the caster has elapsed, the rune automatically fades on its own accord.

Unlike the *imprisonment* rune, *sanctuary* has no associated word that automatically deactivates it.

### Shield

**Shaping Time:** 1d8 turns

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Three times

When placed upon a shield, this rune improves that shield's AC benefit by an additional +1. This effect lasts only for the duration of the next battle in which the shield is used.

If the caster has learned the *shield* rune twice, it improves the AC bonus of the shield upon which it is placed by +2 (+3 if the caster has learned the rune three times).

### Speed

**Shaping Time:** 1d4 turns

**Prerequisites:** *Healing*

**Learnable:** Twice

This rune is placed upon a set of footwear (even a horseshoe will do). If properly activated, it increases the MV of the creature wearing the footwear by 50% for a number of



turns equal to the caster's level. If the caster has learned the rune twice, the MV bonus is 100%.

### Strength

**Shaping Time:** 1d12 hours

**Prerequisites:** *Healing*

**Learnable:** Twice

This rune is shaped upon a helmet or girdle. Thereafter, any character who wears this item receives a +1 bonus to his Strength ability (and all associated bonuses, etc.) for a number of rounds equal to the level of the caster. If the runed object is removed from the character during this time period, the rune's spell is instantly broken.

A caster who has learned this rune twice can use it to increase a subject's Strength by 2 points.

### Thunder

**Shaping Time:** 1d3 days

**Prerequisites:** *Strength*

**Learnable:** Three times

The *thunder* rune is useless until a natural thunder or rainstorm arises. During such a storm, a hammer inscribed with the rune beat on the ground for three rounds summons a powerful *lightning bolt* from the heavens (as though cast by a 7th-level wizard). This bolt will strike any target the character beating the hammer desires (not necessarily the caster), but it is incapable of striking targets that are indoors, underground, or otherwise inaccessible to the sky. Up to three *thunder* runes may be placed upon a single hammer (make separate activation rolls for each; each requires the full Shaping Time), allowing the wielder to conjure up to three *lightning bolts*.

Learning the *thunder* rune more than once allows the caster to increase the damage

inflicted by the *lightning bolt* it summons. Casters who have learned *thunder* twice can shape runes capable of summoning *lightning bolts* equivalent to those cast by a 9th-level wizard. Learning *thunder* three times enables the caster's runes to summon 11th-level bolts.

### Transformation

**Shaping Time:** 1d6 hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Once

This rune is inscribed upon an article of clothing. By wearing this article of clothing, the caster (and only the caster), may *polymorph self* as per the fourth-level wizard spell. The polymorph effect lasts only for a number of rounds equal to twice the caster's level.





## Triumph

**Shaping Time:** 1d3 hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Learnable:** Once

Like *death*, this powerful rune is inscribed upon the blade of a weapon. If the rune is properly activated, the next time that weapon is used in combat, its wielder may add +2 to all his damage rolls and treat the weapon as though it is +2 for the purposes of attacking creatures struck only by enchanted blades. (The wielder does not receive the +2 bonus to his THAC0.)

Note that the *triumph* rune's effects last only for the duration of a single battle.

## Weakness

**Shaping Time:** 1d12 hours

**Prerequisites:** *Healing*

**Learnable:** Once

The *weakness* rune is the exact opposite of *strength*. It too is scribed upon a helmet or girdle. Anyone who is tricked into wearing this item must subtract 2 points from his Strength ability for a number of turns equal to the level of the caster. Note that while the rune's magic is in effect, the victim is totally unaware of its influence — he or she does not feel weak or different in any way.

Should the victim of *weakness* somehow discover the runed object and remove it, the *weakness* effect instantly dissipates.

## Wisdom

**Shaping Time:** 1d12 hours

**Prerequisites:** *Healing*

**Learnable:** Once

This rune functions exactly like the *strength* rune, only it increases the subject's Intelligence and Wisdom scores by 1 point each.

## Wyrm

**Shaping Time:** 1d12 hours

**Prerequisites:** *Healing*

**Learnable:** Once

In the legends of the Jotunbrud, dragons are synonymous with decay and destruction, a belief that undoubtedly dates back to the great war between the giants and dragonkind.

By placing the *wyrm* rune upon an object, the caster targets that object for rot and decay. The rune causes metal to rust, food to rot, and wood to warp. It has no effect upon plant or animal life.

Once the rune is properly activated, it will rust, warp, or decay its target into uselessness in 1d10 days. The only way to nullify this effect is via a remove curse or a *dispel magic*. Due to certain limitations in its energy patterns, the *wyrm* rune will not affect any item larger than size S.

## Ysgard

**Shaping Time:** 1d6 weeks

**Prerequisites:** *Annam's Unblinking Eye*

**Learnable:** Once

Among the most powerful of all known runes, *Ysgard* allows the caster to temporarily open a portal between Toril and Annam's palace of Gudheim located on the plane of Ysgard. To open the portal, the caster must scribe the rune upon a closed doorway. After the rune is activated, the next time the doorway is opened it leads directly to Ysgard instead of its normal earthly destination. Once active, this bridge between worlds remains open for a number of minutes equal to the level of the caster.

One particularly nasty problem facing runecasters who hope to visit Ysgard via this method is that there is no guarantee of a return trip. Once the portal closes down, it is impos-



sible to reopen it from the Outer Planes. Of course, a true runecaster of the Jotunbrud would tell you that this is the sort of restriction that daunts only cowards!

## Creating New Runes

Unlike spells, which are formulae that can be researched and created by player characters, runes are great cosmic secrets. Runecasters cannot create “new” runes, they can only uncover pre-existing truths.

This does not mean that all of the possible runes are described in this chapter. DMs should feel free to introduce new runes of their own creation to the campaign, perhaps in response to the wishes of player-character runecasters. Since all of the runes commonly practiced by the Jotunbrud casters are described herein, learning such a rune almost

certainly involves a quest ending in an appropriate insight /revelation/ epiphany. Strong-arming a particularly experienced runecaster is another method that can be used to gain a “new” rune not described in this chapter. Most of the older or more capable rune lords have uncovered one or two special runes that they reserve for their own personal use and won’t share with apprentices.

## Runecasters in Jotunbrud Society

Once, runecasters were automatically afforded great respect in almost every aspect of Jotunbrud society, but this is no longer necessarily so. A power struggle between rival casters that took place several decades ago prompted many rune lords to accept less desirable





apprentices in an effort to quickly boost their raw numbers and the power of their factions. These rogues have since passed the secrets of the runes down to even less desirable apprentices. As a consequence, runecasters are not necessarily the stoic prophets of old. In fact, some particularly *maug* renegades are known to use the power of the runes to help them perpetrate petty thefts and other despicable crimes.

Still, within select quarters of the society, most runecasters directly tied to respected masters will always command a certain amount of their traditional reverence. After all, they are the masters of Annam's chosen gift. All agree that if Ostoria is to be reborn, the runecasters must certainly have an important role to play.

Typically, all casters within a given stading serve its chieftain, in name if not in deed — a tradition almost as old as runecasting itself. Some work with the stading's military forces (important scouting missions are almost always led by one or more runecasters), others act as liaisons between the chieftain and the merchants/craftsmen of the stading. Virtually all chieftains maintain a very powerful runecaster as a close adviser and friend. In fact, it's not uncommon for Jotunbrud chieftains to regard their casters more highly than their high priests!

## Giant Sorcerers

Runecasting is not the only sort of magic employed by giants. Some giant breeds (most notably cloud and storm giants) also practice traditional sorcery, though the Jotunbrud generally tend to distrust such magics. A few giant sorcerers are treasured advisers and high-ranking authorities (again, particularly within cloud and storm giant stadings), though many are forced to keep their studies

of the arcane arts a secret from their comrades. (Some giant breeds are known to kill wizards on principle alone.)

### Level Limits For Giant Wizards

Hill giants	Not allowed
Stone giants	6th
Mountain giants	4th
Frost giants	4th
Fire giants	6th
Fog giants	6th
Cloud giants	11th
Storm giants	12th
Firbolgs	Not allowed
Verbeegs	6th
Voadkyn	5th

Again, the frequency of sorcerers in any given giant stading is less than one percent of the total population.



**M**OST OF THE REMAINING giant settlements on Faerûn lie in and around the Ice Spire mountains, located to the west of the Great Desert of Anauroch and south of the Endless Ice Sea (the westernmost arm of the Great Glacier). It was here that the ancient empire of Ostonia made its last stand, and here that Hartkiller launched his attempt to reunify the Jotunbrud.

Ever since the War of the Hart (see “Annam’s Legacy”), the huge valley that lies between the spires has been dominated by the human kingdom of Hartsvale that Hartkiller helped establish. Although the valley’s various giant steadings at first had nothing but resentment for the human kingdom that nearly conquered them all (and some still do), today, relations between a few of the various giant breeds and Hartsvale’s royal family have warmed. In large part, this newfound atmosphere of cooperation is due to the realities of life amidst the icy wastes. In this sort of terrain, simple survival is a challenge for both man and giant. Learning to cooperate improves everyone’s odds.

This chapter details the valley, its settlements, and the cultures that call it home.

## Geographic Overview

The largest portion of the valley comprises frozen plains, conifer forests, and low, rolling hills. The Spires themselves are old, rocky mountains, littered with crags and difficult to climb. (Just about any climb in the Spires requires the mountaineering proficiency; see the “Proficiencies” chapter of the *Player’s Handbook*.) Avalanches are common on the upper slopes of all the Spires, and deep crevasses camouflaged beneath thin sheets of ice are a constant danger.

For most of the year, the entire valley is blanketed in light snow. At the peak of sum-

mer, the snow melts and the ground thaws for approximately eight weeks. Average temperatures in the valley are summarized in the table below (temperatures are listed in degrees Fahrenheit).

### Average Temperatures

Season	High		Low	
	Daytime	Night	Daytime	Night
Winter	Avg. 5	Avg. -20	0	-10
Spring	30	0	20	5
Summer	40	20	35	25
Fall	25	-10	20	-5

As one climbs high up into the Spires or approaches the Great Glacier, the temperatures are as much as 20 degrees lower. Both of these regions are covered with thick sheets of ice that tend to reflect away the majority of incoming sunlight, keeping the ground frozen solid year round. Furthermore, both the peaks of the Spires and the icy wastes of the glacier are buffeted by strong winds (ranging in force from 10 to 40 miles per hour) that amplify the bitter cold. Cross index the actual temperature with the wind velocity on the table below to determine the “apparent” temperature due to wind chill.

### Effective Temperatures Resulting from Wind Chill

Actual Temp	Wind Velocity (mph)			
	10	20	30	40
30	15	5	0	-5
20	0	-10	-20	-20
10	-10	-25	-35	40
0	-20	40	-50	-55
-10	-30	-50	-60	-70
-20	-45	-70	-80	-90
-30	-60	-80	-95	-100
-40	-70	-95	-110	-115









Something of an anomaly in the valley are the lands surrounding the Firecap Mountains, located on its southwest rim. The Firecaps are dominated by three semi-active volcanoes, known as the Three Sisters, and sit atop a complex network of super-heated steam vents and lava fissures connected directly to Toril's bubbling core. The foothills surrounding the Sisters act as natural radiators, warming a small dale adjacent to the greater valley by as much as 25 degrees over average. In fact, temperatures in the dale are consistently high enough to allow limited agriculture, though only two out of every three crops survive through the potentially blistering spring and fall. As a consequence, during every growing season, the eyes of the entire valley are focused upon the dale. A failed crop certainly means hardship for all.

## Survival in the Spires

Though giants are made of sterner stuff, humans find survival on the glacier and in the Spires difficult. Blistering winds that dry and crack the skin, insidious frostbite, and lack of fresh water all combine to make such journeys extremely hazardous. A hardy Constitution and some thoughtful preparations can help (properly layering clothing, protecting the extremities), but not even the most experienced survivalists are ever completely safe in these environments.

To adjudicate the effects of the Spires' bitter environment, you should calculate an AER (Arctic Endurance Rating) for each human visitor. Each character's base AER begins at 100% and is modified as follows:

### Prevailing Temperature (including the effects of wind chill):

Very Cold (0 degrees and above)	-0%
Bitter Cold (-1 to -30 degrees)	-20%
Intense Cold (-31 degrees or colder)	-50%

### Protection Worn:

Appropriate protection (thick furs, multiple layers of bulky clothing, insulated boots, complete protection for fingers, toes, and ears; inside warm shelter) +15%

Moderate protection (typical winter clothing; improvised shelter) +0%

Poor protection (thick garments, but no special winter gear) -30%

### Constitution:

Each point of Con above 14 +5%

Each point of Con below 11 -5%

### Character's Activity Level:

Stationary or inactive +10%

Normal activity (hiking, with regular rest periods, but no fighting) +0%

Strenuous activity (brisk hiking, hiking with no rest, occasional fighting) -10%

Seriously fatigued (forced marching, great deal of fighting or intense activity) -20%

Character is wet -25%

For example, a character with a constitution of 16 who is well protected and undergoing strenuous activity in the bitter cold has an AER of 95%.

No AER can ever be less than 5% or greater than 100%. Given time to make normal preparations, all true giant breeds (though not kin) automatically have an AER of 100% in all but "intense cold," in which they have an automatic AER of 90%. When not allowed to make normal preparations, the giants' automatic AER falls to 80% (70% in intense cold).

Every two hours characters are exposed to tem-



peratures of 30 degrees or colder, they should make an AER check (roll percentiles less than or equal to their AER scores). If such a check fails, the character in question immediately suffers 1d4 points of exposure damage. Characters sometimes recover from this damage a bit differently than normal damage. Resting inside a warm shelter beside a fire automatically restores 1 point of exposure damage per hour. Otherwise, exposure damage is healed by normal means. (*Healing potions, cure light wounds* spells, etc. can all be used to recover exposure damage.)

### Frostbite

Any character who has sustained 6 points of exposure damage risks frostbite, a condition in which the moisture inside the flesh actually freezes. Ordinarily, only the extremities (such as fingers, toes, the tips of the ears, etc.) are subject to frostbite. But in extreme cases, an entire hand, foot, or even a limb can become frostbitten.

Whenever a character who has sustained 6 or more points of exposure damage must make another AER check, he or she must also attempt a Constitution ability check. Failing this check means the character is frostbitten and suffers an additional 1 to 2 points of exposure damage. The amount of damage a character suffers due to frostbite *doubles* each time he is again subjected to frostbite until he heals *all* accumulated exposure damage. In other words, suppose a character suffers 6 points of exposure damage and succumbs to frostbite (for another 2 points): If that character later succumbs to frostbite again, the condition inflicts 2 to 4 points of additional exposure damage (1 to 2, doubled). The third time he succumbs to frostbite, the condition inflicts 4 to 8 points (the previous 2 to 4, doubled), etc. Once the character reaches shelter and heals all his exposure damage, the frostbite damage starts at 1 to 2 all over again.

Contrary to popular opinion, rubbing snow on a frostbitten extremity does absolutely nothing beneficial and may even make matters worse.

## Natural Illusions

On the Great Glacier and atop the Spires, the effects of the extreme temperatures upon the senses can combine with the strange reflections thrown off the icy wastes to produce oddly startling illusions. Though most experienced mountaineers in the region have grown well acquainted with such phenomena, visitors and the inexperienced might easily mistake some of these manifestations for divine omens or dangerous supernatural interlopers.

As with magical illusions, most viewers tend to accept natural illusions as reality unless they have a good reason to believe otherwise (such as the experienced mountaineer who expects to encounter such phenomena). All of the guidelines in the “Magic” chapter of the *Player’s Handbook* apply to the believability of natural illusions as well as magical illusions. Identifying a natural illusion normally requires a Wisdom check, with penalties and bonuses as determined by the DM. Identifying a natural illusion doesn’t make the illusion disappear. Instead, the viewer simply recognizes it for the trick of the light that it is. Note, once again, that characters who are well experienced at operating on the glacier, in the Spires, or in similar terrain automatically recognize most natural illusions.

Natural illusions are most likely to appear on dry days with extremely low temperatures. They tend to persist for an entire day or until the weather changes. Some of the more commonly encountered natural illusions in the Spires and on the glacier include:

**Looming.** This effect causes a physical landmark — such as a mountain range or rock out-



cropping—to appear closer than it actually is. A peak that's really 100 miles distant can sometimes appear as close as a few hundred yards away. In some instances, light rays are bent and reflected, making the object appear upside-down.

**Mirage.** This is an image of a landmark that isn't really present. It is formed by light rays bouncing off icy wastes to trick the viewer. Unlike desert mirages, ice mirages rarely shimmer or appear hazy. Some ice mirages are startlingly realistic.

**Halo.** A ring of brilliant light surrounding the sun, caused by high altitude ice crystals. Halos might appear orange, red, white, yellow, or as a series of concentric multicolored circles.

**Sundog.** Sundogs are spots of light also caused by high-altitude ice crystals. They are generally seen in close proximity to the sun, sometimes in conjunction with halos. Unlike halos, sundogs sometimes seem to move and skip in the air.

**Light wheel.** Light wheels are similar to halos, except they are spoked and may seem to spin and dance in the sky

## Whiteouts and Fairy Ice

These are perhaps the most dangerous of the natural phenomena encountered atop the spires and on the glacier.

Whiteouts are generally caused by blowing and sharply drifting snow. Under such conditions, the horizon sometimes vanishes into the sky, making it all but impossible to sense depth, distance, or direction. During a whiteout, all missile attacks automatically incur a -4 penalty. Furthermore, unless the travelers have access to a *find the path* spell, the direction sense profi-

ciency, or similar magics/skills, there is a 50% chance they will become lost and head in a random direction (roll 1d8, 1 is north, 2 is north-east, 3 is east, etc.) until the whiteout subsides.

A strange form of precipitation consisting of slushy ice spheres, fairy ice is unique to the Great Glacier and the Endless Ice Sea. Under normal sunlight, fairy ice sparkles like a shimmering rainbow as it descends.

Because of its granular density, fairy ice poses a unique threat to travelers. Stepping in accumulated fairy ice is like stepping in quicksand. Characters who blunder into a fairy ice pit sink at the rate of 2 feet per round. (Recognition and avoidance of such a trap generally require an arctic survival proficiency check.) At the end of each round, a sinking character may reach out to grab a piece of solid ground with a successful Dexterity check. (There is a -1 penalty to this check for each time the character has previously attempted the task and failed.) Once the sinking character has found a firm handhold, he can pull himself out of the ice with a successful Strength check (with a -1 penalty for each time the character has failed either the Strength *or* the Dexterity check). A character outside the fairy ice pit can pull a sinking character free with a successful Strength check. Two characters outside the pit can automatically pull a sinking character free. A character who actually sinks beneath a fairy ice pit may still be pulled free by others feeling around beneath the surface. Otherwise, he continues to sink, risking suffocation (see the swimming rules in the "Time and Movement" chapter of the *Player's Handbook*).

Both whiteouts and fairy ice are dangerous enough to concern even the giants who inhabit the Spires.

## Hartsvale

Before the coming of Hartkiller more than a thousand years ago, the humans of the valley were little more than scattered barbarian tribes, living





at the mercy of the giants until Hartkiller arrived to unite them. During this darker age, the barbarians survived by hunting game on the plains that lie between the Spires, raiding nearby kingdoms, and (sometimes) stealing food and supplies from the giant steadings. Typical of the Uthgardt (see the FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting, *A Grand Tour of the Realms*), these stout tribesmen revered Uthgar (son of Tempus), their legendary founder, and built their lifestyles around the virtues of freedom, pride, and battle.

By the time Hartkiller reached the valley, the barbarian tribes were hungry and desperate. This, combined with Hartkiller's incredible presence and the promise of victory against the hated giants, is what led them to accept the giant lord as their leader. In preparation for the war against his brothers, Hartkiller was forced to pull off what many believed impossible: the unification of the barbarian tribes. The giant king accomplished this aim by demonstrating to the chieftains that he was willing to lay down his own life for any of them. Hartkiller cemented the unity by forcing the chieftains to venture out onto the Great Glacier to hunt without the aid of their usual hunting parties. To survive and return, they were forced to trust and defend each other.

