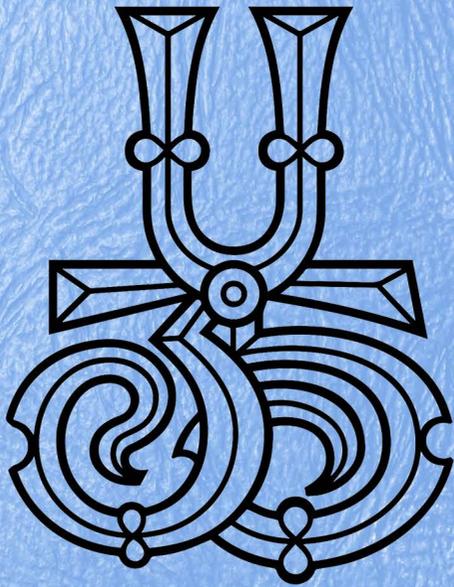


**PAX BRITANNIA**



**THE BOOK OF LORE**



# CHAPTER I

## HISTORY



Under the direction of Lord British, scholars have recently discovered evidence of the oldest Sosarian settlements dating back some 700 millennia from the present day. What little remains of this ancient civilization would seem to indicate a similar level of advancement to modern society. But research indicates that this ancient race, along with all life on the planet, was destroyed in a single cataclysmic event; the cause of which cannot yet be determined.

In time civilization returned to Sosaria culminating in the founding of the Cult of Truth some 3,000 years ago. Although few records survive from this period, it is recorded that the island of Ambrosia was battered to pieces by rocks from the sky. Long thought destroyed, it is now known to have survived, but it remains inaccessible to all but the most persistent traveler.

Not long after the humans drove the cyclops race into the underworld, Wolfgang, future King of Akalabeth, was born. Some 15 years later, the young man who would become Lord British arrived in Sosaria and was befriended by Shamino. It was around this time that Wolfgang's second son, Mondain, slew his father and corrupted the Sun Ruby Gem into the black Gem of Immortality. Neither the name nor the fate of the first son is recorded.

Mondain began experiments among his own followers, forming hybrid creatures such as minotaurs, goblins and lizardmen, but was driven by Lord British from his corner of Sosaria. It was in recognition of this act that Lord British was ennobled. Thereafter he recruited heroes who aspired to the title of knight to rid the realm



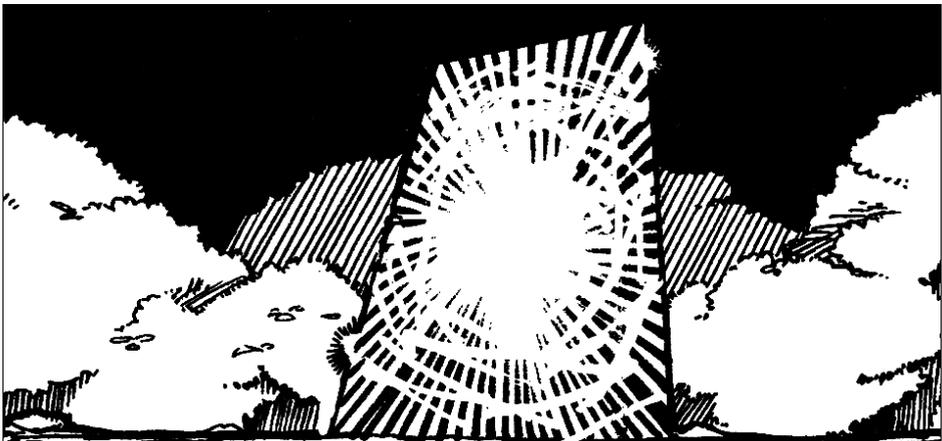
of monsters. However, the depredations of Mondain put the study of the arcane arts into low esteem and various Lords of Sosaria outlawed the practice of magic.

Over the next eleven years, Shamino became ruler of his own kingdom in the Lands of Danger and Despair and the presence of sea monsters was confirmed as the frigate *Pembroke* was sunk by one in plain sight of a small armada. Seeking allies to continue his fight against the eight Lords of Sosaria, Mondain recruited help from star walking monsters of unparalleled savagery, and at the end of this period took Minax as an apprentice. While still young, Minax became Mondain's consort and Exodus was conceived.

At the beginning of the period known as the First Age of Darkness, the Stranger appeared in Sosaria for the first time, entering through the moongate known as the Siege Perilous. Using a time machine, the stranger stepped outside of natural time and penetrated Mondain's stronghold. In the ensuing battle, Mondain was slain and his Gem of Immortality destroyed, and its shards scattered.

The release of magic at Mondain's death caused great upheaval, rending time and space, and three quarters of the world disappeared. But as Ambrosia was once thought destroyed, scholars speculate that it may yet be possible to reach these lost lands.

Some ten years later, Minax, now grown, began her plans by traveling through the time doors that had appeared following the death of Mondain to reach the era outside time known as the Time of Legends. Again, the Stranger appeared and defeated Minax in her castle Shadowguard, thus ending the Second Age of Darkness.



Manuscript fragments found in the wreckage of castle Shadowguard revealed that Minax and Mondain had been lovers, and produced an offspring, but little more.

Twenty years after Minax's defeat, the Isle of Fire rose from the sea as molten lava spewing from underwater volcanoes while monsters began attacking Sosarian settlements and a pirate fleet appeared at sea, sweeping all other ships of commerce before it. Exodus summoned the Great Earth Serpent from its home in the Ethereal Void to take position at the harbor entrance of the Isle of Fire and a ship was found sailing abandoned, devoid of crew, with the word Exodus scrawled in blood on its deck.



In this Third Age of Darkness, Lord British commissioned several people to map out the land in preparation for whatever evil onslaught Exodus was preparing. Among them, Hawkwind the cartographer discovered the functioning of the moongates but was attacked and gravely wounded outside Castle Britannia before he could communicate the knowledge. Shamino returned from his mission of mapping the interior of the Castle of Fire, on the Isle of Fire, but the experience had rendered him temporarily insane.

Around the time of the rediscovery of the lost island of Ambrosia, the Stranger once again appeared in Sosaria, recruiting three local adventurers for aid. After consulting with the Time Lord, they destroyed Exodus in his castle. This triggered a violent set of cataclysms that rearranged much of the land, destroying several cities in the process. The final forces of evil were defeated in a vast battle on the Bloody Plains. Thousands of soldiers died on both sides in the conflict.



## CHAPTER II

### GEOGRAPHY



The reshaping of the world that followed the destruction of Exodus is not yet complete. The worst of the tremors have subsided and travel is once again possible but the lay of the land is unknown. With the exception of the City of Britain, only the smaller settlements that cannot readily defend themselves pledge fealty to Lord British.

