

# CARAVAN

BY KEANE PETERSON



## A Sample Adventure For RUNEQUEST 6th Edition

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# INTRODUCTION

**B**OOK OF QUESTS is a collection of seven, loosely-linked adventures for RUNEQUEST 6th Edition. This scenario, taken from BOOK OF QUESTS, is intended to act as a preview of the book and form a free scenario in its own right, introducing Games Masters and Players to the adventures.

Keane Peterson's *Caravan* is a very good way of providing that introduction. Caravans are common in most fantasy settings, and the scenario brings together characters and NPCs easily. From the interview in Lurien, through the journey to Thorsen, and then the events in Aylesford, the characters have a reason for adventuring together. What they witness in Aylesford may then act as a catalyst for further adventures (which are obviously detailed in BOOK OF QUESTS).

The complete book offers a purpose-built setting in the form of *The Realm*. The Realm is not detailed here, although

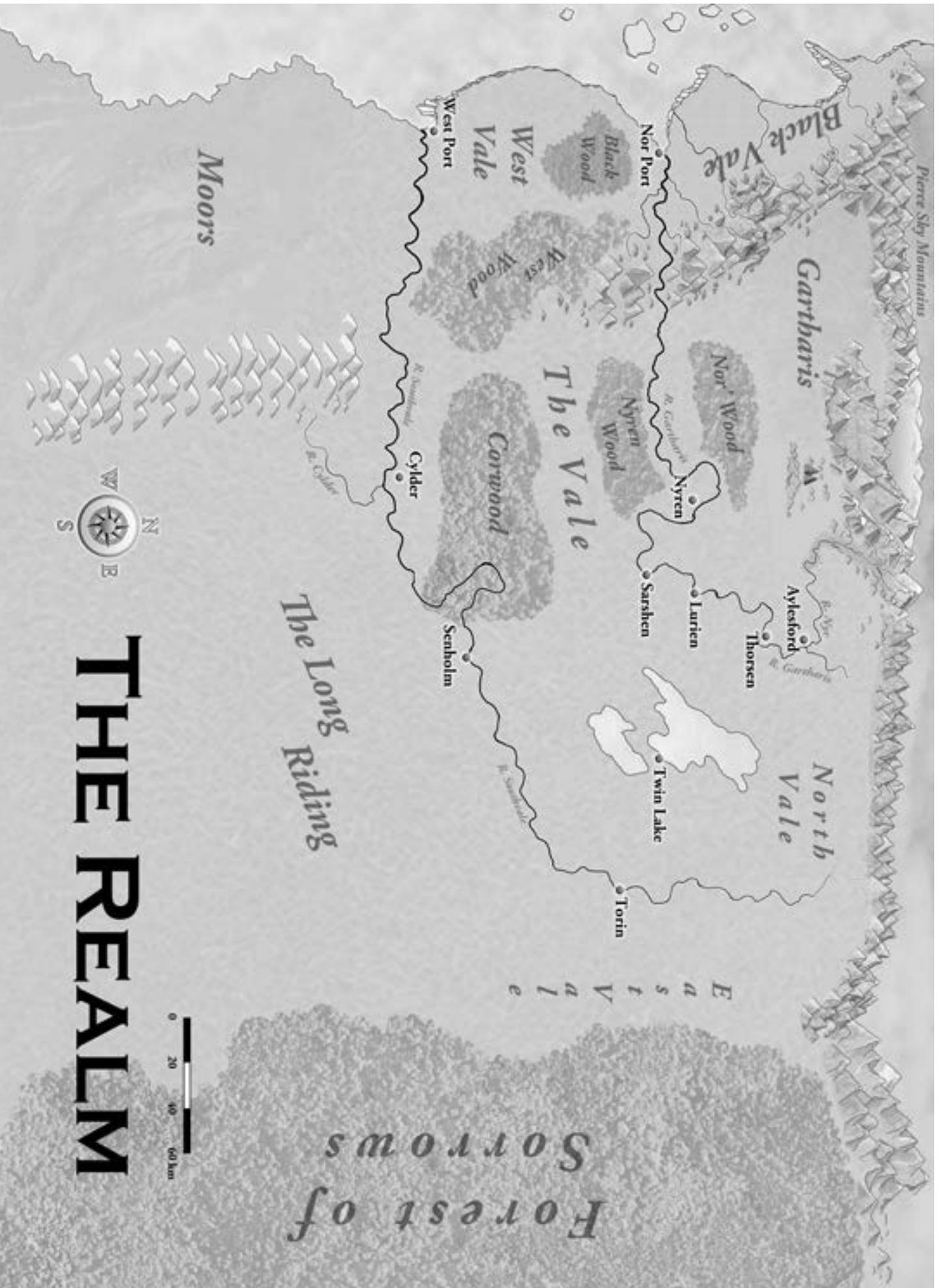
we have included the map to show relative locations and distances for places mentioned in the scenario. *Caravan* can be easily slotted into just about any fantasy setting, given the ubiquitous nature of merchant vans, the need for guards, and the likelihood of robbers, bandits and vagabonds in back-of-beyond destinations. Placing *Caravan* in your own campaign should be straightforward: a few name changes perhaps, but the scenario is easily customised.

The only other thing needed for play is a copy of the RUNEQUEST 6 rules - although any of the d100 family of games, such as Chaosium's *Basic Roleplaying* or *Magic World*, D101's *OpenQuest* or Mongoose Publishing's *Legend* are perfectly acceptable alternatives.

We hope you enjoy *Caravan* and will look out for BOOK OF QUESTS on its release.

## A WORD ON LETHALITY

If the characters decide to face every challenge, head-on, with swords and spears, they will find this a very lethal scenario. Games Masters should encourage problem solving and the use of safety as legitimate options. Remember that retreating at an opportune time is no disgrace. Always taking the Combat Option, though, is a sure-fire way to mutilation and death.



# THE REALM

0 20 40 60 km



# CARAVAN

## OVERVIEW

Caravan routes form a vibrant lifeline of trade, interconnecting the small towns, hamlets, and farmsteads that spread across The Vale. The caravans bring processed trade goods from the towns to the smaller communities. And, in return, they transport raw materials and foodstuffs back from the rural communities – a cyclical pattern of prosperity.

There is great reward, and great risk, to be had plying the trade routes. Shrewd caravan masters seek out skilled warriors to protect their interests. They offer high wages, but they demand loyalty and responsibility from their employees for the welfare of the caravan.

This scenario presents characters with the opportunity to join a merchant caravan as it prepares to depart a small town. The adventure begins with the characters being interviewed by the caravan master. From there, the journey proceeds – mundanely, at first. But, as days pass, it becomes clear that there is trouble brewing in the wilderness they travel through. It will take sharp steel, and a sharp eye, to overcome the dangers the characters will face.

The foul sorcerer Jedekiah has powerful allies among the barbarian tribes of Gartharis. He has forged an alliance with the barbarian chieftain, Delell, and is working towards

unifying all of the tribes under his control. Delell provides Jedekiah with loyal warriors in exchange for gifts from the cult of the Chaos Mother and promises of greater power.

The corrupt shaman, Manuun, initially served as an emissary between Delell and Jedekiah. He travelled to Jedekiah's watchtower on many occasions, and returned to share Jedekiah's wishes with the tribe. Over time, Jedekiah began to see great potential in Manuun as a trustworthy servant. Manuun now serves Jedekiah as one of his chief lieutenants.

Manuun has been indoctrinated into the cult of the Chaos Mother, and has gained the trappings, and the scars, from this allegiance. He is a dangerous and ruthless opponent, driven by a lust for power.

Jedekiah has provided Manuun with a chaos hybrid, bred in the laboratories of the Ophidians. The beast is a tool of destruction that must be controlled carefully. The barbarians transport it shackled and muzzled, and release it to feed and destroy. The shaman is the only one that can safely control the chaos hybrid and Manuun is performing an experiment to determine how far it can be controlled once it has tasted blood.

This scenario follows the actions of Manuun's warband that brings them into conflict with the characters. Over the

past two weeks, the warband has been rampaging across the Northern border of The Vale. They have waylaid travelers, either forcing them into slavery or brutally sacrificing them. During the characters' journey, the barbarians will set the chaos hybrid loose upon a hamlet. It is up to the characters to deal with Manuun and his men before they can cause any more death or destruction.

A Games Master can easily drop this scenario into any rural region of a game world. The only requirements are a populated starting point and some scattered rural communities. The barbarian raiders can be substituted with any appropriate threat in the campaign (orcs, goblins, etc.).

This scenario is not intended to be run during any specific season, though it would be unlikely for merchant caravans to be very active during winter months.

## NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

- ⇒ Jhonen, the merchant venturer operating the caravan between Lurien and Aylesford.
- ⇒ Utuk, Jhonen's mute, barbarian assistant.
- ⇒ Manuun, a shaman in Jedakiah's employ and responsible for the murder of Aylesford.

All NPC statistics are presented at the end of the scenario.

## KEY POINTS/TIMELINE

1. Jhonen hires the characters for his caravan in the town of Lurien.
2. The first day's travel allows the characters to get to know Jhonen, Utuk and other caravan members.
3. Arrival at the village of Thorsen, where Jhonen's past catches up with him.
4. Travel from Thorsen to Aylesford, with various hazards along the way.
5. Arrival at Aylesford - and discovery of the town's dreadful fate.
6. The Chaos Hybrid goes a-hunting.
7. Manuun and his barbarian escort arrive to catch the monster and may become entangled with the characters and the caravan.