Once the tribes were reunited, Hartkiller almost immediately led them to several great victories in battle. Both the hill giant and frost giant steadings quickly conceded to the human interlopers and fled for the Spires, cementing Hartkiller's position amongst the tribesmen. A born ruler, Hartkiller took advantage of his command to educate the barbarians in etiquette, the arts, and the value of civilization. With the help of the giant king, the tribesmen started to establish their own civilization patterned after the human feudal kingdoms of southern Faerûn that Hartkiller had heard about. At a gathering of all the tribesmen held on the Bleak Plain one midnight, the chieftains claimed the title "Earl," while

all of the gathered tribesmen unanimously selected Hartkiller as their king. In honor of their new liege, whom they came to call "Hartkiller" in memory of the enormous buck Hartkiller personally hunted and ate shortly after he arrived in the valley, the barbarians decided to name their kingdom "Hartsvale."

It was during this grand meeting that Hartkiller fell in love with Varissa, the daughter of one of the newly vested earls. Soon, the pair was married and produced a son named Brun. By the time Brun reached manhood, Hartkiller's war against his brothers was coming to a conclusion with his assaults on the fire giant grotto and the storm giant aerie. In the end, Hartkiller died battling the storm giant paramount, but his struggle forced all of the giant tribes to pull back into the spires and cede the valley to the humans. By this time, Castle Hartwick, the seat of Brun's throne, was nearing completion along with a few castles built by the earls.

After Hartkiller died, the subjects of the newly created kingdom were overcome by a strange combination of grief (at the loss of their honored leader) and joy (in ridding themselves of the giants and establishing a kingdom). Almost immediately they built a shrine to the memory of their conquering king and his teachings and instituted regular festivals in his honor, a practice which slowly evolved into the worship of Annam. Ironically, this act of respect sowed seeds that now threaten the whole of Hartkiller's kingdom.

Most recently, Hartsvale was rocked by another crisis. After king Blod died, he left two twins—Camden and Dunstan—with an equal claim to the throne. Since neither was willing to accept the claim of the other, the affair was settled in a long, bloody war (known as the War of the Twins). Ultimately, Camden won the war, but without alienating many of his subjects and calling upon Goboka's ogres for assistance. In exchange for this assistance, Camden was forced



to promise his firstborn daughter to the ogres. At the time, this promise seemed a small price to pay since Hartsvale's royal line hadn't given birth to a female heir in several centuries, though Camden's first child was indeed a daughter. Although Camden now realizes that the ogres and their strange request must be part of some grand conspiracy, he still has no idea what the conspiracy aims to accomplish or who it involves.

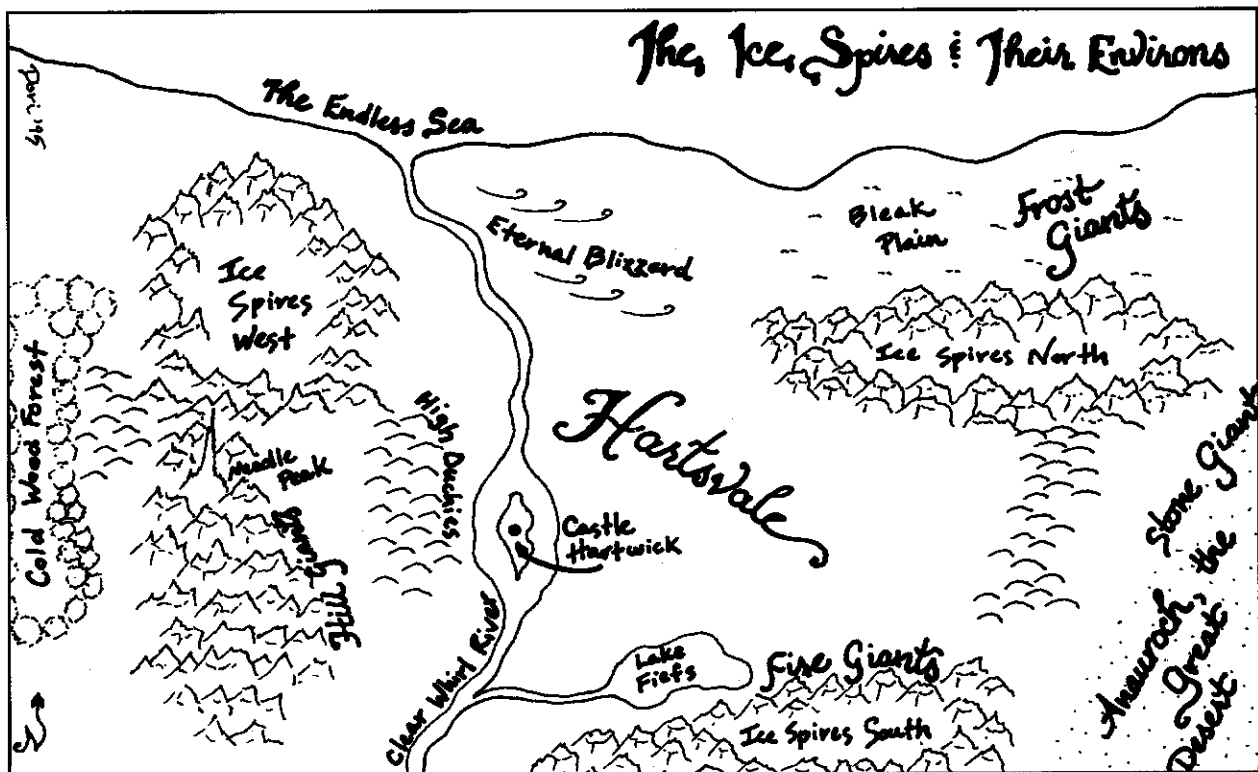
### Current Political Structure

Today, Hartsvale is still under the control of Hartkiller's human descendants. Since Brun, many monarchs have sat in the Alabaster Throne (just before his death, Brun received an ornamental throne of engraved alabaster as a gift from a nearby dwarf kingdom; ever since, the Alabaster Throne has been a symbol of royalty and authority in Hartsvale). Because all of these monarchs chose human consorts, Hartsvale's current ruler has only a tiny fraction

of giant blood coursing through his veins. But of course, Hartkiller was no ordinary giant. Several generations later, his human descendants still exhibit some definitive characteristics of giantkind: Most are over 7 feet tall, immune to various poisons and diseases, and unbelievably strong (Strength of 19 to 21).

Just beneath the royal family in Hartsvale's chain of authority are the earls. Each of the earls is responsible for the defense of his area of the valley Duchies lie to the north, south, east, and west of Castle Hartwick. All earls maintain castles connected to Hartwick and each other via gentle roads (completed only recently, during the current monarch's reign). In the event of trouble, the king's personal troops can reach any of the earls in just under a day.

Hartsvale, remember, was based upon the great human feudal societies that lie to the south. Most of the laws and customs relating to the relationship between vassal and liege in





these societies were adopted by Hartkiller and his descendants. Thus, goods and foodstuffs constantly flow from the earldoms to the duchies on up to Castle Hartwick and the royal family. This sort of tribute to one's master still clashes with the "I have mine and you have yours" philosophy of the barbarians.

### Castle Hartwick and Environs

Castle Hartwick sits atop an island located in the middle of the icy Clear Whirl River. Access to the castle is via a pair of drawbridges extending to either river bank. A large percentage of the supplies consumed by all of Hartsvale pass through these houses on caravans hailing from the Savage North.

Just outside the castle, on the west bank of the Clear Whirl, is a small town of craftsmen, gatherers, and ice fishermen. Looming down over the town are large manor houses owned by the traders and merchants who move their goods in and out of the castle. The only real point of interest inside the town is a large mausoleum that is several decades older than Castle Hartwick. According to the inscriptions on its side, the mausoleum honors Veltig, one of the high knights of the Blood Riders, who was ambushed and killed on the spot by a party of fire giants during the Riders' campaign against the giant steadings. Out of respect, the natives of Hartwick generally leave the mausoleum undisturbed. If anyone has broken its seals and explored its interior, he certainly hasn't bragged about it. Recently, though, a couple of local craftsmen were called upon by the town fathers to conduct secret repairs upon the tomb. One of its seals was clearly broken, but the pattern of the fragments left in the wake of the damage strongly suggests that it was broken *from the inside!* Although a cursory examination of the mausoleum conducted during the repairs didn't reveal anything out of the ordinary, the workmen were too scared and too respectful to inves-

tigate fully. Currently, the craftsmen are working with the city fathers to keep the entire affair secret and investigate the incident's cause. Their theories range from the benevolent (the spirit of the Blood Rider leapt from his own grave to continue his war against the Jotunbrud) to the unthinkable (even in death, the Blood Rider's spirit was defending the valley against the undead souls of the giants he slew in life; the angry spirits finally defeated the Rider and escaped through his tomb to haunt the whole valley). Some of the same odd incidents the Jotunbrud see as Twilight Omens (see "Giant Religion") the city fathers have linked to the mausoleum incident.

On the Clear Whirl's east bank, an icy fen stretches for two or three miles both north and south of the castle. Light playing off the frost and ice that collects on the fen's unusual vegetation often appears to inexperienced visitors as strange monsters and the effects of mysterious magic. Fortunately, the visions scare away most explorers before they can reach the fen's real dangers: an icy will-o-the-wisp believed to be as old as the fen itself and a powerful wraith. The wraith is none other than the restless spirit of Counselor Trevon (see Counselor Fardo's entry under "Important Figures," below). If anyone ever manages to cast a *speak with dead* spell upon the Counselor, he might reveal the true circumstances surrounding his death.

### Customs and Society

The people of Hartsvale have evolved a culture that is a strange amalgam of Jotunbrud, civilized, and barbarian customs. Some of the more uncivilized practices that fell by the wayside during Hartkiller's reign were polygamy, slavery, and the belief in the honor of the individual above the safety of the society. Today, Hartsvale's multifaceted culture is immediately apparent in the dress of its inhabitants: a strange mixture of southern-style spun cloth, thick ani-



mal skins, and horned headwear.

One of the well-entrenched customs of the barbarians that is still observed in modern Hartsvale is the importance attached to the hunt. Survival on the icy plain of the valley has always required keen hunting skills, and as a consequence, most children, male and female alike, begin practicing their basic hunting skills at a very early age (particularly falconry; the barbarians are notoriously skilled bird-handlers). Over the last several hundred years, they have evolved a whole series of rituals and ceremonies surrounding the hunt. For instance, a grand hunt serves as a coming-of-age ceremony for young men and women entering into barbarian society. Similarly, hunts are called to celebrate seasonal and religious festivals, coronations, and visits from the nobles of other lands. In fact, they have recast Annam and Hartkiller as grand hunters themselves. Over the last couple of centuries, they have slowly rewritten their ancient hunting myths to incorporate these exalted figures.

Strangely enough, during a ceremonial hunt, the person “in honor” does not actually hunt the quarry. Instead, he or she travels behind the hunting party in a specially decorated *pulkka* (a sort of sleigh drawn by six reindeer). “In honor” refers to the master or honoree of the hunt—the child during a coming-of-age, the high priest during a religious festival, the newly-crowned during a coronation, or the visiting dignitary during a state reception. Once the quarry is brought down by one of the hunters, the honored party comes up to deliver the killing blow. The hunter who actually brings down the quarry during a ceremonial hunt, though not “in honor” herself, receives a great deal of prestige.

Another barbarian hunting custom that is still practiced in modern Hartsvale is the infamous “wilderness trial.” All free peoples of the kingdom who are accused of a crime have the right to decide the affair with a grand hunt. During

such a trial, the accused is released into the wilderness with only a weapon and a single day’s food. Exactly 24 hours later, the local nobles try to hunt down and slay the accused. If they fail to do so within three days, the accused is automatically found innocent of all charges. All wilderness trials end in death or exoneration, regardless of whether or not the accused’s crime is serious enough to warrant a death sentence if adjudicated by a noble. Thus, an accused criminal who invokes her right to a hunt is often taking a serious risk.

During a wilderness trial, the “wronged” party stands “in honor” (that is, a relative of a murder victim, the owner of property believed to be stolen, or the king’s champion in the case of treason against the throne). Of course, throughout the course of such a hunt, no one is allowed to offer the accused any sort of aid or assistance. Violating this custom or interfering with the trial in any other way is one of the most serious crimes a member of the tribe can commit. Note too that anyone who is not a subject of the Alabaster Throne has no right to insist upon a wilderness trial, though accused foreigners familiar with barbarian customs who ask for such a trial are sometimes granted one as a boon.

Perhaps the most pervasive barbarian custom still practiced in Hartsvale is the exchange of stories. The tribes have always been renowned storytellers. Before Hartkiller introduced them to the written word, storytelling was their only means of preserving history and identity. Just about every important social gathering in the kingdom, large or small, is punctuated with an exchange of stories—religious services, festivals, weddings, even friendly get-togethers.

Customarily, two barbarians meeting for the first time exchange brief stories of their ancestors’ glory. This same sort of behavior is expected from foreigners visiting the kingdom. Because the barbarians link good storytelling





with virtue, those who tell their tales particularly well are likely to be afforded more trust and prestige. In game terms, telling a particularly delightful story requires a check against the artistic ability (storytelling) proficiency PCs who successfully check against this ability receive a +2 bonus to their reaction roll when meeting barbarians.

Other than these few idiosyncratic throwbacks to their barbarian heritage, the people of Hartsvale are much like transplants from the large human kingdoms to the south. They are reverent, hard-working, and respectful of their lieges.

### Language

When Hartkiller taught them of the glorious human civilizations that lie to the south, the barbarians adopted common as their official language. Over the centuries, they've become quite

fluent, though their speech is thickly accented and peppered with local idioms.

In addition to the Common tongue, most barbarians still speak *Bothii* (the "barbaric" language of their ancestors) and a smattering of Jotun.

### Economy

Hartsvale's economy revolves around hunting, trapping, gathering, mining, herding, and craftsmanship. Though some of the barbarian crafts are also sent out of the valley, Hartsvale's exports are centered upon the silver mine in the Gorge of the Silver Wurm, located in the Southern Ice Spires and discovered by the Wynn family many centuries ago. The silver that is removed from these mines provides the kingdom with the valuable goods necessary for trade with the more stable principalities to the





south. Without this important source of income, it is doubtful that Hartsvale could muster the food supply necessary to maintain its civilized state (much of the kingdom's imports come in the form of grain and other nonperishable agricultural products and byproducts).

Today, the silver mines are worked by the serfs of Earl Radborne Wynn.

### Important Figures

Here are some brief profiles of a few of Hartsvale's important personages.

#### King Camden (F14)

Str: X3/20 Int: 12 Wis: 11 Dex: 12  
Con: 14 Cha: 13 AL: CN hp: 49

Many years ago, Camden and his twin brother Dunstan fought a war of succession. In order to best his brother, Camden was forced to sign a pact with a tribe of ogres led by the shaman Goboka. In exchange for Goboka's assistance, Camden promised the ogres custody of his first-born daughter—the rightful heir to the Alabaster Throne—as soon as that child reached maturity. To this day, Camden still has no idea why the ogres were so interested in his children or what they might be planning. Now that his daughter, Brianna, is growing older and the time to pay his debt to the ogres looms near, Camden is growing increasingly troubled. He is still debating whether he will relinquish Brianna or attempt to deal with the ogres in some other fashion.

Camden is considered a good friend by both the hill giants and stone giants of the valley. These truces have eased a great deal of pressure on the earls responsible for Hartsvale's defense.

#### Princess Brianna

(P3—priestess of Hiatea)

Str: 19 Int: 14 Wis: 16 Dex: 15  
Con: 15 Cha: 16 AL: NG hp: 20

Brianna, princess of the realm, is Camden's first and only child. She is good-natured, easy-going, and intelligent. Like most of Hiatea's priestesses, she is also independent and fiercely spirited.

As an "urban" priestess of Hiatea (see her entry in "Giant Religion" for details), Brianna is responsible for counseling the people of Hartwick on family matters. She is also required to participate in a monthly ceremonial hunt in honor of the goddess.

Lately, Brianna has started to fall in love with a firbolg named Tavis Burdun, proprietor of the Weary Giant Inn near Stagwick. Tavis was once a member of the king's exalted Frontier Scouts, elite warriors assigned the task of keeping tabs on the various giant steadings and locating hunting/foraging parties lost in the wilderness.

#### Counselor Fardo (M6)

Str: 9 Int: 17 Wis: 14 Dex: 15  
Con: 10 Cha: 16 AL: LE hp: 16

Fardo is King Camden's counselor and closest adviser. He is responsible for adjudicating the trade that flows in and out of the kingdom, and keeping the king abreast of political developments in all of Hartsvale's trading partners. To help him accomplish these tasks, he has a large network of blindly loyal lackeys, scouts, and ministers.

Fardo is a covetous, ambitious man. Before he was appointed to his position, he was a close aide to Counselor Trevon, his predecessor. Like Fardo, Trevon was a greedy and manipulative bureaucrat who was more than willing to take advantage of his authority for personal gain. In fact, it was these very traits that Fardo used to destroy his mentor, clearing the way for his own ascension. With the help of a couple of crooked merchants, Fardo led Trevon to believe that a bloc of local traders had discovered the ruins of an ancient temple in the fen located just east of



Hartwick. Believing the ruins to be the source of the enormously valuable platinum artifacts that suddenly came to market in Hartsvale (actually, Fardo and his conspirators secretly imported these items and planted them on the market), the usually careful Trevon ventured into the fen without his bodyguards in order to loot the ruins himself. There, he found not an ancient temple filled with valuable artifacts, but Fardo and a band of cutthroats waiting to kill him. So great was Trevon's greed and hatred for his betrayer, however, that upon death he metamorphosed into a wraith. Though unable to leave the fens unassisted, Trevon vows that he will one day have his revenge upon his killers.

After the affair transpired, Fardo made a very smooth transition into his mentor's office. Because he covered his trip into the fen with a clever cover story (just before he left, Trevon told his bodyguards that he was escorting a foreign merchant to Stagwick and had no need of their services), Trevon is believed to have been ambushed and killed by bandits; no one in the entire kingdom suspects Fardo of foul play. Just a few days after Trevon's murder, Fardo secured an official appointment from the king and simultaneously resumed all of his predecessor's illegal activities (most foreign merchants pay a bribe or kickback to bring goods into Hartwick).

**Tavis Burdun, Proprietor of the Weary Giant (R12)**

Str: 19    Int: 16    Wis: 16    Dex: 15  
Con: 19    Cha: 13    AL: LG    hp: 126

A firbolg, Tavis was a member of King Camden's Frontier Scouts for many years before inheriting an inn (and its resident orphans) from his adoptive mother upon her death. Like most members of his race, he is kind-hearted, loyal, and honorable.

Although always content to be something of a loner himself, Tavis has a particularly soft spot

for strays and orphans. His inn, the Weary Giant, is home to a variety of orphans Tavis has taken in over the years in addition to the ones who had lived there before. A true father figure to many of the disenfranchised youths of the area, Tavis is often the first person to whom such individuals turn when they are in need. Although no one knows the exact origins of this personality quirk, some speculate that it is Tavis' compensation for a somewhat lacking childhood of his own.

Tavis is also noted for his fondness of adventure. A true man of action, he finds it difficult to sit idle, especially in the face of crisis. Sometimes, this tendency clashes with the idyllic life of a tavern owner that he has chosen for himself. Of course, this shouldn't imply that Tavis is prone to act rashly or without proper forethought. On the contrary, his quick wits and solid instincts combine to make him a formidable opponent.

Recently, Tavis has caught the eye of Princess Brianna, who has expressed feelings he is glad to reciprocate.