Though not openly at war, the self-governing towns and cities are often in conflict with each other over scarce resources or through the resumption of ancient rivalries. There follows a description of the principal settlements of Sosaria.

**Britannia.** The last of the ancient castles of Sosaria remaining standing, in recent times Lord British's castle has been extensively rebuilt. Once a week, Lord British gives public audiences where everyone can bring his or her matters before the ruler, as long as he or she waits in the line. Two major sights within the keep are the great hall, where feasts and celebrations are held; and the throne room, where Lord British holds audiences. Castle Britannia is also the symbol of Truth.

**Britain.** A very old settlement, tracing its origins to the city of Akalabeth, during the early days of Lord British's ascent to power after arriving in Sosaria. It has grown over the ages, expanding from a simple town to become today's City of Compassion. It is famous for its Bards, who can regularly be found on the public green, educating and amusing the city's children. Under the protection of Lord British, the city has developed a thriving trade and become a major port.

**Magincia.** The recently founded city has grown rapidly into a thriving merchant community, the envy of all Sosaria. It is an opulent and decadent city of vast gardens and marble palaces, from which it has become known as the City of Pride. The availability of wealthy patrons has made this a home to many Alchemists, who can be found attempting to turn base metals into gold or create the elixir of life. Although it has been noted that their true skill may be more of a mixture of magic and deceit.

**Moon.** With the demise of Exodus, the ancient city of Grey disappeared beneath the sea, but neighboring Moon was saved by the combined efforts of its numerous specialists in the mystic arts. Foremost among its practitioners of magic are the Illusionists who lend it the name City of Illusion. Moon has a reputation as a place of virtue and dedication to the battle against evil, but is also known for the many mystics within the city who freely give advice on occult matters to travelers.

**Yew.** Once home to the holy Circle of Light, Yew is now more famous as the City of Justice. In addition to the criminal cases of Yew, the newly formed court will adjudicate in disputes where both parties agree to be bound by its ruling. Surrounded by woodland, the city is home to many of the realm's Druids, but also attracts rangers and clerics.

**Jhelom.** In earlier times, the town of Jhelom was known mainly for its mead. Today it is the Town of Valor, a stomping ground for Fighters, warriors and mercenaries. It is a bit of a wild location as a result, with duels often undertaken as a means of conflict resolution. Due to its focus on the arts of war, it has a thriving arms and armour trade, in addition to hosting an array of trainers and a thriving hospitality industry, which caters to the often transient brawlers who are attracted to the town.

**Minoc.** Due to the harsh mountainous environment in which it was recently founded, this settlement is known as the Town of Sacrifice. The town came about as a result of the desire of its craftsmen, tinkers, and artisans to be closer to the source of the raw material for their trades. Following a short-lived gold rush that drew fortune seekers from the four corners of Sosaria, the town is now struggling to cope with the large number of miners and others who have fallen on hard times.

**Skara Brae.** This recently founded town is home to a few modest merchants and the occasional fisherman, in addition to the Rangers for which it is famed. Known as the Town of Spirituality, it also has a reputation for being a town of spirits, perhaps from some earlier settlement, and numerous hauntings have been reported.

**Trinsic.** Once known only for its strong ale, Trinsic is now chiefly famed for its Paladins who call it the Town of Honor. As a settlement with a strong martial tradition, Trinsic is home to arms and weapons dealers of all kinds with a great selection of goods, as well as attracting shipwrights and sailors, given its position as a port town.

**Buccaneer's Den.** When what was left of the pirate armada finally washed up ashore, they founded this secluded settlement. A well-known haven for the pirates and criminals of the realm, it is home to the notorious Guild of Thieves. Given its lawless culture, the remote Village of Deceit has a significant black market catering to those in search of exotic or illegal goods, and a canny adventurer can often find rare and useful items here, if they know where to look.

**Cove.** An obscure retreat, hidden away in the mountains and difficult to reach, Cove is a place of mysticism and romance, home to lovers and passion, earning it the title Village of Love. A haven for mystics and philosophers, and a place of contemplation and healing, many a weary traveler has found respite within its temple.

**Paws.** This village is all that remains of the ancient City of Magic. Once known for its magical waters which often gifted those casting coins into them with boons of wealth or magic, today it is still known for its Mages, but less so than for its horses. It is one of the only locales in the realm with animals for sale, in addition to being home to the legendary talking stallion Smith.

**Vesper.** It may be considered unusual for a village of this size to be fortified, unless one is aware that this is the resting place of The Ancient Liturgy of Truth. Here in the Village of Faith, Clerics and related professions may study this tome. Offering a safe haven for travelers, it is also home to refugees from the destroyed cities. It even tolerates a branch of the Guild of Thieves, and a number of colorful characters can be found lurking amidst its dark alleyways.

**Fawn.** The once great City of Beauty lies scarred beyond recognition. The major structures remain, but the citizens who have not fled the settlement are divided between those who would rebuild the city in its former image and those who would abandon the ruins and build an even greater city anew. The wondrous Oracle of Fawn is missing, presumed destroyed, but the priests remain. Trade continues and travelers may still find rest, provisions, and healing among the ruins. The Guild of Thieves also remains active.

**Montor.** Once a single settlement, Montor was divided when a river's course altered to run through this City of Courage. In the tempest following the death of Exodus the 'Twin Brothers of Strength' were reunited in a terrible earthquake that utterly destroyed the more recent buildings, leaving only the older eastern part of Montor West

and western part of Montor East standing. Noted for its martial tradition, Montor housed numerous armouries and weapon smiths, some of whom are still trading, and it remains home to many Barbarians.



## CHAPTER III

### PROFESSIONS



Each of the eleven major professions can be found in any of the cities, towns, and villages, though they each have their own settlement where they can be found in larger numbers.

**Fighter.** As one approaches Jhelom, the home of Sosaria's fighters, the clang of steel and the cry of men-at-arms perfecting their trade become unmistakable. These fighting men, the finest in Sosaria, can be found throughout the land, in the employ of some noble lord, or perhaps engaged in an adventure on their own right. The fighters of Sosaria are masters in the art of armed combat, and can competently wield any of the arms forged throughout the land. Years of training have strengthened their bodies to such a degree that no armour is beyond their abilities, and the wise, or at least wealthy, warrior chooses sturdy chain or plate to protect himself when danger is present. Confident in their abilities and arms, some warriors choose to forsake magical enchantments altogether. They make a fitting companion for any adventure into the far-flung realms of Sosaria.



**Cleric.** A profession suited to those who are of an introspective nature, the study of the ways of the cleric requires patience and

results in a good deal of wisdom. Such is their calm and concentration that at no time will the proper spell cast by a cleric fail to attain its desired result.