## AREAS TO BE COVERED

This adventure begins in the town of Lurien, which lies at the border of The Vale and North Vale on the banks of the River Gartharis. The caravan travels north, following the winding, upstream path of the River Gartharis, through lush farmland and woods. Its planned journey takes it through the village of Thorsen and the town of Aylesford, before plunging into the heavy woods of North Vale.

A few additional encounter locations are also included in the scenario. The caravan will face an ambush, on the North Road, as it comes within Aylesford's proximity. Also, the characters may stumble upon the barbarian encampment, five kilometres to the north east of Aylesford.

## INTRODUCTION: THE INTERVIEW

The market square of Lurien is bustling at this time of year. In the early morning air, hawkers can be heard loudly extolling their goods for sale; caravans arrive and depart in billowing clouds of dust and criers announce news, opportunities, and executions to the gathering crowds. For those characters gifted with Literacy, signs are posted throughout the square advertising the same information that the criers bellow.

Employment opportunities are abundant – whether it is the manual labour of unloading or loading wagons, the clearing of animal waste, or accompanying the caravans as they depart the town. Word travels fast that Jhonen, the caravan master, is seeking skilled outriders to protect his caravan as it travels northwards. The characters overhear from a few mumbling townsfolk that Jhonen pays very well, but only trusts the most loyal and competent applicants. Indeed, minutes later, a town crier announces Jhonen's employment opportunities, and reveal that he offers 6 founders, per day, for the journey he is about to embark upon. If that's not enough motivation for the characters to seek out Jhonen, then mention the number of young men walking quickly in the direction of Jhonen's wagons. Competition for employment might pique their interest.

Jhonen can be found interviewing candidates as his wagons are loaded by porters, in a swirl of activity. He questions all of the applicants intently, and many glum young men turn away when it is clear they do not qualify for the job.

## PREPARING FOR PLAY

This scenario is a good opportunity for Games Masters to bring together a new party of players with disparate characters. It is also a good opportunity to have already assembled the caravan guard in advance, with each player taking a ready-made guard position without the need for the Interview section of the scenario. This speeds-up play and provides a convenient reason for the characters to become adventurers, colleagues and, perhaps friends.

If Games Masters choose this latter option, it can be approached in a number of ways:

1. The Games Master creates a set of guard characters for the players, allowing the players to choose which guard they prefer playing. The pre-designed characters can be from very different backgrounds and if so, the players should be encouraged to devise reasons for why their characters have chosen to join the caravan. Some may be professional guards and mercenaries; others might be traders. Some may have secretive reasons for escaping The Realm for a time.
2. Alternatively, all the characters may be of a similar type - professional guards - who have worked with Jhonen before, or been recommended to him. This restricts the amount of say the players have in their characters' backgrounds and reasons for working for Jhonen, but is a simple option for rapid play.
3. Or, the Games Master allows the players to create their characters normally, but introduces, during character creation, the common background that all of them are working for Jhonen so that they have a ready starting point for play. Again, the players should decide how and why they have come to be part of the caravan, but they retain full control over what kind of character they are playing. Constructing a *raison d'être* for being in Jhonen's employ is a great exercise in developing a character's background and for forming links and relationships between disparate characters.

Utuk, Jhonen's assistant, stands silently near Jhonen, eyes applicants, and nods or shakes his head to answer simple questions. He is quite an imposing figure to behold – a Long Riding nomad with graphic scars across his face, and a blackened stump for a tongue. Characters from the Long Riding recognise the scars as symbols of criminal prosecution and banishment from his native lands, and it could colour their perception of Utuk.

When it is the characters' turn to be interviewed, Jhonen asks them a simple question: "Tell me of your deeds and exploits". An Influence or Oratory test is required and, if successful, Jhonen hires them on the spot and offers to pay them daily at the advertised rate. A failed test results in Jhonen questioning their competence – he still employs them but at 75% of the advertised rate. (A successful, opposed Commerce check increases the salary amount, but not over the advertised rate). This is also a good opportunity for the characters to use their Passions - either augmenting their Influence or Oratory, or using a Passion in place of either to sell themselves. Characters with high Deceit, and a tendency to lie or exaggerate, may use this skill instead of Influence/Oratory, but a failed roll will have grave consequences, depending on the depth of the lies or embellishment.

## A DAY'S TRAVEL

Jhonen gives the characters the rest of the day to prepare for travel. He intends leaving Lurien at dawn the next day and does not want to waste daylight. If any characters attempt to gain more preparation time, Jhonen starts questioning their integrity: time is money.

The caravan consists of four horse-drawn wagons, each pulled by a pair of horses. The wagons are covered and loaded with a variety of trade goods: dyed textiles, ground herbs and medicinals, tanned leather, and forged metalwork (ploughs, tools, short swords). The wagons are driven by a pair of men – Jhonen and Utuk drive the lead wagon, and the remainder follow in single file. Characters are loaned a horse for the journey if they don't have one of their own.

The caravan departs that morning if all goes according to plan. The procession heads out of Lurien's eastern gate, following the road through the abundant farmland that surrounds the town. The eastern road is busy during the daylight hours; the caravan passes many travellers making their way to and from Lurien. After two kilometres, the caravan veers onto the northern road. It becomes clear, over the next hour, that there is far less foot and horse traffic travelling this route.

The caravan proceeds at a steady pace, slowing at times to navigate sudden twists in the road. When there is clear visibility of the path ahead – perhaps at the rise of a small hill – the caravan picks up the pace. At intervals, side trails lead off from the western side of the road, leading down to the raging Gartharis River. They become commonplace after a few hours of travel.

The characters are instructed to act as outriders on the roadway. At times, they need to cluster close to the wagons, guiding the caravan through treacherous ground or obstructions, and providing protection from bandits, if necessary. Pairs of guards are asked to ride ahead – on “point” – to spot potential threats and survey the land.

The characters should plan their task, deciding who will ride ahead of the caravan and who will bring-up the rear. This is a good opportunity for the characters to make rolls for the following:

- ⇒ Perception - to ensure that there are no visible hazards or bandits lying in wait.
- ⇒ Ride - to successfully get ahead of the caravan to scout and then return, negotiating potholes, road debris or the odd deer that bolts from nearby bushes.
- ⇒ Locale - to spot any potential herbs, hedgerow vegetables, game and so on to supplement the supper pot or be sold later.

Jhonen attempts to strike up conversations with the characters at different points in the journey. He naturally inquires about their backgrounds – from where they hail and where their lives have taken them thus far. He asks them to go into more detail about their exploits and accomplishments. He also asks what plans they have for the future.

If a character gains Jhonen’s trust – or professes to follow the same religious faith – Jhonen ‘opens up’ and discusses more personal topics. He asks them of their family and friends. He, uncomfortably, asks how they are able to maintain their relationships with the distance that their travel and activities involve. Jhonen does not come out directly and ask for advice for his own unrequited love, but he vaguely describes his troubles if any character asks for details.

Jhonen is very obvious about his cult membership. He fills pauses in dialogue with short phrases, such as: “Surely Xalgith guides our actions”, or “Oh, this is fortuitous; praise be to Xalgith!” Jhonen distances himself from any character that questions his faith, or openly rejects the wisdom of Xalgith. He is far less likely to trust that person in the

future, and speaks with the other characters rather than deal with the blasphemer directly.

## THE VILLAGE OF THORSEN

The caravan’s first stop on the north road is the village of Thorsen, famed for its pig herders. This small community, of two hundred inhabitants, is bound by a crude wooden palisade. A cluster of buildings stand at the core of the village. They include an inn, a smithy, a butcher, and a number of trinket shops. Dozens of hovels radiate out from the village centre, each with an attached pen crowded with swine. A foul stink hangs over this village – it can be nauseating to travellers, but locals have become inured to it. Have the characters make Endurance rolls when entering Thorsen: if they succeed, the stench does not overwhelm them. If they fail, all skill rolls for the next 1d4 hours are at one grade more difficult as they become used to the smell.

When the caravan is admitted through the gates of the village, a great commotion is raised and a large group of villagers congregate around the wagons. The caravan pushes through the growing crowd until they reach the north end of the village core. The wagons halt, and Jhonen’s men work to unpack trade goods and deal with the stabling of the horses.

Jhonen informs the characters that he and his men will be occupied for much of the afternoon in trade negotiations with local shop owners and village folk. He will not need their services during this time, and he suggests that they brush off the road dust and relax at the inn with a beverage. He’ll send one of his men if he has any need for them. Otherwise, he’ll meet them at the inn later and settle their accommodation.

There are not many attractions in the Village of Thorsen for tourists. There are a few small shops that sell various sundries, but nothing that couldn’t be acquired cheaper in Lurien. The local inn is one of the few highlights in the characters’ stay in Thorsen. The following are some suggestions for activities that can be used for engaging the characters while Jhonen conducts his business.

### LUMP HEFTING

Old Merrow, a colourful local of the village, possesses a pig called Lump, the biggest porker for miles around. Lump is almost the size of a small pony, can barely move, and spends its days munching turnips. Every so often, the men

of Thorsen engage in the sport of Lump Hefting. The men, usually drunk, wager on who can push Lump over and roll the poor creature across Old Merrow's pig-pen. The gambling is good-natured and relies on Brawn and achieving a degree of momentum. A Lump Hefting session has begun when the characters arrive at The Hog's Trotters with the locals making their wagers. The current Lump Hefting champion is Nevis the Blacksmith: a massive figure of a man, his muscles are like boulders and his fingers the size of small crowbars. He wagers 3 Founders that he can topple Lump and roll him across the pen there and back three times without breaking a sweat. A group of six or so locals are betting he breaks into a sweat after the first trip. If the characters want to join the gambling, they can. If they want to challenge Nevis in the Hefting, then they are welcomed enthusiastically and asked to better Nevis's claim.