## The Eternal Blizzard

On the east bank of the Clear Whirl lies a gap between the northern and western arms of the Ice Spires known as the Eternal Blizzard. The region gained its peculiar nickname due to the way the surrounding mountains trap the westerly winds cutting across the valley and force them into a swirling torrent that engulfs the entire gap. Winds in the gap rarely drop below 30 miles an hour (averaging 40 mph and higher), and the constantly churning snow tends to leave much of the gap in a constant state of whiteout.

Naturally, such a peculiar locale has spawned innumerable local legends. Some believe an angry snow god lives at the center of the windstorms. Others believe the storms themselves are alive and comprise a powerful tanar 'ri that





was imprisoned in the gap by Uthgar (or Hiatea, depending upon the affiliation of the storyteller) many centuries ago.

The ogres of the misty caves use the Endless Blizzard as their ultimate form of punishment. In ogre society, those who violate the authority of their leaders or betray the tribe are abandoned just inside the Blizzard and left to its mercy. Whether or not there is any significance to the fact that such disparate cultures share such a peculiar custom remains unknown.

According to a rumor that is sometimes heard among the ogres of the Fissures, many of the renegades exiled to the Blizzard have survived its ravages and formed their own feral society. Supposedly, the renegades provide for themselves by raiding human caravans and stealing supplies from the giant steadings, always taking care to cover their tracks and return to the Blizzard unseen. So far, no exploration of the region has been significant enough to confirm or deny these rumors.

## Ogre Caves

High up in the Western Spires lies a series of icy caves inhabited by a large band of ogres that actively roams the entire valley. Access to the caves is via a complex series of stairways—some carved out of the Spires' faces, some constructed of heavy fir—leading from the ground all the way up to cave mouths. Scattered along these stairways are a number of fortified landings that allow the entire complex to be effectively defended by a scant handful of its inhabitants.

Lording over the entire tribe is the ogre shaman Goboka (an ogre chieftain—see the "Ice Spire Ogre" monster entry), a warrior who has managed to achieve an exceptionally revered status among his people. Goboka's grandfather was responsible for uniting the Spires' many fractured ogre tribes in order to raid nearby human settlements for food and fend off the occasional giant

incursion. Although the tribes are less united now than they were 50 years ago, Goboka has done a remarkable job of maintaining a unified ogre organization. In fact, the ogres of the spires are still so strong that the region's giants begrudgingly accept them as a major presence and sometimes go so far as to ally with them. Goboka has also distinguished himself by marketing the ogres as mercenaries, securing an important new source of income; winning important battles against the rebel ogres of the Bleak Fissure; and leading the occasional profitable foray into the Underdark in search of treasure.

## The Mist Caves

All told, approximately 27 caverns of varying sizes make up the complex inhabited by Goboka and his men. Most of these caverns now serve as common living areas and storage rooms, though a few are occupied by single ogres of prominence. At the center of the entire complex is Goboka's throne chamber which houses a strangely beautiful throne assembled by ogre craftsmen from thousands of tiny (and not so tiny) animal bones. Needless to say, the entire complex (including the throne chamber) is filthy and filled with rotting meats, molded cloth, and half-eaten animals. Its caverns are pervaded by a particularly intense variation on the ogres' natural smell.

Vents located deep within Goboka's cave network continuously flood the entire complex with a mysterious, thick gas that erupts from beneath Toril's surface. The gas shrouds Goboka's caves in deep mists and causes nausea in any who are not used to its stench (successfully save vs. poison or fight at -3 for 1d3 turns). Goboka's ogres are highly skilled at ducking in and out of the mists, giving them a +4 to their surprise rolls while they are operating in the caves and granting them the abilities to hide in shadows and move silently 50% of the time.





Most of the ogres inhabiting the mist caves develop a wide variety of minor skin lesions, suggesting that the mists are at least partially caustic.

All told, approximately 100 ogres live in the caves along with 5 1st-level shamans, 2 3rd-level shamans, and 10 ogre leaders (double normal Hit Dice, Strength of 19).

Note that several of the ogre tribes that have sworn fealty to Goboka do not reside in the caverns. Instead they inhabit a wide variety of encampments and steadings located within an approximate 50-mile radius of the mist caves. A constant stream of scouts and messengers dispatched by these encampments allows Goboka to keep abreast of developments across a huge portion of the Valley

### **Goboka's Politics**

Goboka solved the problem of scant resources plaguing all the people of the valley by brokering his legions as mercenaries. Most often, the ogres are employed by King Camden of Hartsvale and the various giant tribes living in and around the Valley. Although none of Goboka's patrons completely trust him, so far, he has completely and faithfully honored all the arrangements he has negotiated. Among the services Goboka's troopers have performed are political kidnappings, treasure raids, and military invasions.

Several decades ago, the Twilight Spirit hired Goboka to involve himself in Hartsvale's War of the Twins, coming to Camden's aid in return for the king's first-born daughter. Soon, it will come time for the ogres to collect their prize (princess Brianna) and deliver her to the Twilight Spirit.

Just within the last few years, Goboka has started toying with the idea of dispatching emissaries to Faerûn's other formidable ogre tribes. His ultimate dream is to top his grandfather's feat by uniting all of the most powerful tribes on the continent.

### **Ogre Society and Customs**

Goboka and his ogres are followers of Vaprak the Destroyer, the hideous god who coupled with Othea to spawn ogrekind. As such, they are extremely aggressive and prone to unpredictable violent outbursts. (They also revere the Twilight Spirit, who bestows spells on Goboka and makes the ogres mighty. They know nothing more of the Spirit save this.) The society within the cave is a vast pecking order that descends from mighty to weak (not unlike a particularly primitive implementation of a giant ordning). From time-to-time, ogres move up and down in the pecking order by challenging each other to ritualistic clubbing duels designed to demonstrate toughness.

One curious custom of the Ice Spire ogres that bears special mention is their tendency of their shamans to completely consume the corpse of any creature they kill in battle. According to the ogres' customs, this practice forfeits the creature's soul and places its fate in the hands of the shaman.

Another interesting custom is the so-called "Six Day Night," a rite designed by Goboka and his shamans to allow particularly ambitious inhabitants of the caves to demonstrate their loyalty to Vaprak and Goboka. Any ogre who so chooses can undergo the Six Day Night. During the rite, the subject is placed in a dark cavern for six full days with no food and only a small amount of water. If the initiate survives, his status is greatly increased and it is much more likely that Goboka will single him out for special favors or important duties. In fact, it's practically impossible to rise above the lowest levels of ogre society without undergoing the rite.

### **The Dour Fissure**

The Dour Fissure is a wide gorge that falls on the far side of the Eternal Blizzard. Huge vents located at the bottom of the gorge carry superheated steam from the nearby Three Sisters and





spew it into the air over the surrounding mountains, blanketing the gorge and its environs in a foreboding mist.

The mountains surrounding the Dour Fissure make up one of the most dangerous areas in the whole valley. Not only are they withered, jagged, and extremely susceptible to avalanches and rock slides, they are also home to a wide variety of dangerous predators who seem drawn to the region and the unmistakable sense of evil that pervades it.

### Ogres of the Fissure

For almost three decades, the Fissure has been home to a band of ogres who broke away from the tribes united by Goboka's grandfather. This band was particularly dedicated to Othea, mother of ogrekind. Many years ago, as their own position in the valley grew more and more dire at the hands of the expansionist giants, the ogres' hatred of the Jotunbrud grew strong enough to attract the attention of Baphomet, the tanar'ri lord of vengeance. With the dark god's agents secretly guiding their activities and development, the ogres of the Ice Spires grew remarkably sophisticated for their breed, enabling them to win some important victories against their hated foes. When the time was ripe, Baphomet finally revealed himself and his invisible agents to the ogres and asked them to turn their backs on Vaprak, their father, and openly accept him as their spiritual mentor. In return, he promised the ogres victory over the Jotunbrud and revenge against the giant god.

Though some of the ogres were wise enough to recognize the danger in serving Baphomet, most were so driven by fury that they readily accepted the dark lord's offer. Ever since, the tribe has won enough victories against the Jotunbrud to sate their periodic fits of bloodlust, though they never seem to make much progress toward their ultimate goal of destroying the giants' society once and for all. According to the

dark lord, this lack of progress is linked to their lack of faith in his guidance. Only by totally accepting his will can they take full advantage of his assistance.

A notorious liar (like most tanar'ri), it's difficult to determine exactly what Baphomet has in store for the ogres. Perhaps, in the past, he ran afoul of Annam himself and truly intends to help the ogres destroy the All-Father's children. Another possibility is that he is using the ogres as a stepping stone to worming his way into the hearts and minds of the Jotunbrud so as to guarantee his place in the future of Faerûn. Like many tanar'ri lords, Baphomet has the gift of limited foresight. Perhaps he foresees a time when the Jotunbrud will fulfill Annam's prophecies and return the kingdom of Ostoria to its former greatness. Yet another possibility is that the dark lord is simply fueling the ogres' dreams of vengeance in order to feed off their nourishing hatred.

### Kaarg's Citadel

Anyone approaching the Dour Fissure with the courage to penetrate its thick mists catches sight of an ornate series of primitive but shocking friezes depicting the ogres' terrible victories over their enemies. Each time the ogres return from battle, the entire tribe makes its way to the rim of the fissure and begins carving a paean to their latest triumph. The fact that the ogres remain in a strange state of bloodlust, almost incapable of speech or independent thought, until their "artistry" is completed makes the frieze carving a horrifying spectacle to witness.

Though the ogres themselves don't comprehend the exact relationship, the friezes are somehow tied to their reverence of Baphomet. (In fact, the ogres of Needle Peak now scrawl similar inscriptions outside their own domain.) A strange sort of magical energy emanates from the hideous carvings (they respond to both *detect magic* and *detect evil* spells), causing *confusion* in those who stare at them for more than



three rounds. Anyone attempting a detailed analysis of the friezes (such as an exhaustive cataloging of their images or an attempt to copy their patterns) must successfully save vs. spell (Wisdom bonus applicable) or change to an alignment of chaotic evil for the next 1d4 days. Further attempts to analyze the friezes lead to more permanent alignment shifts.

Hidden among the friezes are several caves that connect within the mountains surrounding the gorge to form a series of subterranean chambers. These dank caverns provide the ogres with their living and breeding space. Like the friezes, a powerful evil emanates from the underground chambers. There is a 50% chance that any non-ogre walking the dark passageways begins to experience mild hallucinations of ancient creatures committing hideous crimes, obscuring the senses and instilling panic. (The net effect is identical to that of the *maze* spell.)

In the deepest recesses of the cave network, one can find connections leading to ancient tunnels that clearly show signs of experienced workmanship (something not seen in any of the tunnels closer to the surface). Although the ogres have never made an effort to explore these tunnels, it's likely that they eventually connect to the Greater Underdark that runs the breadth of Faerûn. Strangely enough, at the mouths of many such tunnels, faint impressions suggesting that friezes similar to those that decorate the outside of the Fissure were carved down here more than 5,000 years ago.

All told, approximately 200 ogres live within the cave network alongside the dozens of shadowhounds and four smilodons they keep as pets. Among the ogres are 3 3rd-level priests, 10 2nd-level shamans, and 5 4th-level witch doctors.

### The Blood Dance

From time to time, many ogres of the tribe are swept into an all-consuming state of bloodlust known as the "Blood Dance." An ogre undergo-

ing the dance first hears a chorus of ghostly and frightening whispers buzzing in his ears. Inevitably (1d6×10 minutes later), he then succumbs to the urge to chant and dance around the rim of the Fissure (or a similarly bleak landmark if the ogres are not at home), where his fellow tribesmen join him. A few turns after the whole tribe has gathered to dance, they begin breaking off in small groups in search of blood. During this final phase of the frightening ritual, the ogres' eyes glow hot with fire, making them perceive everything they see in varying shades of red. (Because of this limitation to the ogres' vision, characters fighting ogres under the Blood Dance gain a +1 bonus to their surprise rolls.)

Ogres who have succumbed to the Dance are no longer capable of independent thought; they are mindless killing machines (incapable of speech and unable to cooperate with each other) who automatically attempt to slaughter every creature they encounter for the next 2d10 turns. While in this strange state of fury, they receive a +2 bonus to all attack and damage rolls, but keep fighting until they are dead or their rage is quenched. While under the influence of the Dance, an ogre does not stop fighting until it has reached -10 hit points (though it sustains enough damage to die when it reaches 0 hit points).

Even the ogres themselves have no idea what brings about the onset of the dance. Most likely the ritual is either tied to their worship of Baphomet, the strange evil emanating from the Fissure, or both. Over the years, a few particularly charismatic ogre chieftains have apparently exhibited the ability to occasionally touch off the Dance voluntarily. Even more curious is the fact that particularly evil members of other races in the vicinity of the Fissure while a Dance is underway (sometimes located as far as 50 miles distant!) have been known to succumb to its dark influence themselves, though such manifestations are rare indeed.





## Typical Giant Lairs

The Ice Spires are home to dozens of giant tribes of all breeds. The five lairs described in the pages that follow are typical of many scattered across the valley. Note that all camps of a particular tribe have sworn fealty to a grand ruler responsible for settling intertribal conflicts and directing the breed as a whole. The grand ruler of the hill giants, for instance, is Chief Noote, lord of the Fir Palace located in the Spires west of Needle Peak.

### Hill Giant Camp

One of the valley's hill giant tribes makes its home in a broad steading located in the rolling foothills of the northern Ice Spires, southeast of the Eternal Blizzard. Built approximately 200 years ago, after Hartkiller chased the hill giants out of the gentler hills of the valley, the typical steading stands in a formidable defensive position that commands one of the few safe trails leading into the northern Spires. For several years, the nobles of Hartsvale tried to push the hill giants further away from the valley hoping to afford greater security to the human caravans traveling to the northern fringes of the kingdom. No matter what the nobles threw at the steading, however, the giants refused to budge. Happily, with the recent friendship between Noote, the grand chief of all the hill giant tribes of the Valley, and Hartsvale's royal family, the issue is presently moot.

The largest portion of the steading sits atop four hills with a commanding view of the small valley that lies between the steading and the kingdom of Hartsvale. Cutting through the hills is an icy stream that runs down from a mountain lake located high in the Spires. At the center of the steading, the giants have dammed this stream to form a shallow pool that acts as a water supply and frigid wading puddle. Most of the buildings that comprise the steading were constructed from piled rocks cemented by a

thick paste drawn from animal fat. The roofs and the catwalks connecting the buildings were sloppily hewn from conifer wood dragged from a nearby glen. With all the cooking that transpires in the various giant dwellings, the roofs and catwalks are in constant danger of catching fire. Hill giants are notoriously clumsy.

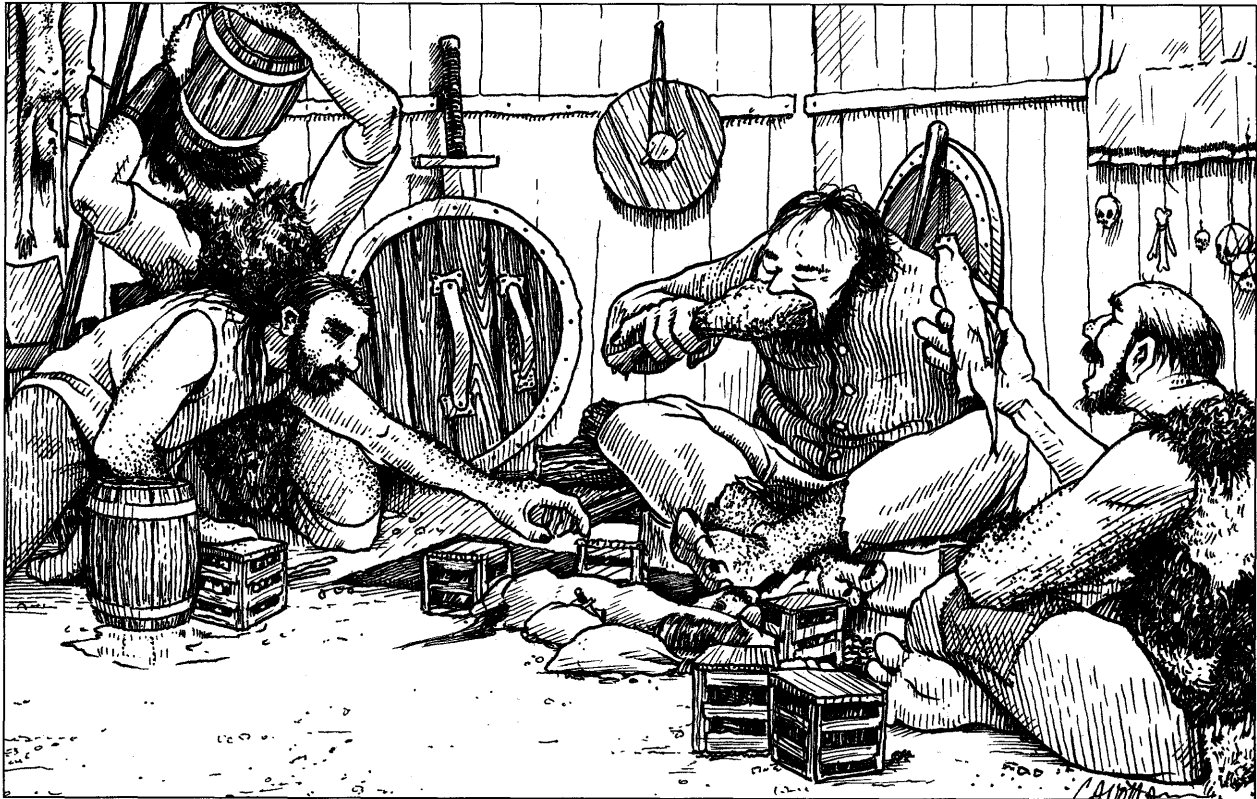
All told, more than 60 hill giants inhabit the steading along with a dozen fomorian slaves and the menagerie kept on hand as pets and potential food sources.

### Food and the Hill Giant Ordning

Like each of the giant breeds, the hill giants have evolved their own unique culture and value system over their many years of existence. According to these beliefs, life has only a single purpose: satisfying one's appetite. Surprisingly, the hill giants have taken this simple philosophy to extremes. Over the years, unusually learned hill giants have constructed elaborate poems that use food and eating as complex metaphors for many of life's travails. Similarly, hill giant priests have recast many of the ancient Jotunbrud legends of Annam and his associates as epic struggles revolving around hunting, killing, cooking, and consuming.

Although notoriously stupid and clumsy hill giants have unnatural gifts for hunting and cooking. Hill giants find most dishes fit for humans and elves appallingly dull, and prefer much more exotic meats. Throughout their long history, hill giants have tried to eat just about everything one can possibly imagine (including all of the various races inhabiting the valley), and they have enjoyed almost everything they tried.

Ordning challenges among the hill giants are settled with epic competitive eat-offs. The parties in contention each set up shop around one of the enormous fire pits located in the steading's smokehouses and begin preparing gargantuan meals. Every three hours, the competitors emerge and consume unbelievably



large piles of food. The first giant unable to match his opponent's consumption loses. For this reason, each of the giants involved try to have vast quantities of particularly palatable foodstuffs on hand before undertaking such a competition. Two notoriously gluttonous giants (such as those likely to vie for the premier positions in the ordning) might continue such a competition for several weeks (without sleep, eating every three hours!) before settling a challenge, requiring them to consume almost unbelievable quantities. At the end of such mammoth contests, conqueror and conquered alike are often blue in the face, sickly, and bloated nearly to the point of immobility.

Sitting atop the ordning is the hill giant chief, otherwise known as the *storkokk* ("master eater", in Jotunhaug). Due to the complex process of selection he must necessarily endure in order to seize his position, the *storkokk* is almost always

the very largest and most voracious giant in the steading. The other giants of the tribe look to their *storkokk* not only for gastronomical inspiration, but for political and spiritual leadership as well. Without exception, *storkokks* tend to handle the affairs of state just like they handle their dining tables. In fact, just about any conversation held at such lofty levels of hill giant society sounds like it belongs in an eatery.