**Mage.** The magi of Sosaria are known for their powerful spells and mesmerizing enchantments. Gathering in Paws, there they study the ancient scrolls and arcane knowledge of the land. Despite their erudite nature and frail frame compared to many stouter citizens of Sosaria, the mage makes a powerful traveling companion and a dangerous adversary. With little need for heavy armour or weapons to protect them from the dangers of the land, most mages choose to cloak themselves in simple cloth armour, and carry a staff, dagger, or sling, although some have been known to carry more resilient fare when danger is expected. Some have even been known to carry powerful magical enchantments woven into their equipment. The primary weapon of the mage, of course, is magic. The most powerful mages have been known to bind enchantments, which can cause the very earth itself to move.



**Thief.** Whilst not a profession held in the highest esteem among those charged with maintaining the public order, thieving is a trade that often serves the adventurer well. Many of the explorer's finds are guarded by clever and devious traps that require nimble fingers and a dexterous hand. Larceny and the opening of locks comes much easier for the thief than for other mortals, for they who follow this occupation are endowed with exceptional agility.

**Paladin.** These noble warriors hail from Trinsic. Their sworn oath can be taken at great value. Their deep beliefs in the value of good lend strength to their magic, which they wield with a certain flair. Paladins have a very strict code that they live by. They value this code above all things, including their own life. Paladins never steal or start petty squabbles. Because a paladin is so skilled and trustworthy, they are respected by everyone, and doubted by no one. They make a powerful and trustworthy companion on even the most perilous journey. Years of training in



arms have allowed the paladins to become proficient in most forms of combat, and they can masterfully wield even the heaviest halberd or two-handed sword. As well, no form of armour is too unwieldy for these honorable warriors. Their strong faith lends power to their magic, and they are unafraid of trusting themselves to enchanted arms or armour.

**Barbarian.** These cunning but primitive warriors can be found in the area surrounding Montor. They can use any weapon, but scorn armour heavier than leather. They also know a thing or two about avoiding traps and thievery.



**Bard.** The bards of Britain are known for their entertaining tales and wonderful ballads, but are also unopposed to performing deeds of valor and daring on their own right. Found throughout the land, they are often encountered in a pub or royal court, where they might entertain with a well-strung lute. They spend countless hours devoted to enlightening the souls of those who would hear their tales. The weapon of choice for bards has long been the sling or bow, although

many a fine bard employs the crossbow. The armour choice of those who follow the way of the bard has long been leather, for the harsh clang of metal offends their sensitive ears; although, many have been willing to make more practical choices when the situation requires. Their profession requires that they be skilled in almost every trade imaginable including, but not demanding: singing, playing musical instruments, fighting, and even casting spells. They make a fine companion on a long journey.

**Illusionist.** Hailing from Moon, these somewhat odd casters study the theifly arts and clerical magic as well, although they are not as powerful as fully trained clerics. Like druids, they are limited to wielding a mace and wearing cloth armour at best.



**Druid.** Making their homes within the Deep Forest of Sosaria, the mystic druids call the City of Yew their own. They can frequently be found in deep meditation amongst their sacred oak groves, which they defend fiercely from all who would



harm the forest they protect. The druids' knowledge of natural lore is without peer, and their understanding of medicinal herbs and the habits of Sosaria's wildlife makes them a boon companion. This, along with their powerful mystic arts and knowledge of the arcane, makes them a valuable asset in any adventure. The druids fight with an assortment of weapons, although they often prefer to wield different types of bows,

carved from the trees they carefully nurture. In close combat, many prefer a stout oak staff or heavy mace. The druids tend to shun works of metal, preferring well crafted leather armour, for they believe in retaining a close communication with nature; although, some have been willing to put aside their convictions to further a greater cause.

**Alchemist.** Hailing from Magincia, these dabblers in sorcery's skill is about half that of other mages. They also have a tendency towards skulduggery, but not to such a great degree as the thief.



**Ranger.** Venturing far from their retreat in Skara Brae, Rangers are found throughout the realm. They are well-versed in woods lore, and are known to fiercely protect whatever forest they call home, but also make an ideal companion in any excursion to the far off reaches of the land. Their Spirituality gives them mystical strength, making them proficient magic users. The solemn rangers of Britannia are skilled in the use of most kinds of weapons, and their familiarity in the ways

of magic leave them unafraid of employing arms and armour bound with magical enchantment. Many choose to limit their protection to nothing heavier than leather armour, for the bright gleam of sunlight off a polished helm, or the harsh clang of chain in a silent forest oft gives away their position. Despite these disadvantages, some rangers have chosen to employ hardier armour for protecting their bodies.

## CHAPTER IV

### SHOPS



What would the economy be without shops? Here, the traveler, adventurer or simple citizen can buy almost anything he or she wants. Weapons, armour, equipment or simply food, there is nothing that cannot be bought from the merchants of Sosaria.

**Apothecary.** It is the shrewd apothecary who mixes strange chemicals and produces the formulas to create potions. These occult apothecaries are quite interesting to visit. Their oddly decorated shelves are often strewn with vials of strangely colored potions, queerly glowing staves and scepters, and a cornucopia of herbal and mineral reagents useful in the mage's work.



**Armoury.** Sosaria's armouries are a key factor in the security and prosperity of the land. Providing both armour for the valiant, and employment for armourers, these shops offer high quality armour of many types. Most armouries will consider buying used equipment, as they recognize the likelihood that one will then need new. The prices they will pay vary, but expect not nearly full value, as they must make a profit on resale.

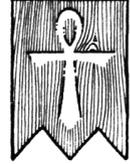
**Grocery.** Meals purchased at markets or in restaurants are often delicious and comfortably filling, but will not sustain travelers long on the road. Most markets offer travelers packs of rations in quantity. Prices vary greatly from town to town.





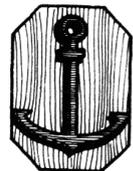
**Guild Shop.** There is no end to the number of odd things that a traveler or adventurer may find in need of, and the one place where nearly all of these might be found for sale is the local Guild Shop. They provide professional adventurers with many of the things they need for journeys into the wilderness and deep dungeons; such items as lock picks, various kinds of glasses for seeing what the naked eye cannot, equipment for working clandestinely in the dark, and the like.