Eventually the group staggers out of the inn and down to Old Merrow's shack and pig pen. Lump is there, immobile, face squashed into a trough of turnips that it steadily munches. The pig doesn't even bother to look up as the group surrounds it. Nevis prepares to make his Hefting attempt.

Lump has a SIZ of 24. Pushing him over requires a successful Brawn roll; rolling him requires a successful Athletics roll and counts as Strenuous activity for Fatigue purposes: Lump squeals and struggles, although is too massive to do anything about being rolled like a barrel. Rolling Lump *once* across the pen requires two Athletics rolls with Fatigue being accrued for each failed roll. Nevis has Brawn 80% and Athletics 65%. The pen is also caked in slippery mud which makes the Athletics skill one grade more difficult. Failing a roll not only accrues Fatigue, it lands the character in the mire, covering him from head to toe in very smelly mud and excrement.

If Nevis succeeds in his boast, he stands to collect 21 Founders - unless someone can beat him. None of the locals are up for the attempt, but if a character succeeds, rolling Lump four times across the pen wins them the bet. Nevis fumes for a while but is good natured about the defeat unless the characters cheat in some way (or use magic), in which case they make an enemy of him, and, potentially, the locals.

## ZOONA THE SOOTHSAYER

Zoona is the local wise-woman. She is an expert in herbalism and claims to speak with the spirits. She has no true magical skill - only the ability to convince the superstitious

locals of her particular gifts. She stumps into the inn while the characters are relaxing, glances around with her beady eyes, and settles on the characters. After a pause she approaches them. Zoona is wild-haired, wild-eyed and toothless. Her hair is caked in bird droppings and her rags barely conceal her emaciated form beneath. "For a Founder I'll reveal your fate as the spirits see it," she declares. "For two Founders I will brew you a potion of Good Fortune."

Saying No to Zoona is difficult. The locals respect and fear her; offering insult attracts withering glances and may provoke hostility - an Insight roll to gauge the reactions of the inn's locals easily determines this. If the characters persist in declining Zoona's offer she takes deep offence and curses the characters in this way: "The spirits are offended! They tell me of misfortunes in your path and the wrath of the dead! I see the raggedy man waiting for you with pain in his mind and blood on his hands. I see your suffering and fear. I hear the lamentations of your loved ones and many graves to be dug!"

All this is rather nebulous and is in no way connected with what lies ahead - Zoona is merely adept in scaring those who are superstitious. But, if so cursed, the characters may believe that Zoona does have the power of foresight when they reach Aylesford, and wish they had paid that Founder.

If the characters agree to Zoona's offer, she takes the character by the hands, stares deep into his or her eyes and speaks in a monotone. She says she sees long years of prosperity ahead, but days of hardship and doubt. She sees love and comfort, but also nights of loneliness and heartache. If a character asks for specifics she dismisses the question: "The spirits have spoken!" She wails. "It is wise not to question their revelations!"

Any character who pays 2 Founders receives the soothing and the promise of a Potion of Good Fortune. Zoona takes a pouch from within her rags and empties the contents into the character's drink. The smell is obscene: sickly sweet, like rotten chicken. She stirs the drink with her finger, spits into it, and declares it ready. "Pour this into a flask. When you consume it, you will be assured Good Fortune for a day and a night. No harm will come to you. The spirits have spoken!"

For once she speaks the truth. This vile concoction has the effect of granting the drinker one additional Luck Point for the session. It tastes vile and requires an Endurance roll to successfully swallow, but the extra Luck Point is granted immediately.

## I AM THE PASSENGER

The characters are approached by a young woman. She acts furtively and takes some time to pluck up the courage to approach their table. She is, perhaps, 14 or 15, very pretty, and calls herself Dalla. "You are travelling to Aylesford and I would go with you," she says. "I have money to pay for my passage, and I can cook, clean and sew." Of course, the characters need to consult with Jhonen about accepting additional passengers and will need to talk with him first. Dalla, if persuaded with a successful Influence or Insight roll, reveals a little more about her reasons for leaving Thorsen.

"My father plans to marry me to Brok. He is a good swineherd and will inherit twenty sows, but I do not wish to marry him." She sighs and dabs at a tear gathering in the corner of one eye. Dalla, it transpires, loves another. A young man from Aylesford who passed through Thorsen a year ago on his way to Cylder for the city's Great Market. A woodcarver and musician, he swept the impressionable Dalla off her pretty little feet and her yearning has grown daily. Now she has managed to scrape together enough for passage to Aylesford where she hopes to be reunited with her love.

Any character who has a Love Passion that is unrequited, or similar in vein to Dalla's must roll against, and *fail*, his or her Passion to remain unmoved by her story. Characters who are moved feel compelled to plead her case to Jhonen and take her side. Indeed, some characters may actually fall in love with Dalla themselves: she is an undoubted beauty with a beguiling innocence. During the course of the trip they might try to woo her. Success is treated as a Social Conflict task (see RUNEQUEST page 427) with either Influence or Seduction being the active skill for wooing her. Dalla resists with her Love Hannen (her Aylesford beau) of 85%.

Naturally enough, Dalla's plight comes with strings. Her father, Rorke, is a determined and possessive man. A marriage between his daughter and Brok will advance his family's standing in Thorsen. When he realises she has run away he gives chase, accompanied by Dalla's four older, and quite strapping, brothers, intent on bringing his daughter home and punishing anyone who helped her leave.

Convincing Jhonen requires an Influence roll. He is grateful for additional money and she has the coin required, but if the Influence roll is failed he expresses doubts about helping a young, promised woman, escape her fate. Utuk also signals his disapproval. If persuaded, Jhonen tells the

characters that they will be responsible for her - and must deal with any consequences. Jhonen will deny, vehemently, any knowledge of her true status.

If accepted Dalla says she will meet the caravan a little way down the road after it leaves Thorsen, sneaking out of the village when the attentions of her father and brothers are elsewhere. She makes good on this promise - although this is an opportunity for the characters to help Dalla with her plans, perhaps arranging a diversion or other scheme to smuggle her safely out of the village.

It takes a day for her father to discover her absence, put two and two together, and organise a pursuit. But Rorke and his sons can move faster than the caravan and will soon catch-up, leading to a confrontation. Rorke only wants his daughter back, not bloodshed, and the characters should be able to talk or intimidate their way out of the situation. Dalla pleads with her father, but ultimately is afraid of him and relies on the characters to support and defend her.

Rorke and his sons are not above attempting to kidnap Dalla back, stage a half-hearted ambush or offer a direct challenge. These situations will need to be planned by the Games Master and adjudicated as circumstances play-out.

Should Dalla remain with the caravan, she is heart-broken when they reach Aylesford and she witnesses for herself the devastation. However, after frantically searching all the bodies she declares that her beloved Hannen is not amongst the dead: perhaps he is still in Cylder? If so, she uses her wiles to get the characters to help her reach Cylder so she can carry on her search (and this would form a good reason for travelling to Cylder in preparation for the scenario *Shadows Behind the Throne*, found in BOOK OF QUESTS).

## THE HOG'S TROTTERS

The Hog's Trotters is the sole inn of Thorsen village. It is a three-storey structure with a tavern on the first floor and private rooms and a common room on the second floor. The tavern isn't frequented much during the mornings and afternoons. But, at noontime, and in the evenings, it gets packed full of pig farmers and random travellers.

There is one regular patron present regardless of the time of day. A depressed pig farmer, by the name of Glun, is drowning his sorrows in ale throughout the day. Glun shares - to anyone who pays him any attention - that his brother, Daek, sister-in-law, Mathilde, and a good friend left Thorsen yesterday. They had plans to settle north in Aylesford, and Glun is quite unhappy with their decision. Glun's mood brightens if he learns that the characters are

travelling north. He asks them to share his best wishes if he encounters the group in Aylesford.

## DISGRUNTLED CUSTOMERS

Jhonen has stopped in Thorsen before, and on his last visit, he made an enemy of a local shop owner. Jhonen forced a hard bargain, and this led to strained trade relations and hurt feelings. Marquat, a Thorsen merchant, felt slighted during their transaction and vowed revenge. He has recruited a few friends and a family member to teach Jhonen a lesson – by way of a cudgel.

Marquat, and his thugs wait until the late afternoon before they take action. By this time, the crowds have cleared and Jhonen and his men are packing up and securing their supplies. Marquat’s group walks brazenly up to the caravan and begins beating Jhonen and his men with cudgels. Marquat feels confident that he can teach Jhonen a painful lesson, but he won’t expect the characters to intervene in his revenge.

They may hear the cries from surprised villagers when the tussle breaks out. The sounds are muffled, though, if

they happen to be indoors at the time – a Perception roll is required to hear the commotion.

Utuk escapes just as the melee breaks out, and runs to find the characters. He goes to the Hog’s Trotters first. He does his best to mime the conflict and then rushes back to the caravan, hopefully with the characters in tow.

They arrive to see that the melee is definitely swinging in Marquat’s favour. Jhonen bears a bloody mouth and visible bruises, and one of his men is prone on the ground. They were initially taken by surprise, but have drawn their short swords to defend themselves. Marquat, and his thugs, number eight men.