#### Life in the Camp

Unlike most Jotunbrud societies, life in the hill giant steading is rather loose and unregulated, though each giant still has specific assigned duties. Generally, these duties fall into six categories.

**Gluttons** are the highest-ranking members of the hill giant society. They handle the tribe's affairs, legislate and enforce the rules of the steading, and direct the activities of all the other



laborers. Most importantly, gluttons are expected to supervise the procurement of foodstuffs, hunting, and the creation of new “recipes.” Any glutton who fails to live up to these responsibilities (by allowing the food stores to dwindle away to nothing, for instance) is severely dishonored. So great is the pressure on some gluttons that they are forced to resort to trickery or dishonesty to keep the foodstuffs coming. One such glutton, Gorgg, currently holds rank three (“tre”) in the ordning. Having spent the last year in a creative dry spell, Gorgg has already stolen foodstuffs from other gluttons. In order to keep his deeds secret, he personally killed one of his victims and saw to it that the other was banished from the steading as a traitor. Now, Gorgg is conspiring with Girog, one of the steading’s leading procurers, to secretly spice up the foodstocks with illegal stag meat poached from the private forests of King Camden of Hartsvale.

**Fetchers** serve as assistants to the gluttons. For the most part, the best and brightest of the hill giants are assigned this responsibility as part of an effort to groom them for later greatness. Each fetcher serves a specific master. Most master gluttons call in their particularly trusted fetchers to handle the minor details associated with their positions (stocking vegetables and nonexotic livestock, etc.).

**Hoarders** are responsible for storing perishables, kitchen supplies, etc. and reporting inventory levels to the appropriate procurers. Because most hill giants are so clumsy, approximately 25% of everything stored in their pantries is accidentally ruined or spoils before it can be used. Despite their ignorance and lack of grace, however, the food storage methods evolved by the hill giants are some of the most sophisticated employed anywhere in the realms. Long ago, the giants discovered the benefits of salting, smoking, and freezing various foodstuffs.

**Hunters** are responsible for stalking game and returning it to the steading (sometimes

dead, sometimes alive). Hill giant hunting parties venture out into the surrounding hills and mountains roughly once per week. In the past, these parties tended to bring back a lot of human game. Now that the hill giants of the Valley are somewhat friendlier with the royal family of Hartsvale, however, they limit themselves to ogres, bears, griffins, and anything exotic they happen to stumble across.

**Gatherers** are responsible for securing the foodstuffs the giants cannot hunt or gather. Typically, such items are purchased from the occasional shady merchant who makes his way from Hartwick to the steading. Giant gatherers pay for their goods by dipping into the vast treasure the tribe has accumulated over the years. Because the treasure is otherwise worthless to them, they’ll gladly (and foolishly) pay double or triple the value of most items—the main reason for their newfound popularity with the more adventurous local traders.

Lately, one of the highest ranking gatherers in the steading, an elderly hill giant named Girog, has grown dishonest. Girog routinely and secretly meets with a band of Hartsvalian rogues to purchase the stag meat they are poaching from King Camden’s royal forests. He then slips this meat to Gorgg so the glutton can surreptitiously include it in his food stocks. In return, Gorgg promises to give Girog the unusually tender foodstuffs he’ll need to win an ordning challenge and promotion to the rank of glutton. Should Chief Groote (the current storkokk of this camp) ever discover their scheme, he’ll certainly fry both of the dishonest giants in oil. Groote is the brother of Noote, lord of the Fir Palace and the great chief of all the valley’s hill giant tribes. King Camden is one of Noote’s most respected friends.

Finally, Herders tend to the tribal herd, slaughtering and butchering the beasts when necessary. (Most of the actual slaughtering is carried out by fomorian slaves operating under the hill giants’ direction.) These giants are usu-





ally specially trained in various care and feeding techniques that can radically fatten the animals they care for. Although most of the herders' charges are krotter (see the MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM entry at the back of this book) and goats, the steading is equipped with all the facilities necessary to cage more exotic cattle the giants hope to fatten up and tenderize, such as the occasional gnome or halfling that wanders into the valley.

Operating both inside and outside of all six groups are the hill giant priests. Their primary responsibility is to insure that all the inhabitants of the steading keep the faith of Annam and the other members of his pantheon. Among all the giant gods, Grolantor (patron deity of the hill giant high priest) is particularly revered within the steading. In toto, the hill giant clergy consists of one 5th-level priest and two 3rd-level priests.

### The Grand Feast

Whenever one of the hill giant gluttons discovers that his foodstores are particularly stuffed, he calls a grand feast to celebrate. During such a celebration, all the giants in the steading gather around the huge flamepit located between the camp's smokehouses. Often, an important guest of honor from outside the tribe is asked to visit the steading to take part in the feast—one of the other giant chieftains, King Camden, or the stormazîn, for instance.

Grand feasts are notorious for their revelry and lack of restraint. Most of them end with the entire tribe heavily intoxicated and dozing away. Because so few guests are willing to match the giants' over-indulgence, most excuse themselves politely long before the feast reaches its bitter end.







## Description

Some of the camp's key locales are described below. Refer to the map located on page 93.

### 1. Fire Pit

This enormous fire pit is the centerpiece of the grand feasts. Large enough to simultaneously roast eight or ten cows, it is usually lit only during special occasions.

When the fire pit is not in use, the young children of the steading like to gather at its side and play *glutton*.

### 2. Smokehouses

The seven smokehouses make up most of the steading's superstructure. Each is dominated by one or two *gluttons* who live and work within. Although most smokehouses are the exclusive domain of the *gluttons* who maintain them, the lowest ranking *gluttons* with access to a smokehouse are required to allow *nongluttons* to occasionally experiment in its cookery.

The center smokehouse along the steading's eastern flank is always reserved for the *storkokk*.

**2a. Cookery:** These vast kitchens serve as workrooms and laboratories to the hill giants' master *gluttons*. Each is constructed around a large flame pit capable of simultaneously roasting a pair of cows.

**2b. Bedchamber:** Master *gluttons* sleep in these areas, alongside the procurers and pantry wardens who help them maintain the smokehouse.

**2c. Pantry:** Most of the giants' collection of spices, vegetables, grains, and other foodstuffs can be found here. Sometimes, the assistants to the smokehouse's master pantry warden sleep here.

**2d. Dining Hall:** Recipes concocted in the cookery are sampled here. A convenient window allows the tribesmen to queue up outside the smokehouse to receive food prepared within.

**2e. Meeting Hall:** The *glutton* of the smokehouse uses this room to conduct any business not related to food (in other words, it's usually empty). Meeting halls are used for tribunals, meetings with foreign dignitaries, tribal planning sessions, etc.

### 3. Tents

Most of the giants who live in the steading sleep and work in thick tents, crafted from *krotter* hides, scattered around its perimeter. Because aspiring chefs often try to cook in their tents, fires are fairly commonplace.

### 4. Covered Pit

The pit leads to a network of underground tunnels the hill giants use to store foodstuffs and treasure. Although the tunnels once connected to the arm of the Underdark that stretches up into the spires, the giants long ago sealed off the access tunnels.

### 5. Livestock Barn/Slaughterhouse

This gruesome building and its surrounding corral are home to the tribe's herd of *krotter*, cows, and goats. Most of the livestock wardens and their *fomorian* slaves sleep here.

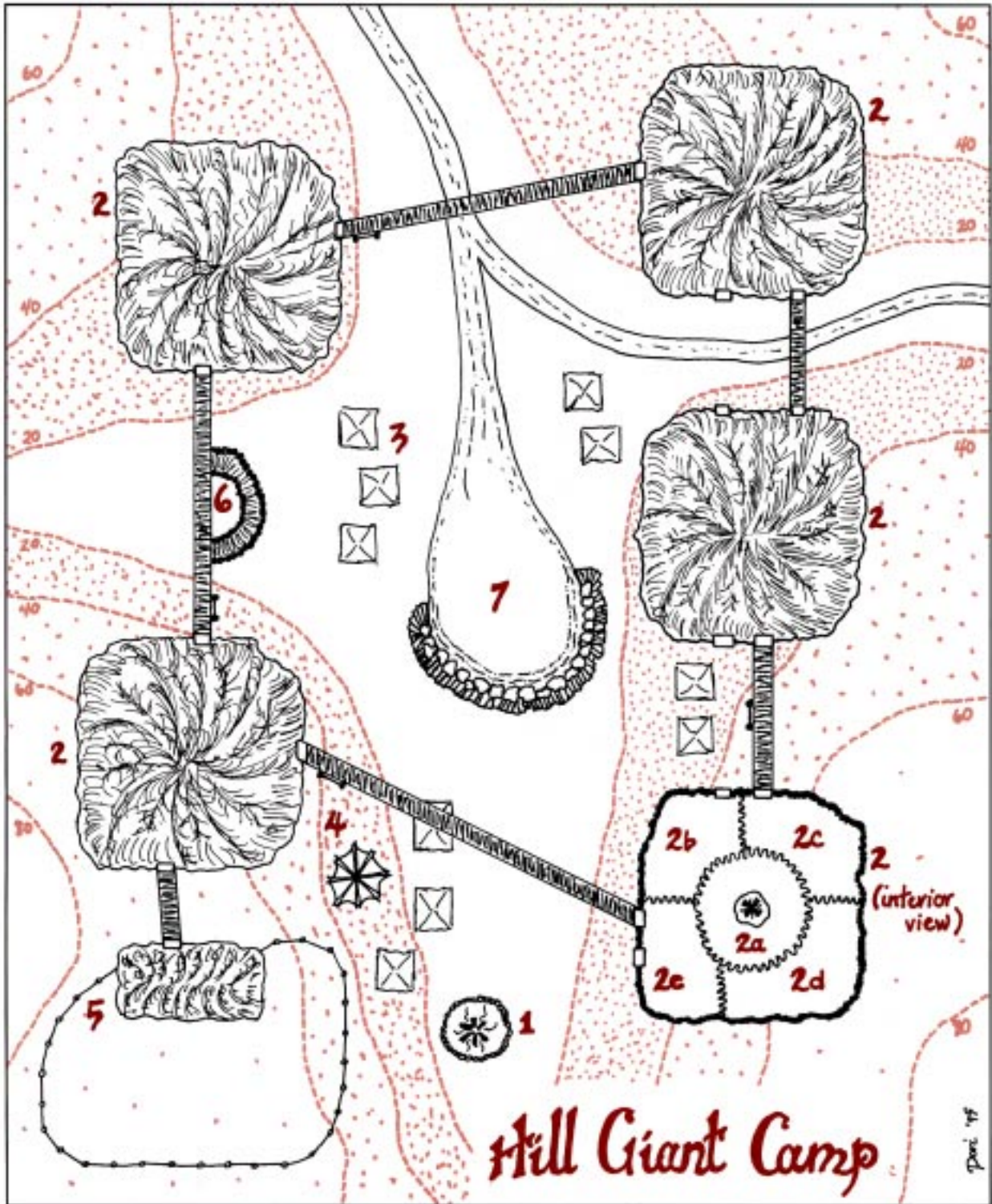
### 6. Main Gate

In order to enter the steading, one must either penetrate one of its thick stone walls or enter through this gatehouse with its deadly murder holes through which defenders can pour boiling oil. At least two hill giants are always on duty here.

### 7. Pool

The hill giants dammed a mountain stream to form this pool. The pool serves as the camp's water supply and a ready source of amusement (despite the extremely low temperatures in the valley, the giants love to wade in the pool).

For approximately half the year, the pool and its connecting streams are frozen solid.





During these months, the giants get their water by chopping blocks of ice from the stream and carrying them into the smoke-houses to melt.

### Hill Giant Statistics

Average Size: 16'  
Intelligence Range: 3d4  
Average Strength: 19  
Armor Class: 3 (5)  
Hit Dice: 12 + 1-2 hit points  
THACO: 9  
No. of Attacks: 1  
Damage/Attack: 1d6 or by weapon +7  
Weapon Multiple: ×2  
Special Attacks: None  
Boulder Damage: 2d8  
Boulder Catch Chance: 30%

### Stone Giant Grotto

One of the relatively few stone giant tribes that resides in the valley makes its home in a grotto of subterranean passages overlooking the great desert of Anauroch. The first thing a visitor sees as he approaches the grotto is the otherworldly blue smoke of the two enormous braziers that flank the main entrance of the cave complex. The stone giants keep the braziers burning year round, 24 hours a day in tribute to Skoraesus Stonebones, the tribe's patron deity. According to the stone giants' legends, the braziers' dying out is a sure omen from Skoraesus. Fortunately, such a signal has been received only twice in the last few millennia: once just after Lanaxis poisoned Othea, and again after the storm giant paramount and Hartkiller ended their epic battle.

As one draws closer to the grotto and its blazing sentinels, the scene begins to take on a more familiar shape. The faint remains of tracks carved from the stone in front of the main cave mouth and the distinctive stretched octagonal appearance of the entrance reveal that the entire network

was once a mine—perhaps one of the very oldest on the whole of Faerûn. Long ago, when Ostoria ebbed under the might of the dragon hordes and fell back to the valley, the stone giants drove the original owners from the mine and claimed it as their own, expanding it as necessary.

The fact that the stone giants have inhabited this same steading for several thousand years isn't very surprising. Life in the grotto suits the giants and their penchant for solitude. The grotto's entrance is surrounded by enormous peaks and sharp crags, making it particularly difficult to reach. As a consequence, the giants rarely receive visitors—particularly human visitors. Notable exceptions are the few artists and scholars invited into the grotto to study with the giant artisans, and the giants' few human "friends" who shuttle foodstuffs and other supplies between Hartwick and the caverns.

All told, approximately 60 stone giants inhabit the grotto, along with perhaps a dozen black bears kept as pets.

### The Arts and the Stone Giant Ordning

Above all things, stone giants respect creative enterprise. They worship Annam as the creator of their race. By indulging in creative activities themselves, the giants believe that they become closer to their deity and closer to the secrets of the multiverse. As a consequence, the stone giants' entire society is based around the notion of artistic skill—creating, criticizing, and analyzing works of art is their one and only concern. In fact, stone giants reduce all things—combat, social interaction, food preparation, etc.—to an art form. Generally, stone giant art takes the form of elaborate carvings and sculptures, though a few storm giants are highly-skilled poets, actors, and painters.

Within the last two hundred years, the stone giants' dedication to their beliefs has grown even stronger. They are now so devoted to their own





work and the integrity of their ordning that they barely notice events in the outside world. This newfound dedication is the result of a strange incident that took place just after Hartkiller died battling the storm giant paramount. On the evening that all of the other giants in the valley shared the vision of the portentous purple mist (see "Annam's Legacy"), the stone giants' leaders were visited by an enormous white owl. This owl told them that they and their brothers were responsible for the death of Annam's chosen king, but prophesied that a new king would one day arise. The owl went on to lecture the stone giants about the value of truth and charged them with the task of maintaining a bank of wisdom that Annam's king could consult upon his return. Convinced that the owl was none other than a manifestation of the All-Father himself, the giants redoubled their efforts, withdrew even further from the society of the Jotunbrud, and began the so-called "Living Cave" (see below).

Ordnung challenges among the stone giants are based solely upon artistic skill (although the giants respect those who can interpret art, their greatest praise is saved for those who create). To settle a challenge, the two competitors retreat to isolated caves located deep in the heart of the grotto and begin furiously creating their works. Stone giants taking part in such a challenge are quite a sight to behold—their work is fast, focused, and deliberate. Often, they are so inspired by opportunity that they are unable to eat or communicate until the work is finished, a process that often takes up to 10 days and sometimes takes even longer. (The ordnung challenge that seated the current lord of the stone giants lasted a record 24 days!) Only when both of the giants are finished with their work do the other members of the tribe come to view the works and judge the results. The winner of the contest is the giant whose work displays the greatest insight and the most prodigious inspiration. Although it sounds as if the subjective nature of such a judgment would lead to disagreement,

making it difficult to select a winner, such is not the case among the stone giants. Their faculties are so attuned to their work and the work of their brethren that in over 5,000 years of challenges, there has never been anything but a completely unanimous decision.

Sitting atop the stone giant ordnung is the Lord, the very finest artisan in the entire grotto. Currently, this position is occupied by an ambitious giant known as Vardun, the youngest ever to hold the throne. Although Vardun's reign began spectacularly with bold innovations in the arts and a great deal of progress on the Living Wall, life in the grotto has recently taken a turn for the worse. Over the course of the last few months, a series of mysterious mutilations and desecrations have wrenched the inspiration from many of the grotto's inhabitants. Unknown to the other giants, these ghastly deeds are actually the work of Lord Vardun himself. Just before he was elevated to the throne, Vardun went exploring in the western spires in search of new truths for the Living Cave. There, he stumbled across the Dour Fissure and the bizarre friezes that decorated its hideous walls. Like most stone giants, Vardun's greatest weakness is his curiosity. While gazing at the friezes, he became convinced that they concealed some ghastly yet important truth. Ever since, his mind has refused to stop contemplating the carvings until he manages to unlock their secret. His current attempts to unlock the secret of the friezes revolve around experimental carvings of living flesh and the "art" of destroying beauty. He has even begun to seduce some of his fellow giants down his own twisted path. Still undiscovered by the majority of the grotto's residents, Vardun and his conspirators hold secret midnight meetings deep in recesses of the Living Cave (see below).

### **Life in the Grotto**

Stone giant society is divided into seven distinct strata. Although there are a couple of general exceptions, no one stratum is inherently higher





ranked than any of the others. Generally, there are high- and low-ranking giants found in all the groups. Bearing special mention is the relationship between master and student that serves as the foundation of stone giant civilization. Shortly after each stone giant child is born, he or she is apprenticed to an older giant from the same stratum as the giant's parents. Though stone giant children retain a certain loyalty to their parents, ultimately it is the responsibility of this older giant to guide the child's development and help the child assume his or her place in the ordning.

**Masters** are the most talented and skilled artisans in the whole grotto. (The Lord is always the highest ranking master.) Their work—whether woodworking, orating, swordfighting, or tanning—provides inspiration for all of the other tribesmen and tends to establish artistic trends followed by lower ranking giants. Two special privileges set the masters apart from the rest of society. First, only the masters are aware of the existence of the Living Cave. Although other giants in the grotto are often directed by the masters to execute special works that will be transported or copied in the cave, the true importance of these works—and the fact that they are destined for the living cave—is never explained to them. Second, a portrait of each giant who reaches master rank is carved into a vast frieze located in the grotto's entryway. This intricate mural serves as a sort of "hall of fame" that helps the stone giants pass their history along to succeeding generations.

**Disciples** are giants who spend all of their time creating new works but aren't quite as talented or experienced as the masters. Again, it's important to point out that although most stone giant artworks are carvings and sculptures, some giants have chosen to pursue more non-traditional art forms. Thus, it's possible for a master poet to hold the title "Disciple."

**Critics** are responsible for judging and analyzing works of art. Contrary to the notorious bad will that exists between their human coun-

terparts, giant artists and critics tend to hold each other in the highest esteem. The stone giants recognize that without the aid of critics, most artisans would fail to recognize and eliminate the flaws in their own works. Critics also help the artisans identify the paths their works are exploring and help place the work in a historical context, allowing the artisan to refer back to appropriate older works for inspiration.

The **Patrons** in the stone giant society are responsible for providing the tribe with inspiration. Generally, they accomplish this goal by relating the myths of the faith and teaching important spiritual lessons.

**Ponderers** are responsible for seeking out new truths. They spend most of their days pouring over voluminous books and consulting with artisans. Stone giant books are carved in magical script on huge biotite sheets and bound with granite covers. As a consequence, all storm giant ponderers are at least 1st-level wizards. Generally, after a ponderer makes an important new discovery, it's only a short time before the find appears in several of the artisans' friezes and sculptures.