**Healer.** Healers have shops in many towns and villages, and in some cities. The vast wildernesses of Sosaria, though rich in beauty, also hold hidden dangers capable of causing travelers' injury or illness. Bold knights frequently incur serious wounds. Poison and plague also take their toll. Fortunately, medicine is advanced in the treatment of just these problems. Healers can turn back the ravages of swamp poison. While it is hard to say any price is unfair for saving a life, some healers are known for their reasonable prices and others are not. Skara Brae's healer has been known to heal even those who cannot pay at all. Few health problems are beyond the ken of the healers, whether disease, wounds, or poison. Some healers are even experimenting with the concept of resurrection. There have rumbled persistent rumors of magical resurrection techniques being used by extremely adept mages within close knit, secret groups. There is still some controversy over whether such techniques should be pursued, but Lord British is known to have supported the research at every turn.



**Inn.** Inns are a source of pride for several Sosarian towns and villages. Inns provide safe, restful accommodations where travelers can retreat after a long, hard day. Many inns even offer fine dining facilities on-site. Prices will vary from place to place, but even the most inexpensive inn is a welcome home away from home for the weary adventurer. They are comfortable and reasonable and usually provide a good, healing night's rest. The inn in the island city of Skara Brae even boasts a magnificent view. Most inns also provide for long stays. If a party member has a long-term need for lodging, the party can rent a room by the month and pick up the friend at a later date.

**Shipwright.** Several of the port towns along the shores of Sosaria boast of craftsmen renowned for their dedication to the construction of safe, dependable sea vessels: The Shipwrights. When one needs a



mighty sailing vessel for open sea travel, the local shipwrights will be more than happy to discuss terms. Since shipbuilders are usually busy building ships, their trading hours are often short and sporadic. When the shipwright is in town, one can buy frigates, which are very expensive. It is wise to pay attention to information about local sea and wind conditions before setting out in a new craft. A shipwright will also sell the ship owner a sextant.

**Stables.** The seasoned traveler understands how valuable a steed can be on lengthy and treacherous journeys. Stables are usually found in smaller towns and villages, or at private residences where the owners may be willing to offer you a fine horse at a fair price.



Stables are not found in many cities. Most stables deal in strong plough horses, rugged mountain horses, swift steppes horses, and a few even have Valorian steeds, which are most excellent war-horses. All horses carry full supplies for the well-equipped rider.



**Tavern.** Taverns (also known as pubs and public houses) are establishments where patrons gather to socialize and to partake of alcoholic beverages, and in some cases prepared foods. Such establishments have been a presence since the earliest days of Sosaria, and have long served as avenues for storytelling, gossip, and good company. The earliest taverns, commonly

called pubs, catered only to those in search of strong drink. These older establishments often proved a font of information for those with loose purse strings, and numerous barkeeps would let slip important and interesting pieces of information if tipped handsomely enough. Such clues could prove invaluable in the wild world of early Sosaria, as danger then was omnipresent and knowledge a particularly precious tool for survival.

**Weapons Shop.** Here one may purchase the finest weaponry that blacksmiths can forge. Depending on the skills of the local artisans, a shop might offer a range of weapons. The weapon shops also offer liberal trade-ins on used equipment, although if thy axe is greatly notched from battle, do not expect much for it.





## CHAPTER V

### TRAVEL



When traveling through the lands, it is very important for the adventurer to know the terrain. Each terrain has different advantages and problems; each hinders the traveler in a different way and has its own dangers. Therefore here is an overview of the forms of terrain found in the lands.

**Grassland.** Vast grasslands pose little to no hindrance or threat to the adventurer. Dangers are far and few between and early to see. Grasslands are often home to herds of wild horses, sheep and cows, who use these lands to still their hunger. Often, huge stretches of farmland cover this type of terrain.

**Brush.** The vegetation of the brush is much denser than that of the grassland. The grass here is often as high as half a man (sometimes even higher) and low scrub growth and bushes add to the terrain, making travel through it more difficult, slowing down the adventurer. If it is possible, the brush should be avoided so that the goal can be reached with no loss of time. The brush makes it more difficult to spot foes, and it is home to the smaller wildlife and beasts that can prove troublesome, like foxes, gremlins and tangle vines. Thus, caution is the best advice to follow when moving through the brush.

**Forest.** Unlike the grassland and the brush with the occasional, or small group of trees, a forest covers big areas with dense growth of tall trees. While beautiful looking, it has its drawbacks. This density of the growth not only seriously hinders visibility, but also slows down the adventurer a lot. Travel through the wood therefore should be avoided, if possible, especially because of the dangers that lurk within. Aggressive reapers like to camouflage themselves as harmless trees until striking. Mongbats, bears, wolves and headless also call the forest their home, and react aggressively towards intruders. At least one peaceful inhabitant, the so-called 'king of the forests', is the deer, but even these normally docile creatures will fight back if attacked.

**Swamp.** Swamp areas are very dangerous. The muddy and soft ground slows down the adventurer seriously, while the muddy, contaminated water is infested with small vermin that can infect the traveler with the worst diseases and poisons, and can only be held back by wearing swamp boots. The deeper water pits are completely impassable. As if that isn't bad enough, swamps are home to a number of dangerous wildlife and monsters. Alligators, greer plants, insect swarms, slime, rotworms and corpses are frighteningly common around swamps. Thus avoid the swamp, if possible.

**Mountains.** Hills and mountains are obstacles in themselves. Hills merely slow down the adventurer, while mountains have to be climbed with a grapple, which is both time-consuming and dangerous. The highest peaks are totally impassable. As one might expect, visibility is extremely low in the mountains. To make matters worse, several dangerous creatures call this terrain their home: Harpies, giant spiders, cyclops, dragons and mongbats to name some of them.

**Lava.** While most obstacles are passable by some alternate form of transportation, few of these can withstand the primal-hot fury of lava. Responsible for the creation of new land masses as well as the destruction of whole areas and man-made constructions, lava is most often encountered underground, but is sometimes seen on the surface near active volcanoes. A rare few structures are built using large lava lakes as a measure of added defense, such as the Castle of Fire during the reign of Exodus. A few rare magic items have been created to bypass lava, such as the Dragonskin Boots and Leather Vest of Flameproof found in the Stygian Abyss, but beware of imitations! In addition to its inherent danger, some creatures are quite content to make their homes in or near lava, such as lava lizards, daemons, and some dragons.

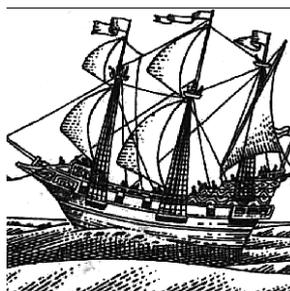
**Coast.** The coast, itself, can be searched by foot. However, to actually move through the rivers, lakes and shallow coastal waters, the adventurer has to organize a skiff or raft, since bigger ships can't enter these waters. These coastal areas and shallow waters have dangers of their own. Giant crabs sometimes roam the beaches, while predatory fish and sharks make the waters dangerous. Trolls tend to wait at bridges over rivers.