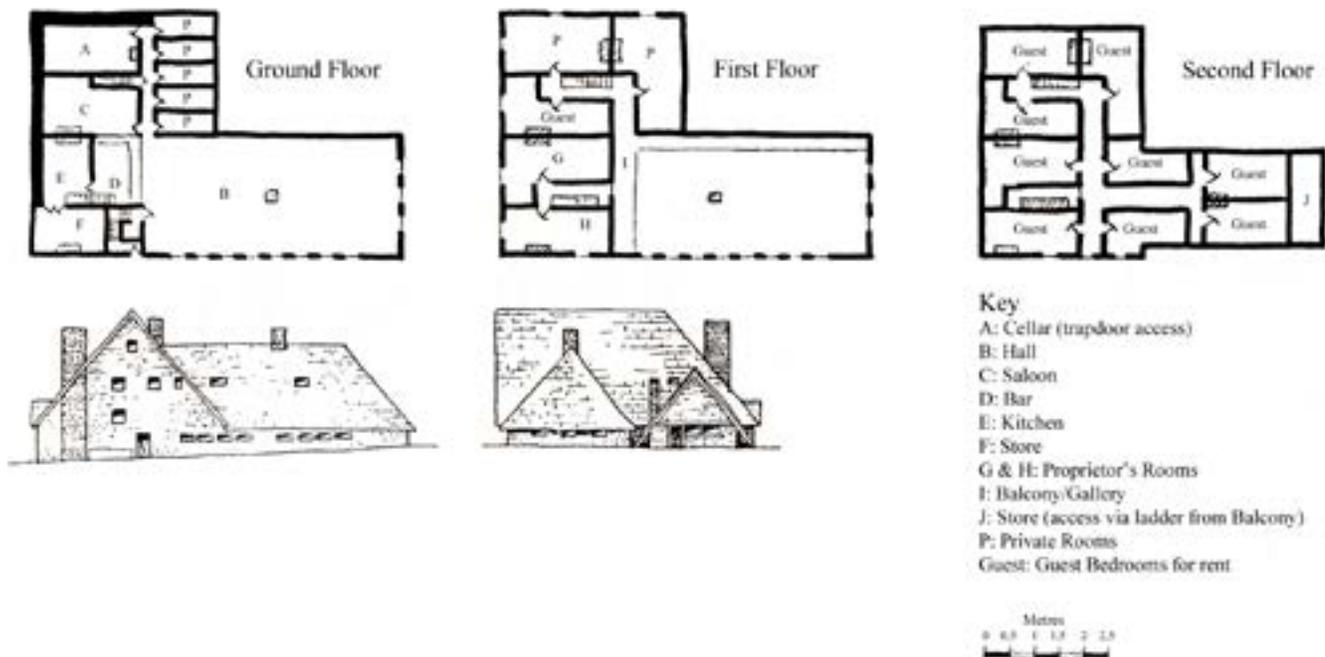
It won’t take much effort to dissuade Marquat’s men from keeping up the fight; they are no match for seasoned warriors. In RUNEQUEST terms, Marquat’s group can be considered Rabble. If any of Marquat’s men suffer damage they cease fighting and flee in fear. If three or more are taken out of the fight (killed or injured) the remainder rout.

When the melee is over, Jhonen suggests that they retire to the inn for the night. His men need some rest from their injuries, and he would prefer to leave by daybreak. If the characters press to intimidate or murder Marquat, Jhonen turns, spit out a bloody tooth, and say: “No, don’t bother. I think he’ll have learned his lesson. Let us not waste our time with filth of his kind.”

The evening passes without further incident. Most of Jhonen’s men rest in the inn’s common room; Jhonen pays for separate rooms for the characters if they choose. The caravan departs early the next morning.

### THE HOG’S TROTTERS DIAGRAM

This inn can also be used as the basis for any generic inn Games Masters might need. It conforms to a standard design and layout commonly found throughout The Realm.



## ROAD HAZARDS

The following events are intended to take place between Thorsen and Aylesford. Use some, or all, of these to punctuate the journey between the two settlements.

### ROCKSLIDE

While the sun is high in the sky, the characters ranging ahead of the caravan spot some trouble. A rockslide has shifted earth and large stones across their path, covering it in raised mounds of debris. Two trees lean precariously in the direction of the roadway, their root structures weakened by the shifting soil. It is apparent that this is a natural occurrence; rainfall from a few days prior has weakened an earth embankment close to the roadway.

Horses can easily navigate the obstacle, but the wagons risk damage if they are driven through it. A Hard Drive test is required to safely cross the unsteady terrain. Failure can lead to: wheels stuck in the debris field, damaged wheels or axles, or, with a fumble, the overturning of a wagon. Any of these events lead to Jhonen barking insults and threats of reduced pay.

The safest course of action is to spend time clearing the roadway of rocks and then smoothing over the earth with the carried farm implements. Have the characters make Brawn rolls to move the larger rocks to the roadside. A fumble results in light injury; that character sustains 1d3 hit points of damage to one of two hit locations. Roll a d10 – on a 1-5 the chest (back) is affected; on a 6-10 the abdomen (lower back) is affected. A failed test delays their road clearing, and one of the leaning trees falls directly into the roadway. Characters participating in the road clearing must make Evade tests to avoid the thick trunk. The tree's "skill" is 35% and inflicts 1d8 damage to a random hit location.

The leaning trees can be easily felled before the work on the road begins. Or, they may try to secure them with ropes and stakes – or use some other form of precaution.

### KIDNAPPING

Four hours before dusk, the riders may catch sight of a subtle disturbance on the eastern side of the road. A successful Perception roll allows a character to notice a large number of cracked tree branches and downtrodden plants just beyond the roadside. It appears that a group emerged from the undergrowth, moving partially out onto the road. Closer inspection reveals many footprints, and hoof prints, pressed into the soft soil. A failed test bypasses this scene, as the caravan rolls by too quickly.

A standard Tracking roll provides more detail. A pair of horse tracks lead north on the roadway until they reach this point of conflict. Six sets of horse tracks emerge from the underbrush, and woods, from the roadside. It can be judged that this struggle took place about a day and a half ago. On close inspection, fragments of hemp rope can be found beyond the roadside, indicating that bound captives were taken. From there, the entire group heads northeast through the underbrush. There are no signs of bloodshed to be found.

Searching the underbrush reveals torn and tattered bags and backpacks tossed haphazardly four metres from the road, their contents scattered. Shredded bedrolls and damaged camping gear can be found with just a few seconds of searching. A brass locket on a chain – inscribed to a Mathilde – is found if the characters spend five minutes digging through the underbrush.

The tracks can be followed, and eventually lead 15 kilometres to the barbarian encampment (see page 17). The back country, through which this trail leads, is navigable by horses but it is much slower going than by roadway. However, Jhonen does not appreciate this kind of distraction. He urges the caravan to press on, and tells the characters to be alert for bandits in the vicinity. If they are resolute in their desire to follow the trail they will risk dismissal from service.

#### KIDNAPPING – ALTERNATIVE

If Dalla is with the caravan, this would make a good place for the characters to encounter Rorke and his sons. Details will need to be adjusted, but the signs of passing the characters uncover belong to Dalla's father and four brothers. They have managed to overtake the caravan, using little-known pathways, and are staging an encounter further down the road.

### WOLVES IN THE NIGHT

As dusk approaches, it becomes clear that the caravan will not reach Aylesford that evening. Jhonen directs the characters to advance on horseback and look for a suitable site for a camp – a widening of the road, or a clearing that can be navigated by the wagons.

It doesn't take long to find a suitable spot. In a half kilometre, the road widens significantly, providing an adequate spot to pull the wagons off the main thoroughfare.

Once the wagons are situated, campfires are lit, tents are assembled, and a meal is prepared. Afterwards, Jhonen assigns watches to the guards; Jhonen and his men will not participate in watches.

As night deepens, watchmen hear the howling of wolves in the vicinity. Torch or lamplight reveal glittering eyes on the edge of wood and underbrush. A pack of wolves watch the camp intently but cannot muster the courage to attack unless the Games Master wishes to enliven proceedings. The wolves can be convinced to flee if a group of watchmen approach and make a lot of noise, or wave flaming torches. They are really only a threat if an individual wanders off into the woods; in which case, the wolves will be upon them, knock them prone, and attack.

## AMBUSH

A small group of barbarian tribesmen have set an ambush for any caravan that takes the North Road. A kilometre north of the Wolves in the Night stopover, the

caravan will come upon the trap that has been set. The barbarians have split into two groups. One group, of four barbarians, is a short distance down a side trail from the main road. The second group, of three barbarians, is set up on the road, prepared to lure the characters away from the caravan after peppering them with arrows.

In the morning, the caravan proceeds down a winding section of the north road. The leading outriders notice a side trail and could choose to investigate it, if they desire. If they pause and make an Easy Tracking check they see a number of hoofprints that head down the side trail. Following them leads the characters into direct conflict with the first group of barbarians, who wait a short distance down the trail, listening for the passing of the caravan. If the characters disregard the side trail, they proceed further down the road until they face missile fire from the second group. This group of three barbarians lets loose a short volley before turning and mounting their horses. They flee and attempt to lure the characters to chase them.



The barbarians' general plan is to lure the characters into pursuing the archers to the point of abandoning the protection of the caravan. Once the second group hears the caravan pass, they spur their horses into fast pursuit. The barbarians attack any characters who remain behind, subduing them as quickly as possible. They ride in tandem on the horses, the passenger hacking opponents with an axe, or leaping on to the wagon and then scrambling up to the drivers. The barbarians slay the drivers if they get the chance, picking off the wagons sequentially. If the bait is not taken, both groups will converge from opposite directions and do their best to slay or disable the characters and the caravan drivers.

This could be quite an active battle, with combat and movement occurring at a healthy gallop. Be sure to call for Riding tests for maintaining speed, and for complex mounted manoeuvres. The wagon drivers try to evade the barbarians, but the wagons are forced to slow if the road conditions become too treacherous.