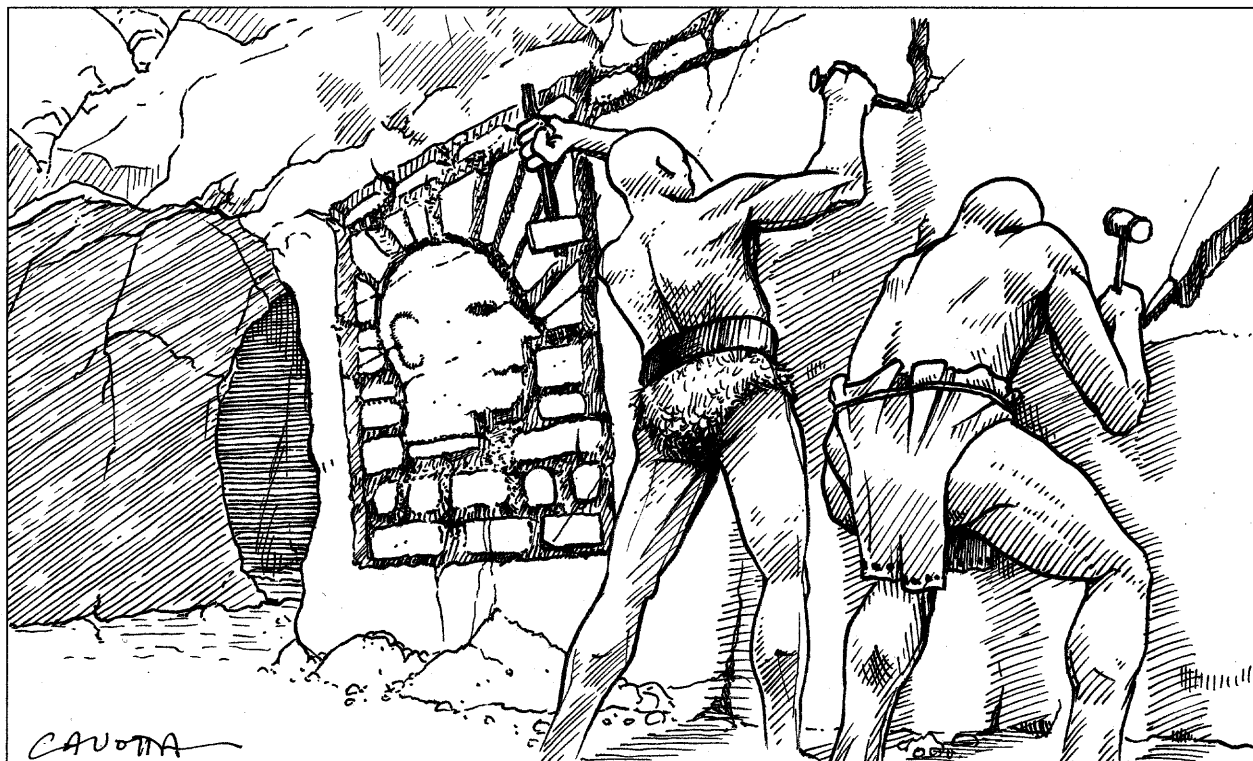
Although the vast portion of the giants' library consists of the biotite folios they assemble themselves, the giants are always interested in acquiring books and scrolls prepared by other races. These books are carefully examined by the ponderers and transcribed to biotite for easier access. Although the stone giants once commissioned giants from other tribes to secure such treasures, they now tend to deal exclusively with humans and demihumans. Three or four of King Camden's subjects are well-known to the inhabitants of the grotto and often act as intermediaries between the ponderers and human adventurers willing to seek after specific tomes and scrolls. In exchange for their service, the humans receive a portion of the enormous treasure the stone giants have accumulated over the ages.

**Laborers** work the veins of gems and precious metals that run through the grotto. (Remember,









the entire complex was once a mine.) These items are usually given to the tribes' human friends, who use them to purchase supplies and hire the adventurers who work with the ponderers. As something of an exception to the general rule of equality between the various strata of the society, only giants who are considered artistic failures end up among the laborers.

Lowest ranking of all the grotto's inhabitants are the **Servants**, who prepare food, clean carving tools, etc.

### The Living Cave

After the white owl appeared to the stone giant leaders long ago, the current Lord ordered some of the grotto's deepest caves sealed off from the rest of the society. Within these caves, the Lord resolved to carve an enormous frieze that somewhere encompassed every truth known to the stone giants and ultimately every truth in the world. This frieze was to become the repository of

wisdom that Annam directed the tribe to maintain (if, in fact, the owl was a messenger from the All-Father). Because the frieze was vitally important to the future of the entire Jotunbrud, the Lord decided to keep its existence a secret from his people. Only he and his masters would actually execute the works that would compose the caves, though he would direct some of the tribe's other members to unwittingly assist him. Shortly after the epic task was underway, the project became known as the *Levendehule* – the Living Cave.

Two centuries later, the Living Cave fills more than 200 miles of tunnel from floor to ceiling (including the floors and ceilings themselves!) with ornate murals, sculptures, and friezes that depict the information equivalent to that found in thousands of books to anyone skilled in their interpretation. At present, almost all of the works executed by the tribe are somehow linked to the cave, though few stone giants are even aware of its existence. Among the secrets housed some-





where in the Living Cave are the true history of the Jotunbrud, the true origins of dragonkind, the nature of the divine, the secrets of the beginning and end of the world, and the essential secret of magic. Just because these truths can be gleaned from the caves' inscriptions, however, does not mean that the stone giants have mastered them. By its very nature, the giants' art is somewhat mysterious, and even they are often incapable of interpreting its meaning. Bringing together all of the disparate works and influences that now grace the walls of the Living Cave has put the answers to some enormous questions within reach, but divining these secrets still requires correct interpretation and analysis. In fact, the bigger the secret, the greater the time needed for such studies—one might prowl around the cave's hundreds of miles for several years before properly decoding the true history of the Jotunbrud.

In game terms, there is a 50% chance that anyone fortunate enough to visit the Living Cave can glean the equivalent of a *legend lore* or *commune* spell with a successful Wisdom ability check. Such an effort takes anywhere from a few hours to a few years, though, depending upon the complexity of the answer sought. Furthermore, it is impossible to effectively consult the cave without accessing the stone giants' biotite library to help translate and interpret its secrets.

### **Description**

Some of the grotto's key locations are described below.

#### **High Priest's Sanctum**

The only inhabitant of the grotto who is not a master, but still knows of the existence of the Living Cave, is the high priest of Skoraesus. In fact, the high priest maintains a secret sanctuary deep within the Cave itself, which he uses for special vigils and prayers.

Recently, Bahroon, the current high priest of the grotto, has started to suspect Vardun of

treachery. In any case, he is certain that Vardun is taking some of the tribesmen into the Living Cave for secret nightly meetings, though he has yet to muster the courage to share his suspicions or investigate these meetings himself.

#### **Magical Workshops**

Unlike most breeds, stone giants place nearly as high a value upon the study of traditional sorcery as upon the practice of runecasting that Annam bequeathed upon the Jotunbrud. (The stone giants believe that sorcery conceals some of the essential truths they have pledged to unearth.) Within their grotto, they maintain some of the largest and most well-stocked magic workshops in the whole valley. An almost unbelievable number of magical items can be found scattered around the shops.

#### **Mine**

Stone giants mining the earth is a sight that must be seen to be believed. They tear through the thick subterranean walls as if they were paper and pull the valuable ores from the rock with their bare hands. Although stone giants are capable of mining a vein roughly four times faster than dwarves, their "rough and ready" approach leaves the passages they mine susceptible to rockfalls and cave-ins that pose a distinct danger to creatures smaller than themselves.

#### **Libraries**

As one might expect, the stone giants maintain some of the largest libraries in the northern Faerun. Keenly aware of the value of books, they take extra care to shore up the ceilings in the libraries to protect their contents from rockfalls and falling dust.

Each library houses a dozen enormous granite shelves large and sturdy enough to hold dozens of biotite folios.

#### **Living Quarters**

Stone giant living quarters are always incredibly



spartan, often consisting of a pile of skins (for a bed) and a single stool. All stone giants share their quarters with their students, and often, several master/student pairs live in the same caves.

#### Stone Giant Statistics

Average Size: 18'  
Intelligence Range: 3d6  
Average Strength: 20  
Armor Class: 0  
Hit Dice: 14 + 1-3 hit points  
THAC0: 7  
No. of Attacks: 1  
Damage/Attack: 1d8 or by weapon +8  
Weapon Multiple: ×2  
Special Attacks: None  
Boulder Damage: 2d10  
Boulder Catch Chance: 60%  
Special Ability: Effective infravision

#### Frost Giant Glacier

The frost giants of the valley are a race of nomadic herders. During the coldest months of each year, they briefly return to more permanent encampments scattered across the Bleak Plain. One such encampment is a thick crack in the ice located on the fringe of the Endless Ice Sea. For three months out of each year, one of the Valley's more active tribes of frost giants returns to the rift to settle and celebrate before venturing forth again in search of usable grazing lands.

As one approaches the broad rift, he is inevitably distracted by the quaking roar of a huge white dragon, a beast the frost giants keep as a captive (see below). In fact, the only way into the rift on foot is to pass beneath the polished skull of another huge white dragon and through a thick subterranean tunnel that leads down to the frost giants' domain. It is only after emerging from this tunnel that the visitor can glimpse the frost giants' dwellings—a series of





makeshift buildings and thick tents resting on several icy ledges that overlook a seemingly bottomless rift. Two narrow wooden bridges span the rift and sway endlessly in the furious storms that constantly rise from its depths.

Nongiants visiting the rift find the going particularly rough. The temperatures here are among the very coldest on all of Faerûn and winds typically reach speeds in excess of 40 miles per hour. (Consult the rules found at the beginning of this chapter when conducting expeditions to the rift.) Frost giants, of course, thrive in such conditions and suffer no penalties due to the environment.

Although these particular frost giants are perfectly content with their winter accommodations in the rift, they once maintained a more magnificent structure located atop a high mountain farther to the south. They were unceremoniously evicted from this dwelling when Hartkiller drove the Jotunbrud tribes from the valley more than 200 years ago. Then, for a number of years, they roamed across the slopes of the northern Ice Spires until one of their scouts finally discovered the ideal location for their new wintering hole. Although their numbers have dwindled over the past two centuries and they no longer have need of such grand accommodations, the giants would certainly welcome an opportunity to recapture their former steading on general principle.

All told, approximately 50 frost giants live in the rift. The tribe maintains a large herd of krotter and mammoths as a food supply, as well as innumerable winter wolves and smilodons as pets.

### **The Frost Giant Ordning**

Frost giant society is based upon the concept of *tapperhot*, translated variously as “courage,” “mettle,” or “machismo.” To a frost giant, the essence of life is adventure. Only by continuously testing one’s prowess might one prove his abilities to the gods and claim a spot in Jotunheim. In the eyes of the frost giants, of course, the ultimate adventurer is Annam All-Father. Claiming a spot

by his side is the ultimate reward.

Equally important are celebrating successful adventures (revelry) and boasting about adventures soon to completed. In fact, the frost giants have evolved a complex protocol that governs the boast. Any giant who violates these informal rules by promising to accomplish a deed clearly outside his abilities almost certainly faces as an ordning challenge (or several such challenges!). In fact, an immediate inferior who does not issue a challenge under such circumstances runs the risk of being branded a coward, almost certainly triggering a challenge from *his* inferior.

As befits their nature, frost giants resolve ordning challenges with a great contest of deeds. The challenger proposes some amazingly brave (and quite possibly foolhardy) deed and goes out to accomplish it. If he succeeds, the challenged must top the deed or lose his rank in the ordning. One of the most celebrated ordning challenges in frost giant history resulted in the recent confirmation of Hjurm, the tribe’s current high shaman and a pupil of Halflook, grand shaman of all the frost giant tribes. Hjurm’s challenger proposed to unseat him by traveling off to spit in the eye of a huge white dragon. Four weeks later, the challenger returned with the skull of the dragon in tow to prove that he made good on his boast. (That skull now rests over the tunnel entrance that leads down into the rift.) Hjurm then departed, promising to top the upstart. Three weeks later, the high shaman returned to the camp with a live and subdued white dragon in tow, and spit in its eye before the entire tribe! To this day, the dragon remains chained in a vast pit on the northern fringe of the rift. Most of the giants’ most riotous celebrations end with the entire tribe standing around the pit and tormenting the poor creature.

Frost giants incapable of completing sufficiently daring adventures are more severely rebuked by their brethren than the low-ranking giants of any other breed. In fact, sometimes the tribe’s collective insults and abuse are so severe





that the lower ranking giants are forced to falsify the completion of glorious adventures for the sake of their own hides.

Sitting atop the whole ordning is the jarl, the bravest and most adventurous of all the frost giants. The current jarl, Hagomil, only recently took control of the tribe. So far, it appears that he prefers the more fanciful style of adventure and is far less warlike than his predecessor.

### Life on the Glacier

Frost giants believe in living life to its fullest. As such, there is very little “civilized” activity in the rift. Most of the giants spend the bulk of their time organizing and participating in colossal drunken revels, most of which last for upward of 3 to 5 days. What little time remains after planning and participating in revels is often spent recovering from them.

The typical revel begins with the skalds and their tales of adventure, then proceeds to an epic round of boasting. After eight or nine hours, most of the tribesmen are both intoxicated and looking for an opportunity to prove their skills. It’s at this point that most revels dissolve into impromptu (and drunken) contests of prowess. Wrestling, axe tossing, boasting, singing, and a peculiar form of ritualistic teasing are all popular. Particularly wild revels turn ugly and violent, beginning with the torment of the captive dragon and moving on to tossing slaves down the rift, and (finally) to the giants challenging each other to bouts with deadly weapons.

Anyone with the misfortune to observe frost giant society under these conditions would be surprised, however, by the giants’ reaction to battle. The minute a battle appears imminent, the giants are suddenly grim, determined, and united. The sounds of revelry are replaced with the sounds of swords being sharpened and tactics reviewed.

Basically, all of the giants in the glacier belong to one of five general classes.

**Warriors** are the brave adventurers and

defenders of the rift. They account for roughly half of the entire tribe. Presently, the most fearsome warrior in the rift is Skaag, brother of Skarg, the tribe’s former jarl.

While **Skalds** adventure themselves, they spend most of their time composing epic poems known as *sagas* (you can find a brief sample of a saga in “Annam’s Legacy”), which honor the adventures of the tribe’s leaders. Because these sagas are often passed down from generation to generation, the skalds play an important role in keeping the tribe aware of its history. Despite the fact that they spend far less time adventuring than the average warrior, skalds are afforded almost as much respect.

**Shamans** are responsible for helping the tribesmen claim their spot in Jotunheim. They fulfill this responsibility by holding regular prayer vigils and trying to incite the warriors to undertake even more daring adventures. At present, the shamans of the rift are somewhat out of favor with the rest of the tribe. Just about three months ago, Halflook, the frost giant high shaman, experienced a powerful Twilight omen and became one of the Twilight Spirit’s prophets. As a consequence, he manipulated the fire giant high shaman into accepting a clerical parley, during which the two clergymen decreed that Skarg, the frost giant jarl and a notorious loose cannon, should abdicate in favor of a giant more tolerant of the Twilight Spirit’s wishes.

**Weirdner** (literally “weird workers”) are the frost giant wizards and runecasters. They are expected to provide the warriors with the extra edge they need to succeed in their most daring exploits.

**Slaves**, as one might suspect, are the absolute dregs of the frost giant society. Usually, this position is reserved for kin. Giants who slip down into the slave class suffer so much dishonor that their relatives are known to voluntarily exile themselves from the tribe rather than face the shame of living in their presence.







### Skalds

The frost giant skalds are roughly equivalent to the bards of the AD&D game. Although they never gain the ability to use magic spells or read languages, they receive all the remaining abilities inherent to the class. In addition, if playing before frost giants, their abilities to influence the reactions of others and inspire friends and allies (see the “Classes-Bard” section of the *Player’s Handbook*) function at *double* effectiveness. In other words, a skald can provoke a -2 modifier to the reaction rolls of frost giants for every three experience levels, and she can bestow a +2 bonus upon frost giants entering into melee (+4 to morale). Furthermore, skalds have the opportunity to learn one rune at each of the 6th, 7th, and 8th levels (see “Giant Religion”).

Frost giant skalds are limited to the 8th level of experience.

### The Ice Runners

Voracious eaters, the frost giants often find it difficult to obtain the food and supplies necessary to outfit the tribe. Traditionally, the giants topped off their foodstores with frequent raids against the various barbarian sects that lived in the valley. But ever since the coming of Hartkiller and the birth of Hartsvale, the tribe has been forced to look for new sources of food—launching raids deep into the Savage North, pilfering cattle from other giant steadings, even hiring humans to purchase livestock in Hartwick and drive it up to the rift.

The tribe’s food problems were finally solved five years ago, when the frost giant jarl defeated the king of the fire giants in a wine drinking contest held at a hill giant encampment. Had he lost, the jarl would have been obligated to allow the hill giant chief to cook the tribe’s captive dragon and feed it to the fire giants. But since the jarl won, the fire giant king was obliged to build a pair of his incredible devices for the frost giants: Six months later, during a meeting of the

giant chiefs on Twilight’s Vale, the king delivered two enormous warships capable of skidding across the great glacier on enormous razor-sharp blades. Sporting sails more than 70 yards wide, the ships can ride the arctic blasts of the glacier to reach Vaasa and the Cold Lands in approximately four days.

Ever since they took possession of the Ice Runners, the frost giants have carried out frequent raids on the large kingdoms to the east. Since it is impossible to launch any sort of counterstrike (the natives of the Cold Lands have no means of crossing the Glacier) and impossible to predict when the next assault will occur, the raids are low-risk propositions that tend to pay off quite handsomely

### Politics

Because they like to show off their courage and skills, the frost giants tend to enjoy any opportunity to mingle with the other tribes of the Jotunbrud. They particularly enjoy their infrequent visits to hill giant encampments, where the drink is so plentiful. The only exception to this general rule are the fire giants, whom the frost giants don’t particularly like. Not only could neither tribe comfortably visit the other (frost giants find temperatures any higher than 80 degrees physically painful), but their founders (Masud and Ottar) were engaged in a bitter rivalry that flared for almost 10,000 years.

Reluctantly, the frost giants are forced to admit that the Kingdom of Hartsvale is just too strong to remove from the valley for the time being, though as the Jotunbrud grow more united, this situation is steadily changing.

### Description

Some of the glacier’s key locales are described below. Refer to the map located on page 103.

#### 1. Entryway

The only way to enter the rift is to descend a







flight of heavy stairs through a subterranean tunnel and exit onto the upper ledge. Gaining entry to the compound in any other fashion would require a difficult climb down more than 100 feet of cragged glacier in extremely inclement weather.

Sitting atop the entrance to the stairway is the polished skull of the dragon killed by Hjurm's challenger long ago.

## **2. Guardhouse**

At any given time, between two and four frost giants occupy this low structure and guard the entryway. Guard duty is particularly unpopular among the frost giants since it forces them to miss the revels. Though guards are supposed to refrain from consumption, few can resist. Just as often as not, the guards end up as drunken and rowdy as the rest of the tribe.

## **3. Mead Halls**

These are long, low structures of stone and wood designed for festivals and large meetings. Each features its own built-in fire pit and brewery for malting ales. Though all the revels begin in the mead halls, they rarely remain here for long.

## **4. Tents**

Most of the giants who live in the rift sleep in these sturdy tents fashioned from krotter hide.

## **5. Slave Warrens**

The frost giants force their slaves to sleep in broad pits covered with hides. Because many of the slaves start small fires for warmth, melted snow and ice frequently accumulate at the bottom of the pits, making them particularly uncomfortable.

Over the years, the slaves have dug a series of slit trenches that allow them to travel from pit to pit without braving the icy winds of the rift.