**Deep Ocean.** Only large, seaworthy vessels like the frigate can explore the ocean; other vessels can't survive the rough sea. Besides the danger of getting lost at sea, the biggest natural dangers are the whirlpools that can eat a ship whole. The ocean is home to several nasty creatures of the deep. Besides sharks, sea serpents, the Kraken and seahorses will attack intruders, while the nixies have no problem with killing travelers. Also, the threat of pirates is always a given.



Riding horses have been commonplace since the earliest days of Sosaria, and are frequently hired by travelers seeking to quicken their journeys across the often-perilous wilds of the realm. While horse husbandry fell into a slight decline during the era of Exodus, groomsmanship is slowly reemerging as a profession.

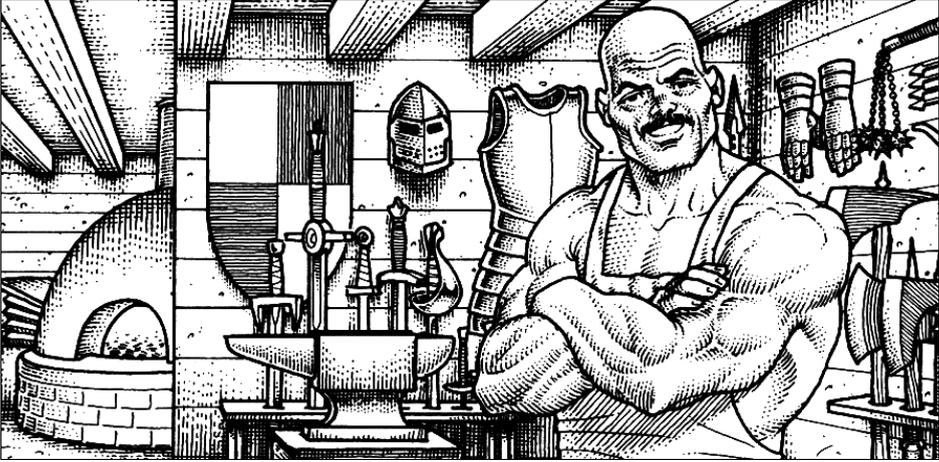
Frigates were first available in the early days of Sosaria. However, during the incursions of Exodus, such vessels were scarce to come by amongst honest vendors, with the pirates of the era having secured the vast majority of the water ways. In this age and for several years to follow, a frigate could most commonly be procured by fighting against a raiding crew bold enough to attack one's party on shore and then claiming their ship after dispatching them.





## CHAPTER VI

### WEAPONS AND ARMOUR



The selection of a weapon is one of the most important choices of the warrior. Certain foes can be more easily hurt with a sword than with a mace, while others can be cleaved with an axe.

**Hands.** If thou lose all of thy weapons, this is what thou hast left. Although it is possible to kill some of the lesser monsters with thy bare hands, the odds of success truly are not very high.

**Axe.** Heavy, two-handed weapons, which evolved from more utilitarian instruments, axes have seen use as a tool of war for many ages.

**Bow.** A bow is a weapon that consists of a flexible wooden arc designed to launch projectiles through means of elastic energy.

**Crossbow.** The crossbow is the second most-used missile weapon. Its destructive power is even higher than that of the bow. However, this comes at the price that the crossbow is very complicated to use, and therefore only agile warriors like bards can use it to great effect. Therefore, it's no wonder that the most famous crossbow user is Iolo Fitzowen.

**Dagger.** Daggers are knives designed for use in combat.

**Halberd.** A halberd is a pole arm, which combines characteristics of both a spear and an axe, allowing its wielder a long reach in a melee.

**Mace.** An advancement of its poor cousin, the club, the mace is a bludgeoning weapon with a metal head outfitted with flanges, spikes or knobs.

**Sling.** Slings are simple ranged weapons, consisting of a cradle for a projectile situated betwixt two pieces of cord.

**Spear.** A basic tool of war, a spear is a pole weapon consisting of a wooden shaft and some manner of sharpened head.

**Staff.** A staff is a simple wooden pole which may be used as a weapon or which may be enchanted to create a magical effect. They are popular amongst magic-users.

**Sword.** A sword is a bladed weapon used for cutting or thrusting in combat.

The warriors and other professions of the fighting art might be brave, but courage is not to be confused with stupidity. Even the bravest warrior knows that good armour is essential to actually surviving a fight, and only a fool would shun it.

**Chain.** Mail or chainmail is armour that has been crafted out of a series of interlinked metal rings, which are usually riveted shut on high quality pieces.

**Cloth.** Cloth armour refers to protective clothing made out of textiles.

**Leather.** Leather armour is a garment made out of boiled and sealed animal hide, designed to protect its wearer from harm during combat.

**Plate.** Plate armour is armour that has been crafted entirely out of articulated metal, such as iron or steel.



## CHAPTER VII

### MAGIC



The division between arcane magic and divine magic in Sosaria was now complete, with various specialty classes practicing either one or the other form of magic. Scrolls no longer had to be bought, casters know their spells from memory, and only the amount of mana available limits their level of power and frequency of use. Divine magic relies on wisdom about the world that surrounds the castle, while arcane magic relies on intelligence to understand the concept and theories behind magic.

The Cult of Runes represents the arcane side of magic, while the Cult of Truth represents the divine aspect. Both sides have their own unique set of 16 spells, which are further divided into ten basic and six advanced spells. Both cults try to make the workings of their spells a secret to outsiders, by giving them names that are not of the common tongue.

Both forms of magic require different words of power, in the form of phrases unique to each spell, and some have extremely rare and exotic components needed to bring about their effects.

Adepts of the Sixth Circle of the Cult of Runes are privy to the secrets of *The Book of Amber Runes*:

**A. Repond.** Both useful, and unpredictable. Made specifically to counter the rampaging hoards of orcs, goblins, and trolls that infested the lands of Sosaria during the Third Age of Darkness, it is available to all practitioners of arcane magic at the time. When used against an aggressive party of such humanoids, it has a 50% chance of destroying a random portion of the opposing force, from one to eight attackers. Its fallacy is that it can only be attempted once in any given combat, whether the creatures are successfully destroyed or not, and regardless of which spell caster attempts it.

**B. Mittar.** In older times known as Magic Missile, this is the most basic attack spell of the mage. Casting it hurls a magical projectile against a foe. It is not as powerful as the later attack spells, but does the job against the weaker foes. However, it is next to useless once the enemies get stronger and then should be left behind.

**C. Lorum.** The darkness of the evil depths makes exploration next to impossible without a source of light. While torches are one solution to this problem, this spell enables the caster to have light without having to carry the light source around. This saves space in the backpack and frees the hands for weapons and shields.