If two or more barbarians are killed or disabled the rest flee, riding off down a trail towards their encampment. Their hope is that the force remaining at the encampment is enough to discourage the characters.

## THE DEVASTATION OF AYLESFORD

The caravan encounters additional signs of trouble around mid-day. The wagons arrive at the edge of the town of Aylesford, three hours travel north of the ambush. As they round a bend in the road, leading down into the town they spot the body of a villager, face down, in the roadway. The body is slashed with horrific lacerations; dried blood stains the clothes, and the earth is damp where it has laid. Beyond the squawk of crows, there are no sounds of activity from the town, and no smoke visible from chimneys.

As the caravan proceeds into the square it becomes clear that something horrible has occurred. Corpses litter the place, all bearing the same ragged wounds. Some are missing limbs or heads, and appear to have been gnawed by wild animals. Bodies can also be seen outside the tight cluster of buildings – along the northern road and scattered in the pastures.

Doorways yawn open and no light is visible from within the buildings. It appears that any surviving inhabitants

have either fled the town or hidden themselves well enough to escape detection.

Aylesford has suffered from the violent rampage of a chaos hybrid. Manuun has unleashed this foul beast on the town as a vile experiment – to test the hybrid's abilities for the time when the barbarian hordes raid The Vale in full force. The horror was set loose in the very early hours of the day, to kill, destroy, and devour.

Page 16 shows Aylesford and its environs. The North Road bypasses the town, with auxiliary paths through the woodland leading into its centre from both north and south points. Aylesford is large by local standards, although only about a third of the size of Lurien. Its large, circular market area hosts regular fairs for the surrounding villages and this is where Jhonen intended to trade. The plentiful supply of good quality timber makes Aylesford a centre for excellent timber and wooden goods, including very high quality charcoal.

Notes concerning major buildings in Aylesford are as follows.

### THE MILL

Aylesford's water mill stands beside a redirected stream from the Gatharis River. Wooden bins line the walls, some filled with flour, and others containing raw grain to be processed. The water wheel spins, and the internal gearing creaks and groans.

A half-dead farmer can be found, prone, near the entrance. He bears the same vicious injuries as the corpses found throughout the hamlet. The farmer coughs raggedly if examined, and briefly convulses. He will only have time to utter "...the beast..." before expiring.

### THE CHAPEL

The Aylesford chapel is a peaked-roof structure with a central prayer hall, and two adjoining chambers. One chamber is the modest room for the local priest; the other serves as a storage room for various ceremonial tools. The chapel serves the cult of Aliya, which is the prominent religion in the region.

The central hall contains a number of low benches facing a table against the opposite wall. A variety of idols cover the table, all representations of the goddess. The roof of the hall is supported by a number of evenly spaced pillars.

The chaos hybrid rests dormant in the chapel's crypt when the characters arrive in the town. It has spent the past few hours recovering from the exhaustion of its violent rampage and the pounds of human flesh it has devoured. It is very perceptive, however, and hears anyone entering the



chapel. For more on the monster's tactics, see the boxed section opposite.

### THE GENERAL STORE

Aylesford's general store has been the site of a serious battle. The front doors have been beaten down – practically torn from their hinges – and a large number of corpses are found within. It appears that a number of the villagers fled into this structure for safety, and tried to defend themselves from the chaos hybrid. Judging from the gory scene found within, they had little success.

### THE WELL

The well is covered, and has a bucket and winch attached to it. It descends 30 metres. A character could be lowered by rope down the well, but the shaft would be a very tight fit, and would take a great deal of time. It would also be for naught because there is nothing below but the accumulated water.

### THE FARM HOUSES

A few farmhouses are located close to the hamlet's square, but most are spread out across the neighbouring countryside. They are all single-story structures built of stone with thatched roofs.

The houses closer to the square are all vacated and many have corpses littered throughout. Some of the doors show signs of being forced open.

A few of the more distant houses are occupied by terrified families that have shuttered windows and barred any entrances. The people can be calmed down if they are told that the threat has been eliminated, but otherwise they remain indoors, terrified. Once they can be assured that all danger has passed, they assist in the cleanup of the hamlet, and can aid the characters in any other tasks they require.

### JHONEN'S SUGGESTIONS

Once Jhonen has had the chance to survey the situation he asks the characters to search through the buildings around the town square. He suggests the general store first, because he would like move his men to a safe location if a

## HANDLING THE MASSACRE

Aylesford is an exercise in wanton carnage. Few will have ever encountered such a terrible scene before - and even those who have witnessed battlefields will still be unprepared for the dreadful scene awaiting them in the town.

Every character must make a Hard Willpower roll. Those who succeed are able to function with a relative semblance of normality, although their mood is likely to be grim for some days to come, and sleep disturbed by images of the carnage.

Those who fail the roll are caught in a state of shock. They immediately function at the Exhausted Fatigue level, and the effects endure while they remain in Aylesford, and for 6 hours after leaving. Nightmares are assured.

Those who fumble the Willpower roll simply cannot function. They suffer the Debilitated Fatigue level which endures for as long as they are in the town and for 18 hours after they leave. They require some form of healing or counselling if they are to overcome the horrors they have witnessed.

threat is still out there. Once the characters have cleared the store, Jhonen has his men dismount and 'hole up' there until the characters check the rest of Aylesford. Jhonen and his men assist them once some level of safety has been assured.

One of Jhonen's men recommends that they deal with the great numbers of corpses scattered across the hamlet. He suggests that a mass burial would be a decent course of action; Jhonen agrees.

Excavation can occur on the north edge of the chapel's burial plots, extending in to a nearby pasture. It takes a great deal of effort to accomplish, but the remaining locals can assist. It is terrible work and takes hours to complete, even with locals assisting. Burying the dead cannot be accomplished in a single day. Jhonen, and his men, recite prayers to Xalghith and Aliya and observe a period of silence for the memory of the slain.

## ENTER THE SHAMAN

Jhonen suggests that they camp in Aylesford that evening. He has no interest in leading his caravan in darkness, especially with the threats that they have faced so far and Aylesford's devastation to deal with. He even hints that it may be in their best interest to return to Lurien tomorrow.

There is room in the chapel to occupy most of the caravan's people, though the characters can determine where they want to set up a camp, and whether they want to prepare any defences. Utuk suggests a patrol of the perimeter.

During the night a small group of barbarians return to Aylesford to retrieve the Hybrid. Manuun, the shaman, and two of his tribesmen sneak up to the edge of the surrounding woods to observe the state of the town. They are immediately suspicious if the wagons are visible, or if there are any fires lit in the building hearths. Manuun orders his men to advance into Aylesford to determine what has occurred.

## THE HYBRID'S TACTICS

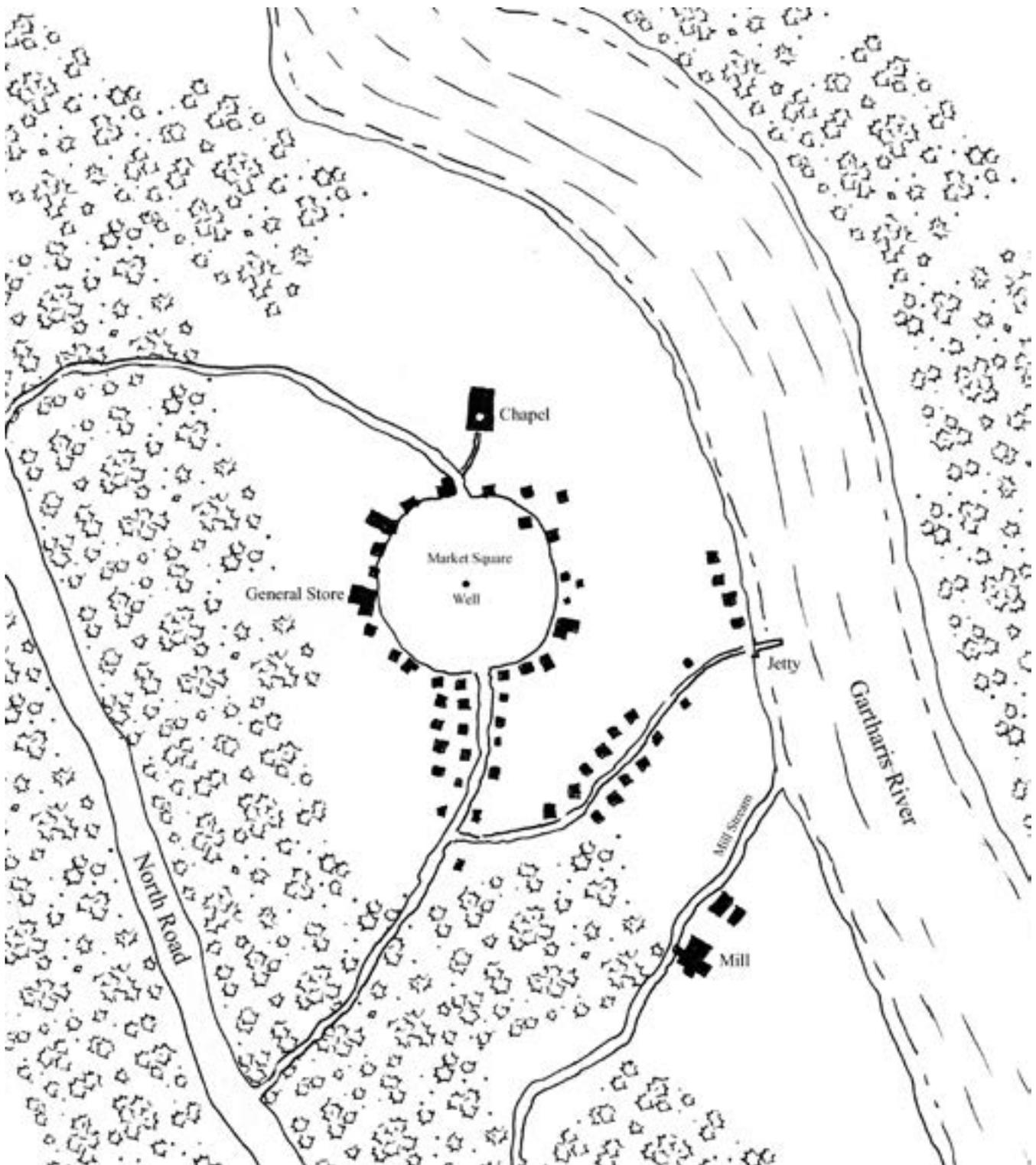
The Chaos Hybrid has been bred by the Ophidians of the Gartharis Mountains with one aim only: to kill. It is large, strong, fast and cunning. It shows no mercy. Its recent efforts have weakened it, meaning it must recuperate and the monster has sought rest in the crypt of the chapel. It only requires a few hours though, and by nightfall of the day the caravan arrives it will be ready for more slaughter.