## **6. Overseer's Manor**

This low house is occupied by a pair of frost giants who theoretically watch the slaves for signs of disobedience or revolt. Because no real warrior would ever fear a slave, these giants are remarkably remiss in their duties.

## **7. Manors**

Frost giants who sit near the top of the ordning are allowed to sleep in makeshift huts rather than the tents available to most of the tribesmen. Recently, sleeping out of doors in order to prove virility has come into vogue among the giant elite, vacating most of the manors.

## **8. Jarl's Manor**

The jarl's manor is the largest building in the rift. Like most of the higher-ranking giants, the jarl has recently taken to sleeping in a small tent. He still uses the manor for important meetings, however.

## **9. Shrine**

This small structure is dedicated to Thrym, the frost giants' most favored deity.

## **10. Dragon Pit**

The huge white dragon that Hjurm returned to the rift several years ago still rests in this huge pit on the northern ledge of the rift. Badly battered by several consecutive years of abuse, the dragon could never dream of escape—it's barely capable of mustering the strength necessary to cry out.

Recently, however, the dragon has acquired a new sense of hope. Late one night, its cry of pain was returned by a similar, healthy cry from the other side of the Glacier. Twice since, the dragon has heard this echo and it seems to be growing closer.



### Frost Giant Statistics

Average Size: 21'  
Intelligence Range: 2d6+1d4  
Average Strength: 21  
Armor Class: 0 (5)  
Hit Dice: 14 + 1d4 hit points  
THAC0: 7 or 5  
No. of Attacks: 1  
Damage/Attack: 1d8 or by weapon +9  
Weapon Multiple: ×2.5  
Special Attacks: None  
Boulder Damage: 2d12  
Boulder Catch Chance: 40%  
Special Ability; Impervious to cold

### The Fire Giant Hall

After Hartkiller ran them off Needle Peak, one of the valley's most prominent fire giant tribes built a new palace on a low plateau joining two of the three volcanoes known as the Three Sisters. Over the next 40 years, the giants used their unparalleled mechanical skills to transform the plateau into a superior duplicate of their former home. In fact, the new fire giant hall is undoubtedly one of the most exquisite structures on the whole of Faerûn. Built atop a series of enormous platforms that act like gears, the whole complex is in constant motion: Buildings revolve around each other, structures rise and fall in height, and towers sway back in forth, all in an unsteady and absorbing rhythm. The net effect of the entire construct is to simultaneously fascinate and disorient the first-time visitor, a dangerous byproduct of the palace's beauty. (First-timers might easily slip between two of the structure's enormous gears and suffer 10d10 points of damage.)

Surrounding the entire complex is a network of trenches filled with boiling oil. The trenches serve to clog the skies with a thick

black smoke that blocks out the sunlight in strategic areas, adding even more eeriness to the palace's facade. They are also responsible for keeping temperatures on the plateau high enough for the fire giants' comfort. In sharp contrast to the rest of the valley, temperatures in and around the plateau are incredibly high (90 degrees in the outlying areas, more than 110 degrees in the palace itself). Another factor contributing to the plateau's balminess is a series of subterranean vents that carry superheated steam up from the Three Sisters and expel it out over the valley from fissures in the plateau's side.

All told, some 45 fire giants inhabit the hall along with dozens of fomorian slaves. The giants keep several krotter on hand as a food supply and maintain innumerable hell hounds as pets.

### Craftsmanship and the Fire Giant Ordning

Like their brothers the stone giants, fire giants worship Annam in his aspect of creator, and they see life as one long opportunity to follow in his footsteps. Only by exercising this opportunity can one grow closer to the All-Father and claim a place in Jotunheim. Unlike the stone giants, however, the fire giants have little use for subtle creations requiring special skills to unlock and comprehend. Fire giants prefer more visceral and practical inventions that boldly proclaim their majesty to all who witness them. As far as anyone can determine, these views stem from the environment in which Annam first deposited Masud and his fire giants several thousand years ago. In order to survive in the fiery mountains located in Faerûn's southern sector, the giants were forced to take advantage of the one natural edge their environment afforded them: the incomparable power of the forge.

Over the course of their eons of existence, the





fire giants have become masters of metallurgy. Their knack for metalworking and weapon-smithing are almost completely unrivaled across the face of Faerûn.

Not surprisingly, the fire giant ordning is based around the ideals of skillful craftsmanship and the mastery of technology. Ordning challenges are settled by the competing parties each retreating to their respective forges to dream up startling new creations. The giant who returns with the most impressive concoction is declared the winner. In fact, the fire giants are so dedicated to these standards that they tend to view the tribesmen who sit atop their ordning (and are, therefore, the best craftsmen in the hall) as somehow “holier” than the lower-ranking giants. To a true fire giant, metallurgical expertise is a sure sign of piety and spiritual devotion—fire giant leaders are often priests. Every giant knows that the inspiration for such achieve-

ments flows directly from the All-Father’s palace in Gudheim.

Sitting at the very top of the fire giant ordning is the exalted khan, the very best craftsman in the tribe. His most important responsibility is the supervision of the giants’ most ambitious undertaking: the expansion of the great hall. Year by year, the giants’ master craftsmen add more and more towers, bridges, gears, and pulleys to the hall. According to their legends, the glory of Ostoria can only be restored when the hall eclipses the entire valley.

#### **Life in the Hall**

In some ways, the society of the fire giants combines traits found in both the frost giant and stone giant steadings. Like the frost giants, the fire giants are fond of wild revelry and exuberant celebration. But unlike their brothers, they believe that such revelry serves only to heighten their effectiveness in their true love: the precise



execution of skill and craftsmanship. In this way, they share the stone giants' dedication to duty. The average fire giant's waking day is divided into three parts: two for labor and one for celebration.

The fire giants share another, less satisfying characteristic with their brothers the frost giants: an almost insatiable appetite for food and drink. They too find it difficult to maintain the enormous amounts of food and supplies necessary to keep their tribe together. To overcome this problem, they launch frequent and fruitful raids into the kingdoms of the Savage North. But when the food supply is particularly lean, even the raids can't fill the tribe's stock houses. When faced with such desperate straits, the giants are often forced to sell their incredible creations to wealthy nobles and would-be conquerors, a solution that raises its own set of associated problems.

At its core, the fire giant society comprises seven strata.

**Architects** are the tribe's master builders. Most of their effort goes into expanding the hall and devising the ingenious traps that protect it from interlopers. Architects are always the most respected citizens from the hall, and the new king almost universally emerges from the midst.

**Forgers** operate the hall's giant furnaces and fashion the huge gears and metallic shells the architects need to carry out their work. Typically, forgers are young and talented giants who hope to one day rise to the ranks of the architects themselves.

**Engravers** take the parts fashioned by the forgers, engrave them with decorative patterns, and apply intricate inlays. Although the decorators are not nearly as respected as the architects and forgers, no true giant craftsman would dream of assembling a creation without their input. To at least this limited extent, the fire giants believe in form as well as function.

**Tool Makers** fashion the hammers, levers, spikes, and other tools used by the forgers, architects, and decorators. Though tool-making is an intricate art form that is very important to almost all the activities in the hall, the tool makers' efforts are underappreciated by the rest of the tribe. For the most part, the tool makers are older or less talented craftsmen who simply haven't the drive to keep up with the architects and forgers.

The few **Priests** in the fire giant society who are not also architects and forgers are charged with the responsibility of keeping the rest of the tribe productive. They accomplish this task largely by composing inspirational tales extolling the features of the glorious palace of Gudheim.

**Weirdner** are the fire giant wizards and runecasters. Their main function within the society is the evolution of new technologies and metalworking techniques.

Sitting beneath all the other strata are the **Slaves** responsible for preparing food, sharpening tools, etc. Like their brothers the frost giants, the fire giants treat their slaves with less dignity than most masters afford their pets. In fact, very few actual giants lose so much respect with the community that they slip down into the slave class. Most of the fire giants' slaves are verbeeg, fomorians, and other assorted outsiders (even a few dwarves and gnomes).

### **Fire Giant Craftsmanship**

You can assume that all fire giants have the blacksmithing, metalworking and weapon-smithing proficiencies, each rated at 16. Master fire giant craftsmen (that is, those sitting atop the ordning) have all three proficiencies rated at 20. Fire giants are such skilled metalworkers that they can construct any sword, suit of armor, or other metal item in 25% of the time it would take a human smith to construct the same item. (See 21.10 *The Complete Fighter's*



*Handbook* for information on forging swords and armor.) Furthermore, any weapon, shield, or suit of armor constructed by the fire giants is automatically of such a high quality that it is treated as though it is enchanted at +1 (though such weapons won't strike creatures affected only by magical weaponry). Note that only items of this quality (forged by either the fire giants or others with similar skills) can be enchanted to +4 or +5, making fire giant weapons exceptionally valuable.

Although the fire giants rarely construct items for anything but their own amusement, they've been known to occasionally hire out their services. To commission a work from the fire giants, one must find the hall and speak with the khan. Though most offers are immediately rejected out of hand, the khan might consider a request by anyone who strikes him as particularly interesting or powerful. Anyone who passes this test is then required to participate in a fire dance. If the petitioner survives, the khan will probably agree to fashion the requested item in exchange for a work of great craftsmanship coveted by the fire giants. It is then up to the individual to quest for this item and return it to the hall in order to claim the item he requested.

### **Fire Dancing**

Most fire giants worship not only the members of the Grand Ordning, but to a lesser extent, they worship fire in its elemental form as well. As part of their religious rituals, the fire giants perform complex and intricate dances along the very edge of vast firepits and lava streams. (In the hall, the giants dance on the edge of the spinning gears overlooking the lava rivers.)

Visitors to the hall are sometimes invited to participate in these dances themselves—particularly if the giants wish to test the mettle of the interlopers. During a fire dance, the heat is so great and the steam so thick that characters

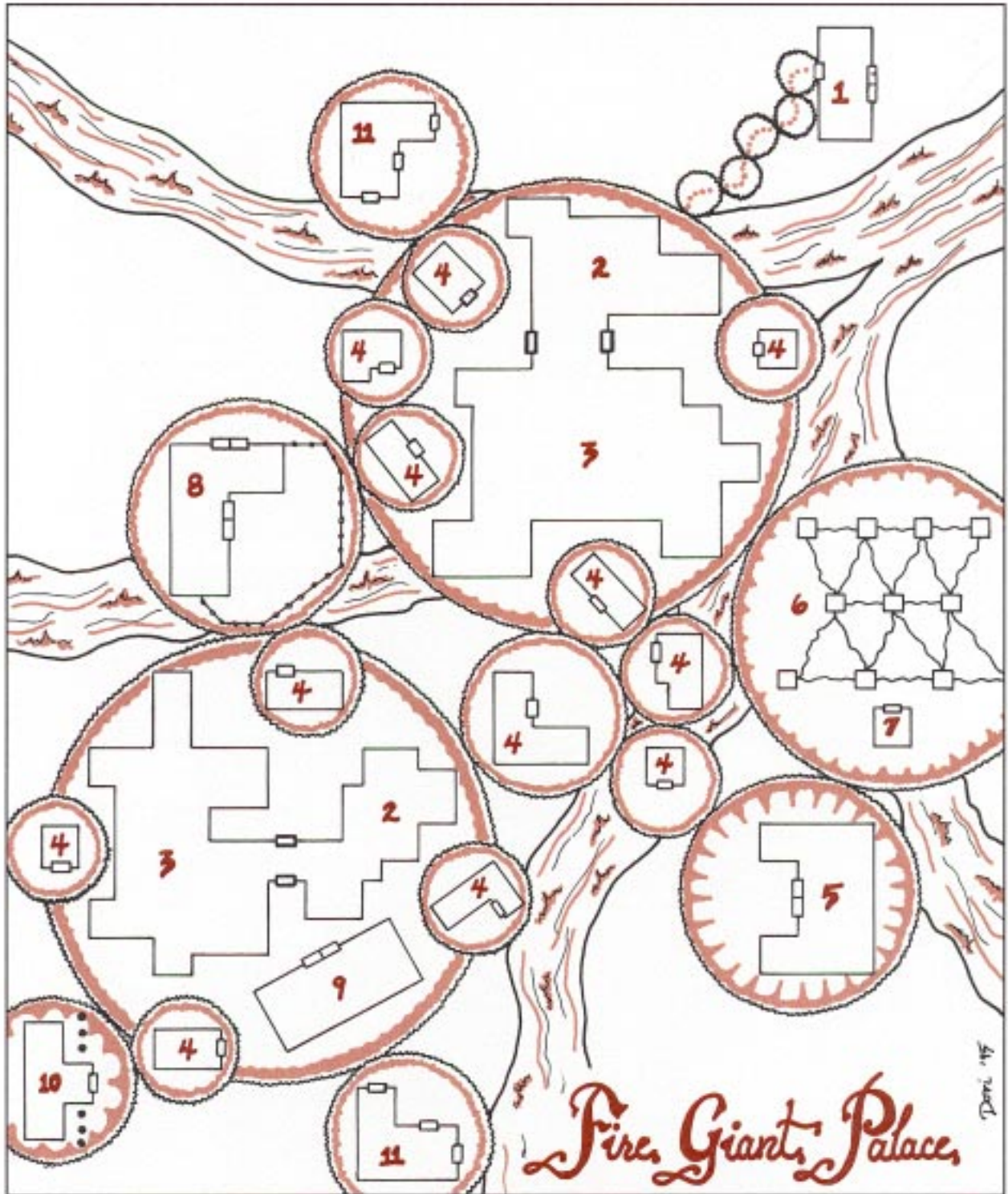
other than fire giants begin to hallucinate and teeter. This effect is equivalent to a pair of *phantasmal killers* trying to pull such characters off their perch and down into the fire (or lava). To last the duration of the dance, such a visitor must drive off the killers before the killers reduce him to 0 hit points. (If the interloper is reduced to 0 hit points, he immediately falls into the flames and dies.) To drive off the killers, the interloper “attacks” them. No attack roll is necessary and all attacks automatically inflict 1 to 3 points of damage plus 1 point of bonus damage for each point of the attacker's Wisdom over 13. Note that although the killers are illusory and can be disbelieved, any successful attempt to disbelieve causes the interloper to remove himself from the dance, thus failing the giants' test.

### **Fire Giant Politics**

Like their brothers the frost giants, fire giants generally enjoy an opportunity to meet with other Jotunbrud tribes, as such meetings allow them an excellent opportunity to show off their incredible craftsmanship. Again, the one exception is the frost giants themselves, with whom the fire giants enjoy a bitter rivalry. Lately, the hall has been visited by dignitaries from Abram's cloud castle on six separate occasions so Abram can conduct secret meetings with the fire giant king. According to the gossip spreading through the forges, Abram is trying to convince the king to help him construct some sort of enormous object.

Although the fire giants had nothing but contempt for the Uthgari tribes after Hartkiller pushed them out of their first great hall, this feeling has since subsided. Now that their new dwelling has eclipsed the size of its predecessor, the giants no longer give the humans and their kingdom much thought. One day, they know they must theoretically obliterate the kingdom to make room for further additions to the hall,







but until that day comes they are content to leave the humans in peace.

### Hall Description

Some of the hall's key locales are described below. Refer to the map located on page 111.

#### 1. Guardhouse

The nature of the hall's construction makes it impossible to enter without first passing through this entryway. Generally 4-6 fomorian slaves (roll 1d6; 1-2=4,3-4=5,5-6=6) are on duty here. (No fire giant would leave his workshop for something as mundane as guard duty.)

#### 2. Forge

These forges are quite possibly the largest in all the Realms. Objects the size of small sailing ships can be smelted here in a single plunge.

Obviously, the air immediately surrounding the forges is even hotter than the unbearably balmy atmosphere elsewhere in the hall. All nongiants who get within 30 feet of the forges must successfully save vs. petrification at the end of each round of exposure or suffer 1d8 points of damage.

#### 3. Workshop

The giants create the bulk of their fantastic devices in these enormous halls. As one approaches, the din of mighty hammers is almost deafening. Inside the shops, it is almost impossible for a nongiant to utter anything intelligible.

#### 4. Manor

All of the hall's occupants (except for the slaves) live in these imposing steel structures.







(The steel walls tend to trap the heat, making such buildings particularly comfortable for fire giants.) Most of the manors are mounted on enormous spinning gears that cause them to rise and fall as the platforms that make up the hall spin. Most humans would find such motion extremely disorienting (if not nauseating), though the giants apparently suffer no ill effects from it.

#### 5. Khan's Manor

The khan of this fire giant tribe occupies the largest manor of all. Located within the manor are the king's private forge and workshop.

#### 6. Slave Warrens

Like the frost giants, the fire giants force their slaves to sleep in broad pits. Most of the slaves line their pits with thick skins and blankets since the metal floors tend to conduct the unbearable heat of the flaming rivers that flow beneath the hall.

#### 7. Slave Overseer's Quarters

The overseer of all the slaves sleeps here. He, too, is usually a slave (one of the few true giants in the slave caste), albeit a particularly trusted one. The current overseer was cast into slavery after improperly quenching a sword forged by the king himself. He hopes to perform his current duties with enough distinction to one day return to the workshops.

#### 8. Livestock Barn

Like most of the Jotunbrud tribes of the valley, the fire giants keep a fairly sizable herd of krotter on hand as a ready food supply. Conditions in the hall make it especially difficult for the giants to maintain their herd, placing further strain on their already precarious food stock.

#### 9. Banquet Hall

The fire giants use this broad steel hall for their own equivalent of the frost giants' revels.

#### 10. Shrine

The giants' shrine is dedicated to Masud, founder of their tribe, though it is often used to honor Surtr, Stronmaus, and the Twilight Spirit.

#### 11. General Storage

This is an all-purpose storage facility. Within, one might find discarded tools, gears, provisions, and malfunctioned devices.

#### Fire Giant Statistics

Average Size: 18'

Intelligence Range: 2d6+1d4

Average Strength: 22

Armor Class: -1 (5)

Hit Dice: 15 + (1d4+1) hit points

THAC0: 5

No. of Attacks: 1

Damage/Attack: 1d8 or by weapon +10

Weapon Multiple: ×2.5

Special Attacks: None

Boulder Damage: 2d12

Boulder Catch Chance: 50%

Special Ability: Impervious to fire

#### The Storm Giant Aerie

Some of the storm giants of the valley make their home atop an enormous mountain located on an island in the midst of Lake Woe, just beneath the southern Spires. (Hartkiller visited this very tribe many years ago.) This particular mountain is one of the tallest in northern Faerûn. Its peak soars high above the local cloud cover, and due to the storm giants' influence, the peak is constantly bombarded by rau-





cous thunderstorms.

Simply reaching the aerie is an extremely daunting task for any not of the Jotunbrud. A potential visitor must first navigate the icy waters of Lake Woe (a task made nearly impossible by the thick mists that drift down from the aerie and gather over the water). Then, after reaching the island at the lake's center, he must complete one of the most difficult climbs in all the Spires. Characters without access to the mountaineering proficiency cannot even attempt such a climb, and mountaineers must pass a proficiency check at a daunting -5 in order to lead a party up the mountain without a mishap.

Visitors who finally reach the peak at first find it difficult to see — if they happen to be visiting on one of the few occasions when the mountaintop isn't being pummeled by a powerful storm, then the thousands of birds who have flocked to the aerie in affinity with the storm giants are almost certainly filling the skies. Then, as the visitors stumble over the last few ledges, they finally catch sight of one of the most magnificent palaces in the Realms. Huge spires plated in silver and topped with alabaster jut out from all over the mountaintop, with a complex series of catwalks and pathways stretching between them. Enormous mosaics and frescos decorate the fortress' few discernible entryways. Intricately carved gargoyles (a gift from the stone giant lord) maintain their silent vigil along the curtain walls that surround the complex.