**D. Dor Acron.** Allows the mage to descend one dungeon level without the need to find the ladder that leads into the depths. Repeated chants can quickly lead to the bottom of said dungeon, where riches await, while avoiding the dangers on the way.

**E. Sur Acron.** Allows the mage to ascend one dungeon level without the need to find the ladder that leads closer to the surface. Repeated chants can quickly lead to the surface to be safe from the dangers below, while avoiding the dangers on the way.

**F. Fulgar.** Second of the combat-minded spells available to the Sorcerer, and stronger than Mittar. Casting it sends a hot fireball against a selected, single target, causing serious injury; and death to lesser foes.

**G. Dag Acron.** Transports the mage and their party to a random location on the surface of Sosaria, without delivering the group upon the ocean.

**H. Mentar.** Very much like Mittar, but works differently. Once the spell is cast, like in Mittar, a magic missile is flung against the foe. The difference is, that this spell enhances the damage of said magic missile by a factor determined by the intelligence of the mage. Thus it is more destructive than the lesser version of the spell.

**I. Dag Lorum.** Essential during dungeon exploration. Unlike the lesser Lorum spell, this one lasts far longer, before a recast is needed.

**J. Fal Divi.** Perhaps the most powerful spell ever created by the Cult of Runes. The mages discovered that the strict division into arcane and divine magic was to their disadvantage, closing the door to many useful spells. Thus, this spell was created. Casting this spell allows the mage to actually cast a divine spell of choosing. Needless to say that this is a tremendous power, especially since even the more advanced divine spells still have the mana cost of Fal Divi.

**K. Noxum.** A stronger version of the Fulgar spell. Instead of only one fireball, this spell throws a fireball against each foe visible. This of course makes it much more useful than the simple Fulgar spell, but also more taxing on the mage.

**L. Decorp.** Of the attack spells available to the mage, Decorp is the strongest against a single foe. Casting it sends a beam of pure magic power against a foe to sap the life out of it in the most efficient ways possible. Only the strongest foes can hope to survive this attack, whose power against a single foe is unmatched.

**M. Altair.** Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of the Cult of Runes. Casting it freezes time around the caster and the party for some moments, enough to either start a tactical retreat, or to strike down the foes while they can't move. Either way, it is a very powerful spell. However, the sheer drain on the mana pool prevents it from being used too often, as it is very taxing on the caster. Keep this in mind, or you'll be unable to cast it, when really needed.

**N. Dag Mentar.** An even stronger version of the multi-fireball spell Noxum. While Noxum already has great firepower, it is even more enhanced with this version. The spell essentially still is the same, but the strength of the fireballs is raised considerably, determined by the intelligence of the mage casting the spell; the smarter the mage, the greater the damage.

**O. Necorp.** Not exactly an attack spell, but nonetheless very effective against the foes. After preparing it, usage of this spell by the mage seriously weakens an entire group of foes, sapping the life out of them with a vampiric touch that while not killing, leaves them behind seriously weakened and thus easy to defeat in battle afterwards. It therefore is extremely useful for softening up the more powerful foes, before finishing them off with an attack spell like Noxum.

**P. —————.** The arcane spell known simply as P, for lack of a designated name, is the supreme incantation of carnage available to the mage, eclipsing even the lethal Decorp. The casting of P calls forth deathly energies to seek out and strike down all visible foes. While the most stalwart of targets will endure, albeit in a much-weakened state, the majority of enemies are fated to immediately perish. As such, this spell frequently decides the battle in favor of the mage.

Pilgrims of the Cult of Truth are privy to the secrets of *The Ancient Liturgy of Truth*:

**A. Pontori.** The earliest known attempt by spell casters meant to specifically eliminate the undead. When used against an aggressive party of skeletons, zombies, or ghouls, it had a 50% chance of destroying a random portion of the opposing force, from one to eight attackers. The spell's only fallacy is that it can only be attempted once in any given combat, whether the creatures are successfully destroyed or not, and regardless of which spell caster attempts it.

**B. Appar Unem.** A spell of great use. When cast upon an unfamiliar treasure chest, the magic of this enchantment will attempt to safely disarm any traps present. If successful, the chest will open instantly so that its contents are at the disposal of the caster. Although the casting of Appar Unem does carry with it a chance of failure, if this should occur, the spell may simply be attempted again, until either the chest is disarmed or the caster runs out of adequate mana to cast the spell.

**C. Sanctu.** Serious injury happens often on travels. Since a healer usually is too far, the clerics of the land use this spell to compensate for it. Casting it restores a part of the patient's health, thus lessening the severity of the wounds. Note however, that it only heals wounds. It doesn't cure poison.

**D. Luminae.** The darkness of the evil depths makes exploration next to impossible without a light source. While torches are one solution to this problem, this spell enables the caster to have light without having to carry the light source around. This saves space in the backpack and frees the hands for weapons and shields.

**E. Rec Su.** Allows the cleric to ascend one dungeon level without the need to find the ladder that leads closer to the surface. Repeated chants can quickly lead to the surface to be safe from the dangers below, while avoiding the dangers on the way.

**F. Rec Du.** Allows the cleric to descend one dungeon level without the need to find the ladder that leads into the depths. Repeated chants can quickly lead to the bottom of said dungeon, where riches await, while avoiding the dangers on the way.

**G. Lib Rec.** Allows the caster to teleport to a random location within a dungeon level. This is useful to escape tight situations or when the way seems to be a dead end. However, as the goal of this teleportation can't be chosen, the success of this spell is a gamble at best.

**H. Alcort.** Poisonous creatures are especially dangerous and their poison can quickly spell doom to an adventurer. Since a healer usually is too far, the clerics of the land use this spell to compensate.

Casting it, all poison is removed from the body, restoring the patient's health. Note however, that it only removes poison. It doesn't heal wounds.

**I. Sequitu.** Essential during dungeon exploration. The spell essentially is a stronger version of Rec Su.

**J. Sominae.** Essential during dungeon exploration. Unlike the lesser Luminae spell, this one lasts far longer, before a recast is needed.

**K. Sanctu Mani.** In cases where the normal Sanctu spell is no longer enough to heal the wounds, this spell should be used. Using it, the cleric can restore a large amount of health to the patient.

**L. Vieda.** A navigational aid, invoking the spell affords the wayfaring cleric a bird's-eye view of the surroundings, be they a dungeon, settlement, or wilderness. Vieda does not identify proximal threats; it does, however, indicate various obstacles inside dungeons, such as doors and fountains.

**M. Excuun.** Of the attack spells available to the cleric, Excuun is the strongest against a single foe. Casting it sends a beam of pure holy force against the foe, whose natural darkness and therefore its life, will be eradicated. Only the strongest foes can hope to survive this attack, whose power against a single foe is unmatched.