The Hybrid uses shadows, cover and rooftops. Having indulged in relatively easy slaughter already, it now seeks a different approach and intends to stalk and ambush, using the town's layout to full advantage. It therefore bides its time, hides, and then plays a long game of cat and mouse with those still alive in the central town, picking-off stragglers one by one, butchering them and then going in search of the next.

But the Hybrid is no mindless killer. It employs a variety of different combat Special Effects to Trip, Disarm, and incapacitate foes. Those it can render helpless it does so and then leaves them, intent on returning to finish them later. The Hybrid knows how to use a sling, and has a ready supply of missiles to Stun opponents before moving in with more immediate weapons.

The atmosphere to strive for is one of the lone, inhuman, stalker/slasher. The Hybrid uses every part of the environment to aid it, retreating when it has to only to return later to continue its spree. It is quite prepared to move to the outlying houses and murder the terrified locals who have locked themselves in. While it lives, no one is safe.

# AYLESFORD AND ENVIRONS



The barbarians cautiously sneak into Aylesford, hiding in shadows, and using the buildings for as much cover as possible. They are alert to any posted sentries, and try to retreat back to the woods rather than face a confrontation. The Hybrid, also loose in the town, does not attack these barbarians, whom it recognises as its masters. If the characters have posted sentries, and can win an Opposed Perception vs. Stealth test they'll be able to detect the barbarians and can try to eliminate or capture them, if they wish. If a combat occurs the barbarians do their best to disable the characters so that they have the opportunity to flee back to their encampment. Manuun flees at the first sounds of conflict, returning to the encampment to muster his forces to assault Aylesford the following day.

Manuun is the only one who can command the Hybrid, having been taught the skill by the Ophidians who bred the beast. He must have sight of the Hybrid and must succeed in an Influence roll to direct its activities, which include making it retreat and return to the barbarian's encampment. These verbal commands are in the Ophidians' native tongue: hisses and whistles that approximate simple commands: "Cease," "Follow me," "Attack that one," and so forth. If Manuun fails an Influence roll then the Hybrid simply ignores that command. If a roll is fumbled, the Hybrid does the opposite. Manuun, being a shaman, has his own command of spirits - see his description on page 22.

## THE OLD STONE BRIDGE

Four kilometres north of Aylesford stretches the Old Stone Bridge, a sturdy structure spanning the raging Gartharis River. The bridge was built more than 100 years ago, and is rarely used by travellers. On the eastern side, a stone watchtower stands disused, with a yawning doorway and vacant windows. In years past, the watchtower served as a defensible position against the raids of the barbaric Gartharis tribes. Now, it is simply roadside scenery.

The North road shifts close to the river as it nears the Old Stone Bridge. The banks of the river slope at a sharp angle, and there is a three metre drop from the shore to the surface of the river.

The Old Stone Bridge is easily crossed on foot, and can be crossed by wagons travelling single file. It is not wide enough for two wagons to pass, or travel side-by-side. It is well-built and in good repair.

This location could be the site of a final assault by Manuun's warband if they muster their numbers for a greater assault on Aylesford. The bridge is defensible and Aylesford has plenty of materials that can be used to blockade

one end of the bridge, decreasing the barbarians' chances of crossing the river. The Gartharis River is strong and wide here; swimming across is always at a Formidable level of difficulty. Few of the barbarians can swim and so they need the bridge to pass between the civilised lands on the Aylesford side, and the wilder lands to the north east.

## THE BARBARIAN ENCAMPMENT

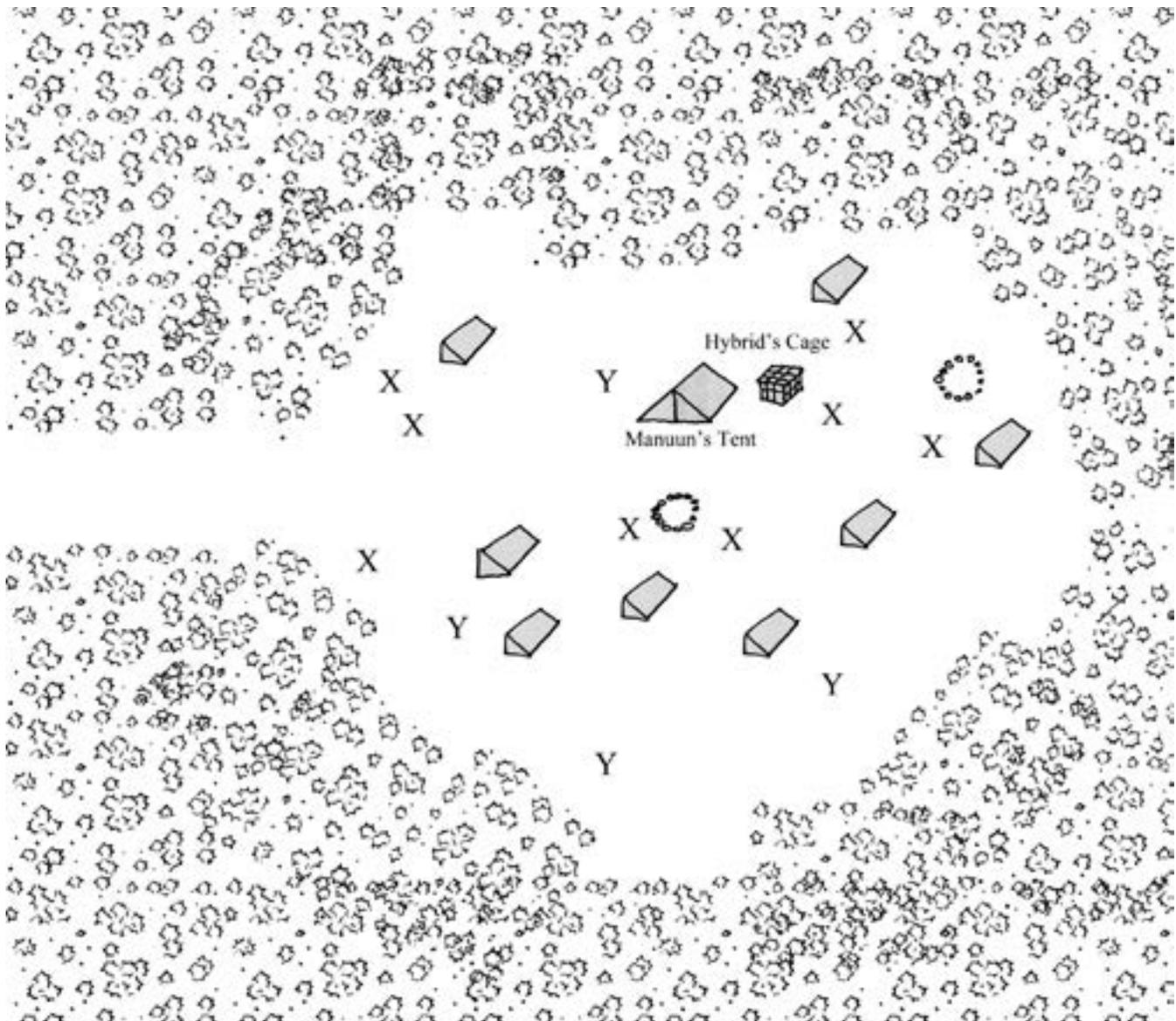
The shaman's warband has established an encampment in a clearing one kilometre to the north east of Aylesford, on the far side of the Old Stone Bridge. Their animal hide lean-tos are deep in the woods. A few smouldering campfires are dotted across the clearing. See page 18 for a map of the encampment.

In the morning and afternoon hours, barbarians are located on the spots on the map marked with an 'x'. During the evening hours, barbarians are found at the locations marked with a 'y'. Bound hostages are held in the cage which is also used for transporting the Hybrid. Hidden in the eastern edge of the wood is a cart that is used for transporting the monster back into Garthari lands. The barbarians' ponies are tethered out of sight. There are nine lean-tos in total, the largest belonging to the Manuun, the shaman.

The barbarians always post sentries, regardless of the time of day. The encampment is most active in the morning and afternoon, while the barbarians tend to their horses, eat, and sharpen weapons. There are four barbarians active in the evenings, on watch. Two are posted by the horses, near one of the trails exiting the camp, and the other two are spread out keeping an eye on the other trails.

Manuun's warband consists of 16 barbarians, including himself. The characters could face a challenging fight if they tried to take on the entire group. But it's likely that the barbarian forces could be halved if the characters have already faced some during the Ambush encounter and the Dead of Night encounter at Aylesford.