But as one draws near the palace, he begins to notice that it is slowly crumbling. The silver is growing worn and tarnished. The brightly colored mosaic tiles are dulling under the elements. The features of the gargoyles are slowly eroding.

All in all, 12 storm giants reside in the aerie. Although the storm giants do not formally maintain any pets, birds sense their presence

and flock to the aerie by the thousands. Scattered all over the mountain are the unusually large rots (wingspan of 75 feet plus) that the storm giants sometimes ride as steeds.

### **The Storm Giant Ordning**

Storm giants don't really see Annam as an outside force that sometimes influences their world. They see him as a physical embodiment of that world. To the storm giants, Annam is found in the skies, mountains, forests, and inhabitants of Faerûn. He is the lifebringing spark of nature. His children live within him. Closely related to these views is the storm giants' refusal to entirely accept the doctrine of free will. They see the world, creator and created, as part of a single organic mechanism that runs of its own accord. Any single action forms a pre-ordained pattern with thousands of other actions to sound out the rhythm of the multiverse. Anything an individual can do—even an individual as mighty as a storm giant—is a futile gesture in the face of such formidable cosmic forces.

Although storm giants have an ordning, it is much looser than those maintained by their brothers. Though a great paramount, the grandest storm giant of them all, still lords over the tribe, in the eyes of the giants the ordning exists largely out of tradition. In their society, only the distinction between ruler and ruled is important.

Because of their peculiar beliefs, the storm giants don't really conduct formalized ordning challenges. Instead, they believe that nature signals them when it is time for an ordning change with an appropriate omen or prophecy. Unlike their brothers, storm giants almost never covet rankings higher than those they hold. Devout believers in predetermination, they find the entire concept of ambition useless.

The exact sort of omen that signals change to the storm giants is well-illustrated by the last



two to hit the aerie. Just over a year ago, during a festival held in the honor of Ramos—the giant who was ranked just below the paramount—all the clouds suddenly fell from the sky, bathing the aerie in sunlight for the first time in almost 10 years. To the storm giants, this was a clear sign that Ramos should assume the mantle of paramount; the tribe's current leader stepped down without argument. Ten years earlier that giant had been elevated to the throne after a lone dove inexplicably landed on his shoulder at the outset of a great feast.

### **Life in the Aerie**

Creatures of raw passion, the storm giants are still brooding over the battle between Hartkiller and their former leader that took place thousands of years ago. Just after the battle concluded, the tribesmen realized that they had betrayed Annam, touching off a wave of grief they have yet to overcome. Making matters more confusing is the giants' imperfect belief in fate. Yes, they betrayed Annam, but Annam must have wanted such a thing to happen. How could he have singled out their kind for such torment? What was their great crime?

Shortly after the epic struggle ended, the aerie's new paramount issued a proclamation of atonement. In accordance with the proclamation, no storm giant (of this particularly tribe) was to set foot on Toril again to enjoy its bounty until Annam personally redeems the tribe. Ever since, the storm giants have spent the bulk of their time brooding and punishing themselves for their grand failure. Most have turned to poetry and the other arts as an outlet for their sorrow and fury, as they desperately attempt to comprehend the implications of their great sin and what it says about the nature of the universe. Externally, all of this pent up frustration manifests itself as the incessant storm clouds that have been batter-

ing the aerie for thousands of years and are slowly eroding its grandeur.

Most of the organized activities that still take place in the aerie revolve around suffering. Since their self-imposed exile began, the storm giants have evolved a number of creative ways to torment themselves: lying awake for several days straight, gazing at conjured images of the natural beauty they are no longer able to experience firsthand, standing amidst the crashing storms and bellowing at the moon. The storm giants hope that through such conduct they can come to understand their place in the world and comprehend the nature of their failure. Not until they make some sense of the contradictions that seem to surround them can they hope to redeem themselves in Annam's eyes.

The giants' constant brooding has also had a dramatic impact upon the more mundane corners of their lives. For instance, food is in rare supply on the aerie and none of the giants can be troubled to do anything about it. As a consequence, many of the giants have eaten very little over the last two centuries. Although their incredible constitutions keep them alive, they are obviously a weak shadow of their former selves. Many are gangly, emaciated, and incapable of much physical activity. If it wasn't for the periodic help of the cloud giants, the tribe would certainly be losing its weakest members to starvation.

### **Aerie Description**

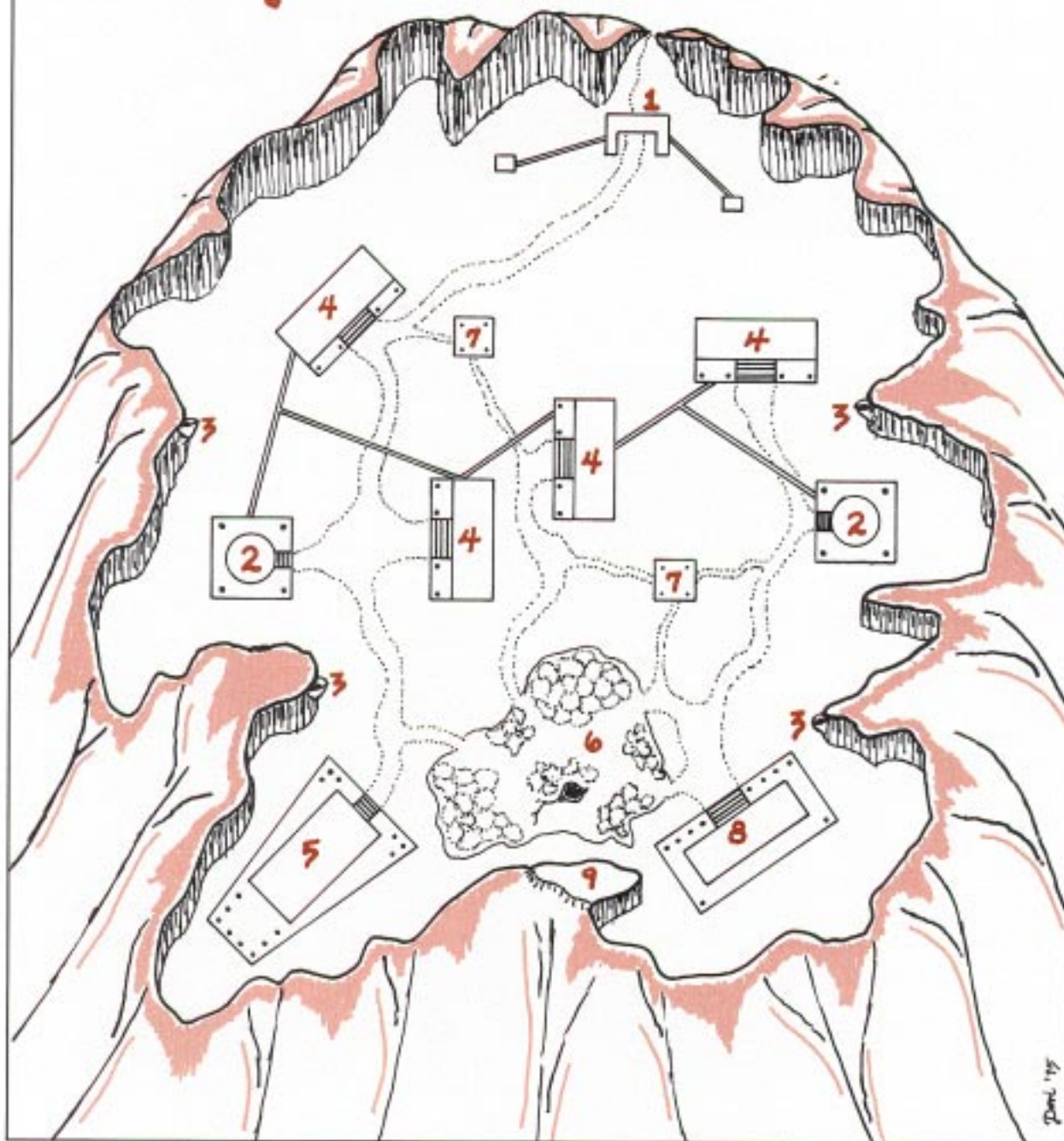
Some of the aerie's key locales are described below. Refer to the map located on page 116.

#### **1. Entryway**

In order to enter the aerie, one must pass through this entryway—the approaches on all the other sides of the peak are far too steep to climb. Although the structure that towers over the path leading from the entryway to the



# Storm, Giant, Aerie







palace was obviously built for defense, the storm giants never bother to post guards.

## 2. Watchtower

The watchtower is the tallest structure on the entire peak. From here, one can look out over the mists and clouds, and into the valley below.

## 3. Roc Nests

Storm giants enjoy a natural affinity with all nature's creatures, particularly birds. Sensing the presence of the giants, thousands of birds have made their way to the aerie to nest. Among the most spectacular are several gargantuan rocs (75-foot wingspan) with whom the storm giants enjoy a great friendship. In fact, the giants have been known to ride the eagles as colossal aerial steeds.

## 4. Manors

These towers house the aerie's main living rooms, halls, and food preparation areas. Given the opulence of the palace's exterior, they are remarkably spartan.

## 5. Chapel

Hiatea's chapel is one of the aerie's structures that most interests the assembled multitude of birds. In fact, thousands of small birds cover practically every available inch of its ceiling and floorspace at all times. Whenever one of the giants enters the chapel to perform further penance, all of the birds instinctively and politely leave.

## 6. Garden

The storm giants' garden was once one of the most beautiful in northern Faerûn. Now it is choked with weeds and crabgrass, and most of its delicate trees have died. Many of the storm giants like to take long, brooding walks here.

## 7. Servant's Quarters

Storm giants take remarkably good care of their servants. Their quarters are easily the equal of the giants' own. (In fact, now that the giants don't bother to maintain their quarters, the servants enjoy superior surroundings.)

## 8. Paramount's Manor

This building was once the grand manor of the storm giant paramount. Shortly after Hartkiller died on the aerie, the newly coronated paramount left the manor and decreed that no giant should sleep in it again until the entire tribe has been redeemed. Thousands of years later, the storm giants still honor that dictum.

## 9. Cloud Mooring Area

This is the area where the cloud giants' palaces moor when they drift into the valley and over Lake Woe. After the cloud enters the mooring area, storm giants lash it to the aerie with enormous ropes (over 2 feet thick) stowed in a small shed near the mooring bay.

### Storm Giant Statistics

Average Size: 26'

Intelligence Range: 2d6+8

Average Strength: 24

Armor Class: 0 (5)

Hit Dice: 14 + 1d4 hit points

THAC0: 7 or 5

No. of Attacks: 1

Damage/Attack: 18 or by weapon +9

Weapon Multiple: ×4

Special Attacks: Lightning, weather control

Boulder Damage: 3d12

Boulder Catch Chance: 55%



## Cloud Giants

The storm giants aren't the only members of the Jotunbrud native to the aerie. For several years, one of the valley's largest cloud giant tribes lived there as well. Just before Hartkiller's birth, however, the cloud giants built their own magnificent palace atop one of the clouds surrounding the aerie's peak and cut the cloud loose to drift over Toril. Whenever the cloud returns to the valley, its masters moor it at the aerie and pay a visit to their brothers.

Unlike the storm giants, cloud giants are an easygoing people who spend much of their lives frolicking and celebrating just about everything imaginable. Until recent years, they have been the most benevolent of all giants, mooring their cloud at mountain peaks located all over Toril and venturing out onto its surface to feast alongside humans, elves, and the other benevolent races of Faerûn.

Approximately 75 years ago, however, a great rift developed down the middle of cloud giant society. Abram, one of the most prominent of the cloud giants and high priest of the god Memnor, seemed to suddenly develop a malevolent streak that provoked untold disruptions in the cloud giant ordning. At first, Abram confined his untoward activities to humiliating servants before the whole tribe and occasionally threatening a brother. But before too long, his conduct spilled over into the great games that sit at the center of cloud giant society, prompting him to select incredibly callous tactics that endangered the lives of several innocents. When things were finally so out of hand that Marchas, current vanguard of the cloud giants, decided to ban Abram from the games, the high priest accused the vanguard of a blatant attempt to rid himself of a competitor whom he knew would one day challenge his top spot in the ordning. To Mar-

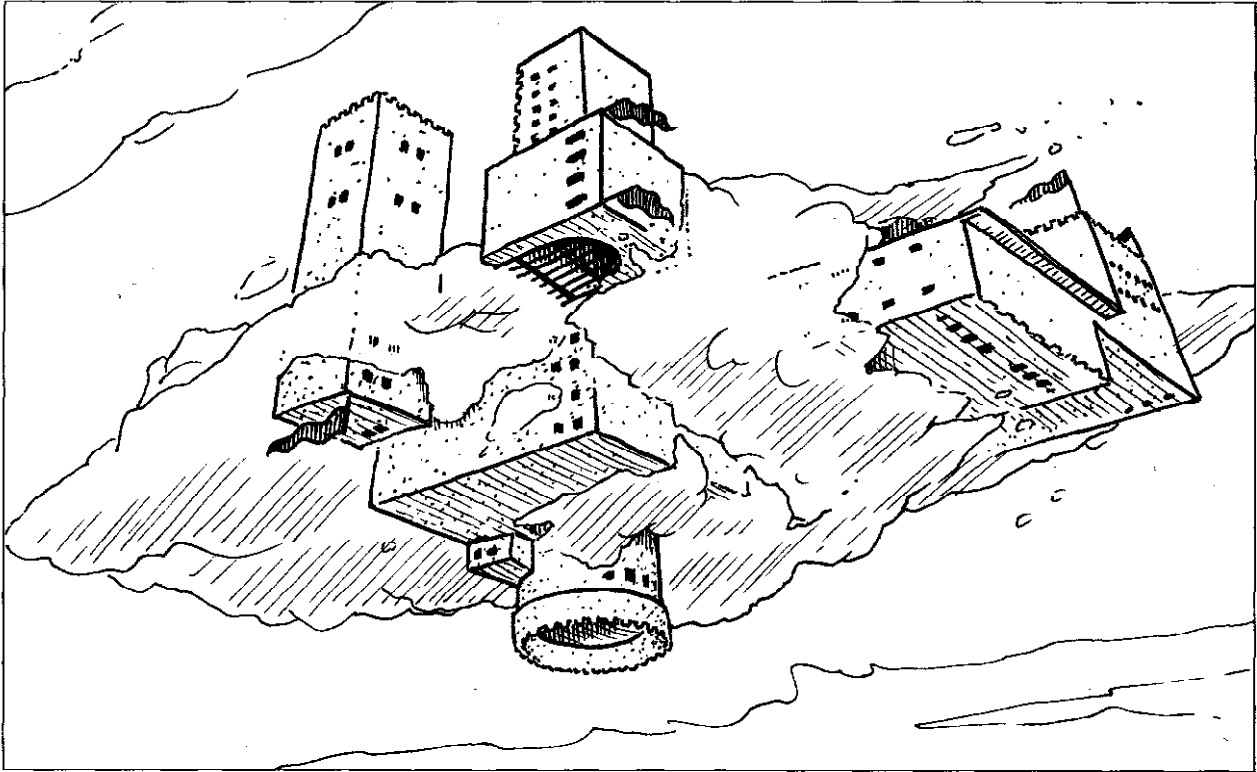
chas' utter astonishment, several of his fellow tribesmen spoke out in support of Abram. A few even openly questioned why Abram's bloodthirsty tactics weren't welcomed in the games in the first place.

Scared, Marchas felt he had only one recourse. Trying to appear unconcerned, he urged Abram to challenge his spot in the ordning, if that's what was on his mind. If Abram refused this invitation, Marchas felt the high priest would probably lose many of his supporters, allowing the vanguard an opportunity to rally the benign giants and devise plan for dealing with this new evil in their midst. Surprisingly though, Abram accepted the invitation and issued his challenge immediately.

Several days later, the high priest easily defeated the vanguard in one of the cloud giants' games, suddenly exhibiting skills he'd been unknown to possess. To the astonishment of the entire tribe, though, Abram refused to claim the vanguard's throne. Instead, he establish a sort of "separate but equal" ordning operating out of the same palace.

Now, there are two semiconnected societies inhabiting the palace that drifts across Toril's skies: one consisting of Marchas' benevolent giants, the other of Abram's marauders. To this day, Marchas and his followers still don't know what set Abram down his current path and turned their brothers against them. In fact, even Abram's disciples don't really understand their sudden shift in perspective—they just instantly knew in their hearts that Abram is a born leader who promises them a magnificent destiny

Whatever Abram is up to, it may involve dragons. Although the cloud giants are theoretically unable to steer their palace through the skies, each of the last eleven locations where the palace was moored have been home to an elder of dragonkind. In each of



these locations, Abram has secretly ventured forth to meet with the drake— far too coincidental an occurrence to be the result of pure chance.

### Cloud Palaces

Back in the days of Nicias, long before the cloud giants inhabited the aerie, they floated across Toril in an enormous cloud palace similar to those under the auspices of Abram and Marchas today. A smaller duplicate of the god's own domain, Nicias won this first cloud palace in a wager with the great god Stronmaus. The entire palace ultimately plummeted to the ground (its ruins are said to litter the Great Desert of Anau-roch), but not before cloud giant runecasters uncovered many of the secrets of its operation. Years later, runecasters working in the aerie discovered the last few secrets of the great rune that keeps the palace aloft.

The construction of a cloud palace is a tricky

affair that requires the cooperation of no less than a dozen cloud giants working in tandem. Together, they use their *levitation* ability to capture the cloud and force it to obey their movements. Once it is completely under their control, the giants force the cloud to descend upon a runecaster waiting upon the ground. In the caster's hand is a small leather bag containing a pebble inscribed with the rune that supplies the special magic necessary to solidify the cloud's surface. After the cloud has obscured the caster for a full 10 hours, the giants force it upward again. If the caster prepared his rune properly, he should now be standing atop the cloud and everything should be ready for the construction of the palace to begin (an entirely separate affair no simpler than building such a palace on the ground). All of the participants find this entire procedure incredibly taxing. The sheer force of will necessary to move an even empty cloud is





enormous.

Once the cloud has been properly solidified, the caster must take the leather bag and conceal it within the cloud's mists. Any tampering with the runed stone the bag contains might send the palace plummeting out of the sky. Note that the rune needed to power a cloud palace is by far the most complex that any of the Jotunbrud have ever uncovered—its shaping time is well over a year.

The inhabitants of a cloud palace have no control over its wanderings. It simply drifts on the winds along with the other clouds.

### **The Cloud Giant Ordning**

To the cloud giants, life is a series of obstacles to be overcome through the application of skill. Contrary to what many might believe, these obstacles are never to be met with sorrow, only joy. Each provides another opportunity to experience the thrill of victory, the ultimate reward. None of this is to imply that the cloud giants attach any sort of shame to defeat. Loss is nothing more than the absence of victory. All of these views date all the way back to Nicias, founder of the cloud giants, and his teachings.

Over the years, the cloud giants have built a complex etiquette around the ideas of victory and loss. Skilled winners should know how to share their victories with all. Losers must be gracious and humble. Contests should always be accompanied by an exchange of wagers. A contest without a wager is unfair to both parties: It denies the loser the glory of rewarding his better and denies the victor a trophy of his triumph. Part of what made Abram's behavior so shocking to the vanguard during their falling out was his callous disregard for many of these rules.

Needless to say, cloud giant ordning challenges always revolve around games. One's rank in the ordning is just another commod-

ity open to wagering. Although there have been some notable exceptions over the years (a pair of cloud giants once decided the high priesthood of the tribe with a simple game of lots), in general only the most elaborate and exquisite games are used to resolve ordning challenges.