**N. Sumandum.** One of the most powerful spells available to the cleric. Surmandum is next to being a miracle as it returns the body of a dead companion back to life. This is a very taxing spell for the cleric, as it violates fundamental laws of nature, and is prone to error. Should the casting of this spell fail, the body will be burnt to ashes.

**O. Zxkuqyb.** The preeminent form of lethal invocations available to the cleric, similar in mechanism but more broadly effective than its penultimate cousin, Excuun. The casting of Zxkuqyb calls forth devastating energies to seek out and strike down all visible foes. While the most stalwart of targets will endure, albeit in a much-weakened state, the majority of enemies are fated to immediately perish. As such, this spell frequently decides the battle in favor of the cleric.

**P. Anju Sermani.** Its purpose is to return a being to life whose body had been burnt to ashes by an improperly cast Sumandum spell. Unlike normal resurrections, burnt bodies lose their connection to the soul, which is instantly reborn and thus difficult to recall. This spell is needed for the complicated reversal of this process, and for the restoration of the destroyed body; the Sumandum spell is not capable of this; only Anju Sermani can then return the departed companion back to life in this case, and at the cost of 5 points of the restored person's Wisdom.

An ancient scroll on display in Castle Britannia tells of different types of energy fields created by magical means. It lists the following fields and discusses their properties:

**Fire.** An orange field that will burn everyone that comes too close to it.

**Lightning.** A blue field that serves an impenetrable barrier which inflicts damage upon any who touch it.

**Poison.** A violet field of noxious vapors that poisons anyone passing through who is not quick to hold their breath.

**Sleep.** A green field that will cause everyone that comes too close to it to fall asleep.



# CHAPTER VIII

## BESTIARY



Travel in Sosaria is often perilous. This section shall provide both information, and warning, a description of every foe, animal, and monster that can be encountered.



**Bat.** The most numerous bats of Sosaria are timid and of little threat to humans who do not provoke them. While these cave bats may prove a mild threat to those who encounter a hostile cauldron of the animals, this common bat of the Sosarian caves and wilderness has done little to earn the ill reputation commonly associated with these animals.

**Cyclops.** A race of fierce, gigantic humanoids, well known for the single eye they each bear on their foreheads. While generally hostile to mankind and often discounted as mere monsters, the Cyclopean race is a sapient species, although little of their culture and history is known.

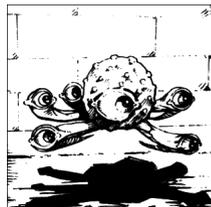


**Dragon.** Intelligent and powerful reptilian creatures, dragons did not appear in the lands of Sosaria until late in the Age of Darkness around the time of Exodus' rise to power, although accounts of such creatures as the fire-breathing dragon turtle indicate that encounters with dragons may have occurred as early as the time of Mondain.



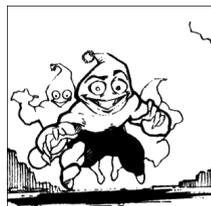
**Ettin.** A breed of two-headed gigantic humanoids who appeared in the first days of Sosaria. While they are capable of some manner of speech and use crude weapons and clothing, little evidence has been brought to light of these creatures as having any culture aside from violent brutality.

**Gazer.** Their bodies are composed of a large, hovering orb with a central eye attached to it. From this node, five stalks radiate outwards - each with a smaller eye on its tip. With this preponderance of sensory organs, little escapes a gazer's attention, although the eyes serve a double-purpose, each one allowing the gazer to enact a different variety magical power. Sleep spells, charms and magical paralysis are among these creatures' preferred techniques to attack their victims. They are also capable of dealing direct physical damage to their quarry by means of blinking their central eye or twisting one of their stalks. By some bizarre mechanism yet unexplained, gazers' bodies transmute into swarms of stinging insects when slain.



**Ghost.** The lost souls of individuals who have died without achieving peace, and who are subsequently tied to the material plane until such time as they can achieve a closure which will allow them to ascend to the Void. Oftentimes such beings find no rest, and cave to their baser instincts, persisting as hostile apparitions which plague the living.

**Gremlin.** Tiny, green-hued, humanoid monsters characterized by their ravenous appetites and pack mentality. They are consistently linked to consumption, whether it be through their desire for human food or their curious bodily dissipation into foodstuffs upon dying.



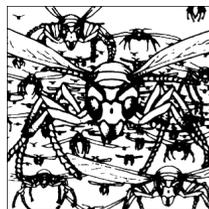
**Headless.** A bizarre race of humanoid creatures who lack a head or neck. It is unknown how these strange beasts first came into being, although many hypothesize that they are the product of perverse experimentation by a rogue magician.

**Hydra.** Large reptilian beasts, similar in power and intelligence to dragons, but unique in that, each hydra sports three separate heads - each with a distinct personality of its own. Often found lurking within the depths of the cavern-



ous dungeons, hydrae often hold conversations amongst their various “selves,” and disagreements between its three heads may provide a canny adventure with an opening for a preemptive assault.

**Insects.** Of little or no concern to a well outfitted adventurer, although their bites and stings may prove painful or bothersome. Generally the harm dealt by these tiny animals best reckoned in their deleterious effect on crops and livestock or their potential as a vector for disease, rather than their ability to bring any direct injury to individuals.



**Lava Lizard.** A type of flame-borne reptilian beast, frequently found in the vicinity of active volcanoes or other great sources of heat, lava lizards appear particularly attuned to the element of fire, and are capable of spewing superheated lava across great distances in combat.

**Lich.** The end result of a mortal necromancer who, wishing to outlive their natural end, undertakes dark magic to allow themselves to persist in a never-ending state of undeath. Such creatures are extremely formidable opponents, and are not easily defeated.



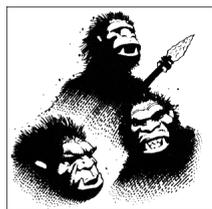
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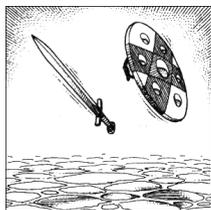
**Mimic.** A shape-shifting predator that takes on a seemingly harmless, or even enticing, form in order to lure its prey to it. Appearing harmless until approached, a mimic will assault unprepared treasure-seekers with a jet of venomous spittle before proceeding to bite and claw at their prey in an attempt to consume it in its weakened state.

**Nixie.** A hostile race of sea-dwelling humanoids, said to be descended from the elves of Sosaria. While they appear to be a sapient species capable of speech, little is known about Nixie society or culture - given that almost all of its interactions with mankind are violent.