There are two captives currently in the camp. A traumatised husband and wife are currently bound in one of the lean-tos. Daek and Mathilde, Thorsen villagers, were captured prior to the Kidnapping scenario on page 11, and have been subjected to beatings. One of their friends, Serg, was captured as well, but has since been fed to the chaos hybrid. Human bones and animal excrement can be found near the shaman's lean-to.



## ENCAMPMENT TACTICS

The barbarians are very well organised and confident in the presence of Manuun. If the sentries are engaged, their first action is to fight defensively and make enough noise to alert the camp. The barbarians initially attempt to screen Manuun from any attacks, allowing him time to call upon his spirits. Once they have determined how many opponents they are facing, they advance and attempt to surround or flank the enemy.

The barbarians will not slay the characters outright. If given the chance, they will try to disable them and take them hostage. They will be taken to Distaff Peak and made into slaves (see *Reckoning at Distaff Peak*, in BOOK OF QUESTS) or used in dread rituals by Jedakiah and the Ophidians.

## CONCLUDING THE SCENARIO

The scenario has many possible outcomes. Some of the most likely are described below. The end of the scenario is left deliberately vague because it depends greatly on the actions taken by the characters. They should, at least, be able to collect enough information to find the location of the barbarian encampment. And, launching an assault, ignoring Aylesford altogether (if the characters trace the camp first) is a possibility.

If the characters do not take the fight to the barbarians, they waste no time retaliating. Manuun lays siege to Aylesford at an opportune point after his first reconnaissance.

Capturing Manuun, alive, has serious ramifications for this scenario. His tribesmen may try to rescue him, of course, but he would be an immense bargaining chip for the characters. If Manuun regains his freedom he will not stop until he has seen the death of all the characters. In that case, he seeks immediate revenge if he has a number of surviving tribesmen to aid him. Otherwise, his group retreats back to Gartharis, and Manuun plans to strike back at a later date. The Games Master could use him as a recurring foil for the characters.

## POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

1. Jhonen and the characters see-sense and flee Aylesford, returning to Lurien. Jhonen intends to inform the local duke of what has happened in Aylesford and alert him to the likelihood of more, and more ferocious, barbarian and monstrous assaults. The Chaos Hybrid is proof that chaos is rising once again in The Realm - and clearly something commanding considerable power is behind it. If Manuun is captured and brought before the duke of Lurien, he remains resolutely silent about who her serves. Torture makes him talk and he names Jedakiah as 'The Master' and 'Servant of the Chaos Mother' but says no more about the sorcerer's power.
2. The characters manage to kill or capture the Hybrid and some, possibly all, of the barbarian advanced guard. If Manuun is also captured or killed, then they have achieved a small victory: the remaining barbarians return to Jedakiah to inform him of the situation. This would mark a good point to flee Aylesford, taking evidence of a new threat from Chaos with them.
3. The barbarians amass and descend on Aylesford to capture the Hybrid and complete the massacre.

There is an opportunity for a heroic stand at the Old Stone Bridge, house-to-house skirmishing in Aylesford's streets or, more sensibly, fleeing as fast as they can from the devastated town. If the barbarians recapture the Hybrid they may let the characters and others escape: their experiment was successful. Jedakiah can breed many more of these vicious Hybrids, train others to control them, and send an army of Chaos against The Realm, taking control of it for himself and the Chaos Mother.

4. The barbarians are defeated entirely. Some will no doubt reveal that they serve a sorcerer who dwells in the mountains of the far north and that his power is unmatched in The Realm. Manuun remains stoic, revealing little. If the barbarians are defeated in this way, then the characters can return and alert those who hold power in The Vale.

In particular there are a number of ways that locating the barbarian encampment could work. The characters could follow the trail from the Kidnapping scene all the way to the camp; also, trails lead from the Ambush scene, and from Aylesford, back to the clearing. If the characters take a barbarian prisoner during any part of the adventure they can intimidate/interrogate him into revealing the location of the camp. It takes Tracking rolls to navigate woods without overly slowing pace.

The true purpose of this scenario is to introduce the characters to Jedakiah's evil and expose them to the kinds of forces and creatures he has at his disposal. The characters' survival leads to further adventure, as described in the rest of the scenarios in Book of Quests. Their death or capture serves little purpose other than to satisfy Jedakiah's villainy.

### JEDAKIAH?

Although mentioned several times in this scenario, Jedakiah does not appear personally - although he is the major villain from BOOK OF QUESTS.

He is the archetypal evil sorcerer. Corrupted by chaos and dreams of power, he seeks to free the Chaos Mother - the goddess of Chaos - and thereby become a demigod himself. Jedakiah is magically very powerful, a combination of his own study, veneration of the Chaos Mother, and an alliance with the sinister Ophidians - ancient serpentmen who also venerate the Chaos Goddess but originate from a different plane of existence.

Games Masters can substitute any scheming sorcerer of their choosing of course; Jedakiah need not be used.

# NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

## JHONEN

Jhonen is a Valeman who has worked the caravan routes for the past decade. He is a very capable merchant who has made a modest fortune with his hard work and ingenuity.

In the past year, Jhonen's attention has drifted from his quest for profits, alone. He has fallen in love with an inkeeper, named Gisal, in the city of Nyren. He longs for her but his social brusqueness forces a barrier between them. This frustrates him no end, and he has found it hard to accept that this obstacle isn't as easily resolved as a trade negotiation.

Jhonen is fervent member of the Xalgith cult. He believes strongly in the principles of his faith and frequently recites the blessings and doctrine of Xalgith.

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 11	Action Points	2	1-3	Right Leg	1/5
CON: 12	Damage Modifier	0	4-6	Left Leg	1/5
SIZ: 13	Magic Points	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
DEX: 10	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	2/7
INT: 14	Strike Rank	10	13-15	Right Arm	1/4
POW: 13	Armour	Leather	16-18	Left Arm	1/4
CHA: 14	Abilities	None	19-20	Head	1/5
	Magic	None			

**Skills:** *Athletics 59%, Brawn 62%, Commerce 86%, Deceit 67%, Drive 89%, Endurance 62%, Evade 56%, Locale 66%, Navigate 81%, Perception 64%, Survival 67%, Unarmed 59%, Willpower 62%*

**Passions:** *Loyalty to The Vale 80%, Love Gisal 90%, Hate Laziness 70%*

**Combat Style:** *Valeman Merchant (Shortsword, Dagger) 75%*

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
<i>Dagger</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>1d4+1</i>	<i>6/8</i>
<i>Shortsword</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>1d6+1</i>	<i>5/7</i>

## UTUK

Utuk hails from the steppes of the Long Riding. He has lived in the Vale for eight years, employed by Jhonen the entire time.

His tribal scars across his face, arms and chest mark him as a member of the Scaled Crane Tribe, a barbarian people who worship Feyr. His tongue has been cut-out for crimes against his people: his exile is self-imposed and he will not return to the Long Riding until he believes he has atoned for his crimes.

Although mute Utuk has developed an eloquent vocabulary of grunts, gestures and expressions. It is not difficult to understand what he means or intends even though he has no voice.

Despite his imposing appearance, Utuk has a thoughtful demeanour and a general calmness about him. He greatly enjoys games of chance and sleight of hand, parlour tricks. He will often entertain his compatriots with sleight of hand by the campfire.

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 12	Action Points	3	1-3	Right Leg	1/7
CON: 17	Damage Modifier	0	4-6	Left Leg	1/7
SIZ: 13	Magic Points	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
DEX: 15	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	2/9
INT: 15	Strike Rank	12	13-15	Right Arm	1/6
POW: 13	Armour	Leather	16-18	Left Arm	1/6
CHA: 14	Abilities	None	19-20	Head	1/7
	Magic	None			

**Skills:** *Athletics 59%, Brawn 62%, Drive 70%, Endurance 62%, Evade 56%, Locale 66%, Perception 64%, Ride 90%, Sign Language 90%, Survival 67%, Unarmed 59%, Willpower 62%*

**Passions:** *Loyalty to Jhonen 80%, Atone for Crimes 90%*

**Combat Style:** *Long Riding Barbarian (Spear, Shield, Sword, Bow) 74%*

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
<i>Shortspear</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>1d8+1</i>	<i>4/5</i>
<i>Shortsword</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>1d6+1</i>	<i>5/7</i>
<i>Target</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>1d3+1</i>	<i>4/9</i>
<i>Short Bow</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1d6</i>	<i>4/4</i>

### JHONEN'S CARAVANEERS

The rest of Johnen's group are Valemen who have worked the caravan routes for a varied length of time. They are skilled horsemen, but they are not warriors, and will not fare well in combat against trained opponents. They are a boisterous bunch and will happily converse with the characters – and anyone else willing to receive an earful.

### THORSEN THUGS

The thugs are friends and family members of the tradesman, Marquet. They are unarmoured, equipped only with cudgels, and are no match for skilled combatants. Their numbers are their greatest advantage, and they do their best to surround and overwhelm individuals. They flee at the first instance of injury, or surrender if cornered. Use these statistics for Dalla's father and brothers

### WOLVES

The wolves of rural Vale are a mangy lot. They only fear men in groups, and aggressively drag down lone travellers.