### **Cloud Giant Contests**

Although the cloud giants were originally obsessed with very simple games like lots, quist (a card game developed by the dwarves), and wah-ree (an ancient game of abstract strategy said to have been developed by the gods themselves), over the years they have become addicted to much more exotic fare. Most of the games the cloud giants play today revolve around the lives of the creatures inhabit Faerûn—to the cloud giants, the so-called "lessers." (Their overpowering superiority complex is one of the true weaknesses in the cloud giant psychology.) As their cloud palace drifts over a new region, the cloud giants use complex scrying devices to keep an eye upon the region's inhabitants. Originally, they contented themselves with simple wagering over the course of action an individual creature might select under a given set of circumstances—the game simply measured each giant's ability to master the psychology of the lessers. Eventually, though, the cloud giants grew tired of simple prediction and began devising games based around actually manipulating their perceived inferiors down on Toril. One giant might bet another, for instance, that he could make a given woman fall in love with a selected man, or that he could force a popular king to abdicate his throne. Both giants use messengers, magic, and any other means of interference they can get their hands on to win their wagers. The only rule in such contest is that the lessers can never suspect that they are



being manipulated by a cloud giant. Any giant who clumsily tips his hand fouls and instantly forfeits the contest.

Although such games are obviously thoughtless and show nothing but contempt for the outsiders who become embroiled in them, the giants honestly don't intend any harm. Their tendency to look down upon lesser beings blinds them to the horrible consequences of their actions. With the relatively recent defection of Abram, however, Marchas, the cloud giant vanguard, is beginning to get the first glimmers of insight into the havoc the games sometimes wreak with the groundlings' lives. Abram's shocking willingness to inflict physical damage upon the lessers during his games started to remove the blinders from the vanguard's eyes. Lately, he has occasionally intervened in the games of others when he thought they were putting an undue stress upon the lessers they were wagering over.

#### Cloud Giant Statistics

Average Size: 24'  
Intelligence Range: 2d5+5  
Average Strength: 23  
Armor Class: 0  
Hit Dice: 16 + (1d6+1) hit points  
THAC0: 5  
No. of Attacks: 1  
Damage/Attack: 1d10 or by weapon +11  
Weapon Multiple: ×3  
Special Attacks: None  
Boulder Damage: 3d10  
Boulder Catch Chance: 55%  
Special Ability: Surprised only on 1





## Ice Spire Ogres

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Ice Spires, arctic
FREQUENCY: Uncommon
ORGANIZATION: Tribal
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any
DIET: Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE: Average
TREASURE: M (Q, B, S)
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil
NO. APPEARING: 2d10
ARMOR CLASS: 4
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT DICE: 5
THACO: 15
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1d12 (or weapon +6)
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Mist, blood dance
SPECIAL DEFENSES: None
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil
SIZE: L (10')
MORALE: Elite (13-14)
XP VALUE: 420
Leader 975
Priest 1400



Ice Spire ogres are bigger, smarter, and generally more dangerous than their more common cousins found elsewhere in Faerûn. Spire ogres are approximately 10' tall and weigh between 500 and 600 pounds. Their skin color ranges from yellow to black-brown, their hair is dirty gray, and their eyes gleam purple. The odor of Spire ogres is even more repellent than that of their common cousins, smelling something akin to rotting flesh.

**Combat:** The ogres of the Spire are highly disciplined combatants capable of implementing a wide variety of combined maneuvers when fighting in large groups. Their powerful limbs give them +2 attack bonuses and damage bonuses of +6. Any group of 11 or more ogres includes a leader who receives a +3 attack

bonus. Groups of 16 or more include a chieftain with a +4 attack bonus. Female ogres fight as males, but inflict only 2d4 points of damage and receive a maximum of 6 hit points per Hit Die. Young ogres fight as goblins.

Also, the ogres of the Spires are incredibly well adapted to their icy environment. When operating in this environment, they receive a +2 bonus to their surprise rolls. Spire ogres also have a 30% chance to move silently when operating in their native lands.

**Habitat/Society:** Most of the Spire ogres inhabit a vast cave network located high in the mountains. Access to the caves is gained via a complex series of stairs and stepladders built for maximum flexibility in defending the complex from outside incursion. Permeating the caves themselves is a thick, choking mist that





causes nausea in all who are unused to its effects (save successfully vs. poison or fight at -3 for 1d3 turns) and limits visibility throughout the complex. The ogres who live in the caves are particularly adept at ducking in and out of the mists to surprise invaders (+4 bonus to surprise rolls while operating in the caves and a 50% chance to move silently or hide in shadows).

The ogres that inhabit the cave network are followers of Vaprak the Destroyer, the great ogre god. As such, they are aggressive and fond of combat. From time to time they ritualistically bash each other with clubs to establish their might and sort out the social hierarchy.

Another tribe of ogres found in the Ice Spires inhabits an icy chasm known as the Dour Fissure. At Baphomet's bidding, they occasionally enter into a trance state and carve hideous friezes outside the fissure to ward away intruders. Anyone staring at these friezes for more than three rounds is affected as though the target of a confusion spell. Anyone making any sort of detailed investigation of the friezes must save successfully vs. spell or undergo a subtle shift to the chaotic evil alignment for a period of 1d4 days. The influence of Baphomet has taken a powerful toll on these ogres in many other ways. Many of them are incapable of any action save fighting and eating, spending their time in a frightening, lethargic trance state.

One strange custom of all Spire ogre shamans is to completely consume the body of any creature they kill in combat. The ogres believe that this gives the shaman control over the creature's spirit.

**Blood Dance:** From time to time, under Baphomet's influence, the ogres of the Fissure enter into a state of killing frenzy known as the

Blood Dance. While in this strange state of fury, the ogres receive a +2 bonus to all attack and damage rolls, but always keep fighting until they are dead or their rage is quenched. While under the influence of the Dance, an ogre does not stop fighting until it has reached -10 hit points (though it sustains enough damage to die when it reaches 0 hit points).

Once the dance begins, it generally lasts for 2d10 turns. Even the ogres find it impossible to predict when the dance will strike.

**Ogre Shaman:** If six or more ogres are encountered, they are accompanied by a shaman with the Hit Dice, AC, damage/attack, etc. of a normal ogre, but all the abilities of a 3rd-level priest as well. If 16 or more ogres are encountered they are accompanied by an ogre shaman of the 5th level.

**Ogre Chieftain:** If 16 or more ogres are encountered, they will be led by an ogre chieftain. The chieftain is a 9-Hit-Die monster with an Armor Class of 3. He inflicts 2d8 + 7 points of damage per attack, +7 with weapon.



## Krotter

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Ice Spires, arctic

FREQUENCY: Uncommon

ORGANIZATION: Herd

ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any

DIET: Herbivore

INTELLIGENCE: Animal (1)

TREASURE: None

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

NO. APPEARING: 4d10

ARMOR CLASS: 3

MOVEMENT 6

HIT DICE: 4

THACO: 17

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1d4/1d4/1-3

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Stampede

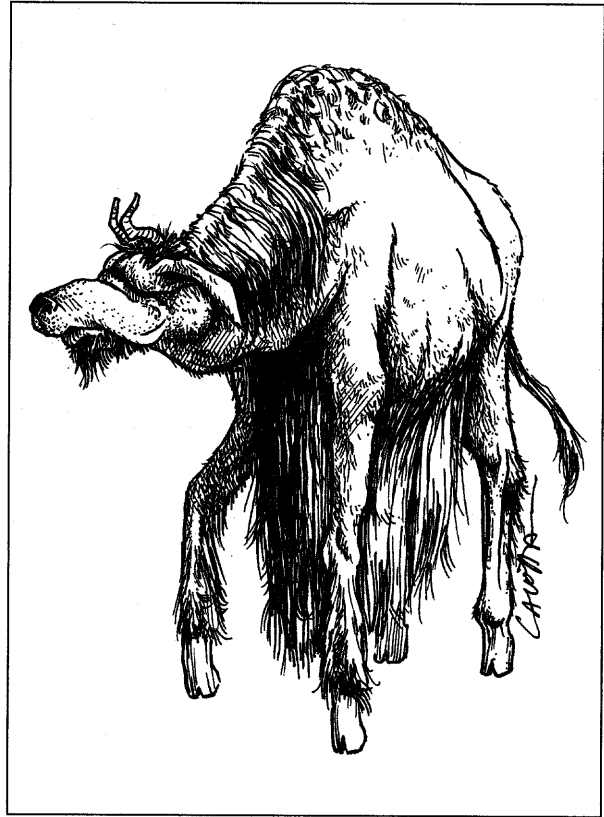
SPECIAL DEFENSES: None

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil

SIZE: L (6' at shoulder)

MORALE: Average (10)

XI' VALUE: 80



Krotter are heavy, well muscled herd animals resembling large yaks. They sport thick, stringy fur that hangs down off their bodies so far that it nearly touches the ground. Atop their heads are two small, jagged antlers (useless in combat), their hooves are cloven and smaller than one might expect, and their backs are sharply humped. Krotter's eyes are thin and tucked within several layers of fat to protect them from the snow glare and the blowing debris during snowstorms.

Most krotter are a dirty ivory color, though some are brown, black, even dull red. Whenever their herds pass an obviously living creature they all emit a characteristic high pitched whine in series (each krotter whining as it spots the creature) as a warning. Other than these few outbursts, the creatures are generally totally silent save for the occasional grunt or snort.

**Combat:** Although their bodies are adapted to blistering arctic temperatures and therefore armored in thick hide and fat, krotter are poorly adapted to combat. If threatened the beasts can do little more than kick at their foes with their powerful forelimbs and attempt an occasional bite with their strong, pulling jaws. Given enough space, a krotter might charge an opponent, increasing its movement rate to 12 and doubling its kick damage, but the beasts' incredible bulk makes it impossible for them to perform this maneuver more than once.

Although krotter are not particularly intelligent, they do have a sort of strange instinct that protects them against the kinds of attacks commonly employed against them by the predators who try to trap or kill them. Pack hunting tactics, snare and lure techniques, and common



herding tactics typically fail to snare them.

The one real danger krotter pose lies in their thundering stampedes. Any time one of the beasts suffers damage in combat, there is a 25% chance of triggering a stampede. During such these mad rushes, the creatures instinctively herd together and thunder in the general direction of their nearest adversary. Unless the target can outrun the herd (the krotter's movement jumps to 15 during a stampede), it is automatically hit and truck for 2d10 points of damage (successful save vs. breath weapon cuts damage in half), provided the herd consists of 12 or more animals. Smaller herds inflict only 1d12 points of damage. After a stampeding herd runs roughshod over its target, it generally keeps running until it reaches safety, never turning around to attack again.

**Habitat/Society:** Although they are remarkably stupid beasts in almost all other respects, krotter have the aforementioned abilities to warn each other in times of potential crisis and avoid common traps.

Krotter survive by locating the scant vegetation capable of surviving in the arctic environment. In fact, travelers who find themselves lost amidst snow storms often follow any stray krotter they stumble across, knowing the beasts will eventually lead them back to a landmark.

Unlike other forms of cattle, krotter do not battle for dominance amongst themselves. In fact, at times, the creatures are remarkably cooperative. At night, they sleep standing up in tight clusters to conserve body warmth and provide additional protection.

Krotter reproduce and grow at an almost incredible rate. Nearly every cow in a typical herd gives birth to single calf almost every year, and these calves grow to almost half their final size by the end of that year – yet another adaptation necessary for survival in harsh arctic environments.

**Ecology:** Although the taste of their flesh is perhaps below human standards (though many humans eat it), krotter are herded and tendered by a wide variety of arctic cultures, among them almost all of the various Jotunbrud tribes of the Ice Spires. In fact, the large krotter herds that roam through the valley between the Ice Spires are so important to the various giant settlements in the region that the giant population tends to vary in perfect proportion with that of the krotter. Any disease or other calamity that runs through the herds is ultimately reflected in dead giants back at the steadings.

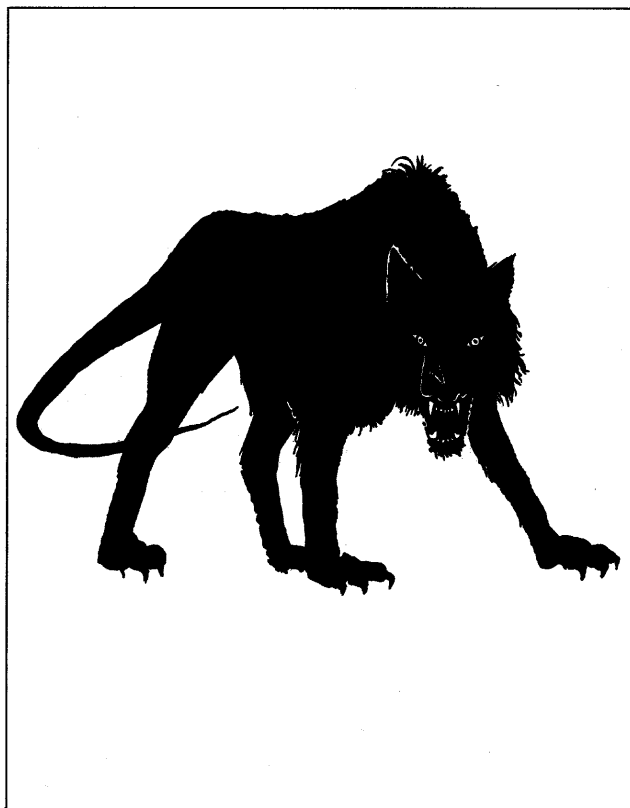
Most of the races that tend krotter herds also craft parkas, tents, and other cold weather gear from their thick hides. Similarly, krotter fat makes an ideal fuel for lamps and campfires.





## Shadowhounds

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Ice Spire/Abyss  
FREQUENCY: Very rare  
ORGANIZATION: Pack  
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any  
DIET: Special  
INTELLIGENCE: Low (5-7)  
TREASURE: None  
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil  
NO. APPEARING: 2d4  
ARMOR CLASS: 3  
MOVEMENT: 16  
HIT DICE: 3  
THACO: 17  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1  
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1d8  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Fear  
SPECIAL DEFENSES: +1 or better weapon to hit  
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 5%  
SIZE: M  
MORALE: Elite (14)  
XP VALUE: 270



Like hell hounds, shadowhounds are fierce canines from another plane of existence sent to the Prime Material Plane in the service of evil beings. The difference between the two breeds is that hell hounds are native to Ba'ator and serve the baatezu, while shadowhounds are native to the Abyss and serve the tanar'ri.

Shadowhounds resemble large, black dogs with long, whipping tails and razor sharp teeth. No individual details are visible on their bodies; they seem to exist only as murky silhouettes. As they move, the hideous canines seem to glide over the terrain without making the slightest sound (-5 to opponents' surprise rolls). In fact, even when agitated or injured, they are always completely silent.

**Combat:** Like hell hounds, shadowhounds are clever hunters that like to operate in large packs. Totally incorporeal to the touch, the dogs are

incapable of physically biting their targets, but anyone who comes into contact with their shadowy form feels an icy chill and suffers 1d8 points of damage.

The dogs' most vicious attack form, however, is their natural ability to induce *fear* in everyone within 30 feet except their master (normal saving throws apply). Typically, the hounds invoke this ability to send their target running and screaming, then bolt after him and take him on the run.

Shadowhounds enjoy a number of special defenses: They are immune to *fear* themselves, take only half damage from electricity and fire, and aren't susceptible to any sort of *charm monster* spell or ability.

**Habitat/Society:** Shadowhounds are native to the Abyss, where they like to roam cold, subter-



anean passageways looking for easy prey. Many powerful tanar'ri lords keep huge kennels of shadowhounds in their palaces and dispatch the beasts to their human followers on the Prime Material Plane. Baphomet has sent a large pack of shadowhounds to the ogres of the Ice Spires. Graz'zt keeps a kennel of them in his palace for hunts in Zrintor, the Viper Forest.

Incorporeal, shadowhounds are not capable of eating actual meat. Instead, they feed off the fear of their victims by chilling them with their shadowy touch.

Approximately 15% of all Shadowhounds encountered in the Abyss will be accompanied by 1d4 young. Born in litters of 2d4 with the weakest half of the litter always immediately consumed by the stronger half, shadowhound young have 1 Hit Die and inflict only 1d4 points of damage per touch, but grow to full size in less than a year.

**Ecology:** In the Abyss, shadowhounds serve to quickly remove trespassers from undesirable areas (such as the approaches to a tanar'ri lord's palace). Because of their ferocious nature, unparalleled loyalty, and ability to easily surprise intruders, they make excellent watch dogs.

Shadowhounds are remarkably easy to domesticate. Generally, they tend to naturally latch on to a master (always of chaotic evil alignment) from whom they will gladly accept any reasonable orders until one of three conditions is met: they die, their master dies, or they stumble across a more powerful or more evil patron (at which point, they switch alliances).

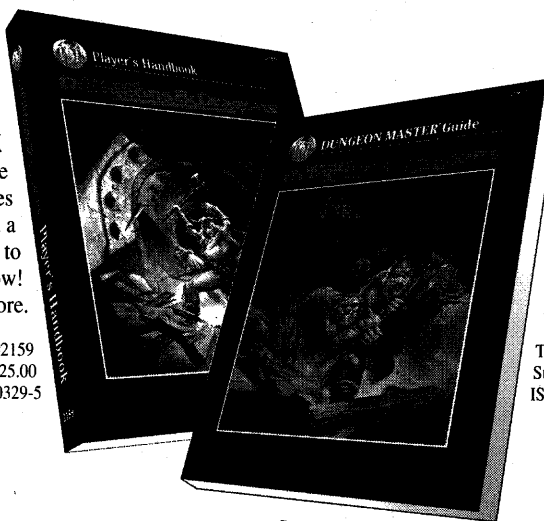
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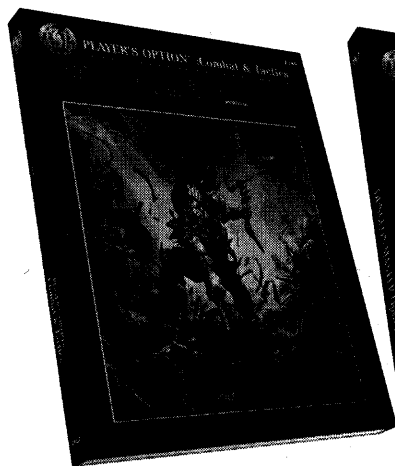
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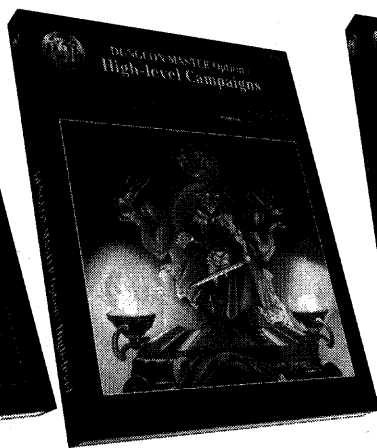
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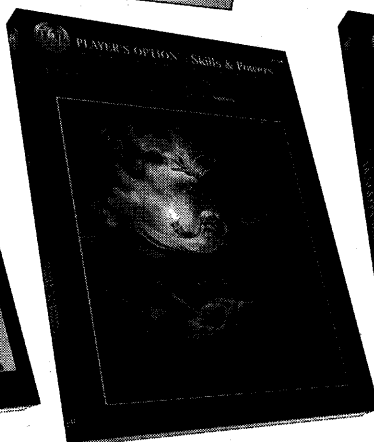
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# GIANTCRAFT

by Ray Winninger with Troy Denning and Jeff Grubb

*As Kiruna reached the mouth of the cavern, she realized the heat was emanating from two towering braziers, one on either side of the entrance. Deep gouges—now she could see they were runes, of ancient origin—ringed their bases and rims, their lines and curves carved by instruments far larger than any she could wield.*

*Her eyes adjusted slowly to the darkness within the stone giants' home. On the walls she could make out stunning friezes and portraits, all carved in bas-relief with artistry like none she had seen back home in Shadowdale. Kiruna stood for a moment, gazing on these immense figures and faces, her reverie broken only by the realization that she was shivering; no, not shivering, but being shaken. The floor was quivering, and, echoing in the depths of the darkness, footsteps approached. . . .*

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