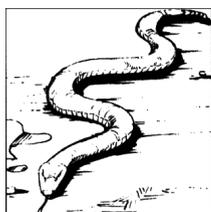
**Orc.** Primitive, porcine humanoids created by magical experiments in the Age of Darkness, the orcs of Sosaria are not particularly strong or intelligent, but often travel in packs, waylaying and mur-

dering travelers while they steal what they can. Usually little more than a nuisance to a well-equipped adventuring party, the Sosarian orcish band typically attacks above ground, although subterranean enclaves of these creatures have been encountered.



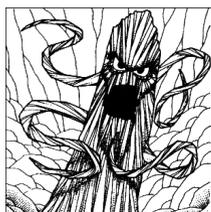
**Phantom.** Said to be the remnants of dead warriors, who have been twisted by evil forces such that they must continually relive the battles of their previous lives. Their bodies, if they can be said to have any, do not appear to mortal sight, although they are easily detected by the mundane swords and shields they still bear.

**Pirates.** Sea-faring bandits that attack and rob merchant vessels as a means of livelihood. Piracy is a constant threat to mariners from every realm, with these criminals holding dominance over the oceans of the world.



**Python.** Many snakes of Sosaria are both venomous and aggressive toward mankind. These reptiles will actively seek out and attack humans. The Sosarian python combines the deadly attributes of constriction, poison and projectile ejection of venom all in one creature. These animals may afflict a target with their poison from up to eleven paces away.

**Rat.** The giant rats of Sosaria are unusually large rodents, often responsible for spreading disease and infesting poorly maintained basements and sewers. Possibly originating in the sorceries of Mondain, and other experimentally-minded wizards of the era, the giant rats of the land have steadily grown in size since their appearance early in the Age of Darkness.



**Reaper.** A malevolent species of magical trees that are said to be possessed by spirits which enable them to practice the mystic arts. These beings are almost always hostile when encountered and have proven the unfortunate end of many an unwitting adventurer who makes the mistake of taking them for nothing more

than harmless deadwood.

**Rogue.** Criminals who make their living through waylaying and robbing travelers. Bandits and high-

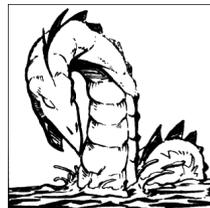


waymen long plagued the Sosarian countryside, assailing those who wandered too far from the safety of civilization. Such brigands do not appear to have ever enjoyed the organization of realm's Guild of Thieves, and appeared to merely be opportunists taking advantage of the unwary.



**Seahorse.** The giant seahorses of Sosaria are gargantuan beasts. These intelligent creatures have the capacity to speak and are gifted in magic. They can often be sighted alongside the elfin nixies. Regarded as peaceable beasts not naturally inclined toward evil, these comely beings will nevertheless frequently harass sailors - assailing them with volleys of magical bolts.

**Serpent.** Sea Serpents are aquatic relatives of dragons that have roamed the waters of the Sosarian seas since the last days of Exodus. Often attacking from a distance, a sea serpent can quickly overwhelm an unprepared traveler before they can approach it.

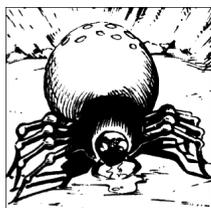


**Skeleton.** Animate skeletons have long plagued Sosaria. Of the undead, skeletons typically rank among the weaker specimens. Although these creatures have been known to overwhelm the living through strength of sheer numbers. These creatures generally have their origins with necromancers, liches or other practitioners of dark magic, although it is rumored that

in places of great evil, the bones of the dead may rise of their own accord, or may spring fully formed from unliving stone.

**Slime.** Green viscous organisms whose bodies emit a venomous toxin, slimes are often found in swampland or dungeons, preferring moist dark environments. They attack by ejecting part of their venomous flesh at their victims, and are capable of extremely rapid asexual reproduction - a process which may be instigated when a slime is struck with a weapon. As a result, large swaths of slime can easily overwhelm an ill-prepared adventuring party, especially when they are vulnerable or at rest. Most wayfarers, however, can protect themselves against such assaults by keeping a watch during the evening hours, and by equipping themselves with flame-based weapons or torches, which are extremely effective against such beasts.





**Spider.** Giant spiders are abnormally large arachnids which inhabit the dungeons and wastelands of Sosaria. These creatures have exhibited numerous predatory behaviors exhibited by their smaller cousins, including jump attacks and the projection of silk and venomous spittle. It seems that such beasts largely attack defensively, when

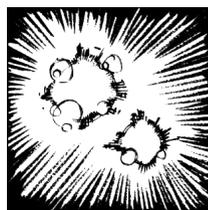
their nests are disturbed or that men are simply victims of happenstance, used as food or hatching fodder in lieu of more common prey.

**Squid.** The giant squid, kraken, or Man-o-War, is a type of tentacle-bearing monstrous sea creature known to attack ships at sea and adventurers wandering too close to perilous shores. A threat to mariners since the earliest days of Sosaria, these monsters generally take their prey with their tentacles, crushing their victims in a beak-like maw after dragging them below the water's surface.



**Troll.** A race of humanoid monsters that have long harried travelers on the roads and bridges of Sosaria. Sapient and capable of speech, these brutish creatures appear to have adapted much of their culture from that of mankind, and have, on occasion, been able to peaceably exist among humans.

**Wisp.** As physical entities, wisps have a number of powers: including instantaneous teleportation; the capacity to summon hostile creatures; and the ability to break off portions of their luminous corpus to act as scouts. They have long been fearsome opponents in combat, and may be nigh invincible, unless confronted with a weapon such as the Black Sword.



**Wizard.** The occult world which surrounds wizards can open the way to temptations of power, wealth or the satisfaction of perverse curiosities—and it is not altogether uncommon for mages thus tested to fall to depravity. Such men and women often display a callous disregard for human life, seeing others as obstacles to their success or as fodder for dark experimentation. These ill-intentioned sorcerers have been a plague to Sosaria since time immemorial.



**Zorn.** A bizarre breed of magical creatures, known as the ‘antitheses of everything’. The zorn are capable of a number of unexplainable behaviors. Zorn bodies consist of a large semi-spherical node supported by three legs. Their mouths are situated on the top of this node, whereas their sensory organs are positioned close to the ground.

Through means unclear, zorn are capable of physically transcending all known matter—passing through obstacles as though they didn’t exist. This strange negation of reality also appears to effect the ethereal waves surrounding this beasts, as magical arts are disabled in the immediate vicinity of zorn. Commonly found in subterranean locales, these omniphagous entities have long puzzled scholars, as the evaporation of their physical bodies upon death has left little means of studying the zorn. They have occasionally been found in the company of the normally xenophobic gazers, although their purpose in this seeming alliance has never been discovered.



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