Attributes	1d20	Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	1/5
Damage Modifier: 0	4–6	Left Leg	1/5
Magic Points: 11	7–9	Abdomen	2/6
Movement: 6 metres	10-12	Chest	2/7
Strike Rank Bonus: +9	13–15	Right Arm	1/4
Armour: Light Leather	16–18	Left Arm	1/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	1/5

**Skills:** Athletics 35%, Brawn 42%, Drive 59%, Endurance 42%, Evade 28%, Locale 65%, Perception 30%, Survival 35%, Unarmed 25%, Willpower 32%

**Passions:** Loyalty to Jhonen 50%

**Combat Style:** Valeman Driver (Shortsword, Dagger) 55%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Shortsword	M	S	1d6+1d2	6/8
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1+1d2	6/8

Attributes	1d20	Location	AP/HP
Damage Modifier: 0	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 10	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Movement: 6 metres	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Strike Rank Bonus: +10	10-12	Chest	0/7
Armour: None	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Magic: None	19–20	Head	0/5

**Skills:** Athletics 40%, Brawn 43%, Endurance 38%, Evade 23%, Locale 66%, Perception 34%, Survival 20%, Unarmed 30%, Willpower 21%

**Passions:** Loyalty to Thorsen 75%

**Combat Style:** Village Thug (Cudgel) 35%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Cudgel	M	L	1d6	4/4

Attributes	1d20	Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Hind Leg	2/5
Damage Modifier: 0	4–6	Left Hind Leg	2/5
Magic Points: 11	7–9	Hindquarter	2/6
Movement: 10 metres	10-12	Forequarters	2/6
Strike Rank Bonus: +10	13–15	Right Front Leg	2/5
Armour: Fur and Hide	16–18	Left Front Leg	2/5
Abilities: Night sight	19–20	Head	2/5

**Skills:** Athletics 80%, Endurance 52%, Evade 55%, Perception 60%, Stealth 55%, Survival 40%, Tracking 70%, Willpower 43%

**Combat Style:** Wolf Pack Pounce 45%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	S	S	1d8	As for Head
Claw	S	S	1d3	As for Leg

## MANUUN: CORRUPT SHAMAN

Manuun serves as one of Jedekiah's many agents, and has been thoroughly corrupted by the influence of the Chaos Mother. Manuun, like others, fell under the Chaos Mother's power many years ago and has been compelled to seek-out and free trapped spirits of Chaos, Disease and Curse ever since. He was probably destined to become one of the sorcerer's minions.

Manuun bears many scars and is covered in an assortment of tattoos. Most notably, he bears a tattoo that covers part of his forehead and scalp, which is an odd combination of the chaos and fertility runes. This tattoo appears fresh and leaks a pus-like solution that gives his face the appearance of being coated in a discoloured sweat.

The shaman is an intimidating figure, and his barbarian tribesmen do not question his commands. Manuun has proved to be ruthless, unforgiving, and prone to violent outbursts. He has promised a great deal to his men; he has told them of the great wealth, and power, they will possess when the towns of the Realm burn.

Manuun has been gifted a fetch; Uurungun, the Vermin Spider. The fetish holding Uurungun is a ring of black crystal Manuun wears on his left, little finger. Anyone who watches the ring sees its substance writhe and pulse from time to time, as though alive.

The shaman is also capable of controlling the Chaos Hybrid using his Influence skill and employing the hissing, whistling language of the Ophidians. On a successful Influence roll the Hybrid obeys, and acts to, Manuun's simple commands. On a failed roll it ignores him; on a fumble it does the opposite.

Characteristics	Attributes		1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 12	Action Points	3	1-3	Right Leg	1/7
CON: 13	Damage Modifier	0	4-6	Left Leg	1/7
SIZ: 13	Magic Points	15	7-9	Abdomen	2/8
DEX: 11	Movement	6m	10-12	Chest	2/9
INT: 15	Strike Rank	10	13-15	Right Arm	1/6
POW: 15	Armour	Leather	16-18	Left Arm	1/6
CHA: 10	Abilities	None	19-20	Head	1/7

**Skills:** Athletics 50%, Brawn 48%, Endurance 55%, Evade 50%, Influence 70%, Locale 66%, Lore (Chaos Mother) 102%, Perception 64%, Survival 67%, Willpower 62%

**Passions:** Loyalty to Jedekiah 80%, Love Chaos 90%

### Magic

*Animism: Binding 68%, Trance 77%*

### Spirits

*Uurungun - Allied Chaos Fetch*

*INT 15, POW 16, CHA 9*

*Spirit Bite 75%, Lore (Chaos Mother) 130%, Willpower 82%*

*Abilities: Manifestation, Possession*

*Uurungun is an allied fetch that once served the Chaos Mother. Its form is that of a huge, black and grey spider with the head of a rat. It can manifest physically and acts to defend Manuun if he is attacked. For this purpose it has 2 Action Points and 16 Hit Points. Its bite causes no physical damage - the victim feels an icy chill - but a bitten victim becomes possessed by Uurungun until such time that it wishes to release the victim. A possessed victim is forced to protect Manuun physically and lay down his life, if commanded. A possessed victim is effectively a Chaos Mother slave and gains Loyalty (Chaos Mother) 82% for the duration of the possession. Manuun can command that Uurungun maintain or release a possession as he feels fit.*

**Combat Style:** Gartharis Shaman (Axe, Dagger) 52%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Hand Axe	M	L	1d6+1	4/8
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1	6/8

## COMMANDING THE DEAD

With so many dying an unexpected, violent death in Aylesford, it is inevitable that the sundered souls of the townsfolk become malignant spirits, still tied to the town. Aylesford is therefore a place where Haunts take root, and Manuun knows this. Entering the Spirit World around the town he can see, and commune with, those souls that have the potential to become Haunts and curse them into doing so (see RUNEQUEST page 406).

Manuun can awaken 1d4 Haunts if he needs to. These Haunts have the following characteristics and abilities:

*Intensity 2, INT 10, POW 8, CHA 10*

*Locale 80%, Influence 40%, Willpower 66%*

*Miasma, Glamour*

The Haunts want the living to share in their pain and suffering and re-enact their terrible deaths. The Chaos Hybrid appears as a barely-visible, wraith-like form that tears at the Haunts body, which howls its grief and despair. The Miasma ability then takes effect upon all those who witness the Haunting

## MANUUN'S BARBARIANS

Manuun's barbarian tribesmen are capable warriors and skilled horsemen. They are not foolish, however, and will flee any conflict where they are greatly outnumbered or suffer a number of losses. They will prefer to retreat and antagonise the characters at a later time than fight to the death, to the man.

Attributes	1d20	Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
Damage Modifier: +1d2	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
Magic Points: 11	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
Movement: 6 metres	10-12	Chest	2/8
Strike Rank Bonus: +10	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
Armour: Hard Leather	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
Abilities: None	19-20	Head	2/6

**Skills:** Athletics 59%, Brawn 62%, Endurance 62%, Evade 56%, Locale 66%, Perception 64%, Ride 85%, Survival 67%, Unarmed 59%, Willpower 62%

**Passions:** Loyalty to Manuun 80%, Love Battle 70%

**Combat Style:** Gartharis Barbarian (Axe, Short Bow, Shield, Dagger) 58%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Battleaxe	M	M	1d6+1+1d2	4/8
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1+1d2	6/8
Target	L	S	1d3+1+1d2	4/9
Short Bow	L	-	1d6+1d2	4/4

## CHAOS HYBRID

This horror is a hybrid of man and bear, covered in patches of fur and crowned with wicked, curling horns akin to those of a mountain goat.

It has been specially bred by the Ophidians who are in league with Jedakiah. It is an experiment in ferocity: the Ophidians have carefully manipulated its psyche and physiology to make it strong, fast, resilient and utterly merciless. However, it needs to be controlled and the Ophidians have been concerned that, consumed by blood-lust, such hybrids will be uncontrollable. So, the Aylesford experiment was devised. Manuun and a small force would take this hybrid into the field, command it to slaughter, and then attempt to regain control. The experiment has been horribly, horribly successful.

The hybrid has been conditioned for limited, single-purpose sapience. It can use cunning, plan strategies, employ tactics and is self-aware. In terms of intelligence it is akin to an alpha male wolf (indeed, parts of its brain were taken from Gartharis wolves). It can use weapons and is armed with a sling, a long spear, and its own formidable weapons. It enjoys raw flesh and, like a bear, will feast on its prey from time to time.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Location	AP/HP
STR: 18	Action Points	4	1-3	Right Leg 3/8
CON: 26	Damage Modifier	+1d4	4-6	Left Leg 3/8
SIZ: 17	Magic Points	15	7-9	Abdomen 3/9
DEX: 27	Movement	10m	10-12	Chest 3/10
INS: 13	Strike Rank	20	13-15	Right Arm 3/7
POW: 15	Armour	Tough	16-18	Left Arm 3/7
CHA: 1		Hide	19-20	Head 4/8

### Abilities

*Blood Sense, Chaos Feature (Leaper), Formidable Natural Weapons*

**Skills:** Athletics 90%, Brawn 90%, Endurance 90%, Evade 80%, Perception 65%, Survival 80%, Unarmed 80%, Willpower 70%

**Passions:** Killing 110%

**Combat Style:** Chaos Bastard (Unarmed, Sling, Spear) 80%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Claws	M	T	1d4+1d4	As for Arm
Bite	M	T	1d6+1d4	As for Head
Horns	M	S	1d4+1d4	As for Head
Longspear	L	VL	1d10+1+1d4	4/10
Sling	L	-	1d8	1/2

*The Hybrid's general tactic is to disable a foe from range using its Sling, with a Stun Location effect. It then closes-in to stab with its spear, and then use natural weapons to finish the opponent. If faced with a straightforward melee, it looks to impale with its spear, leaving the weapon in the wound, and then to continue attacks with claws, teeth and horns. The claws can Sunder and the horns can Bash.*

# COMING SOON FROM THE DESIGN MECHANISM



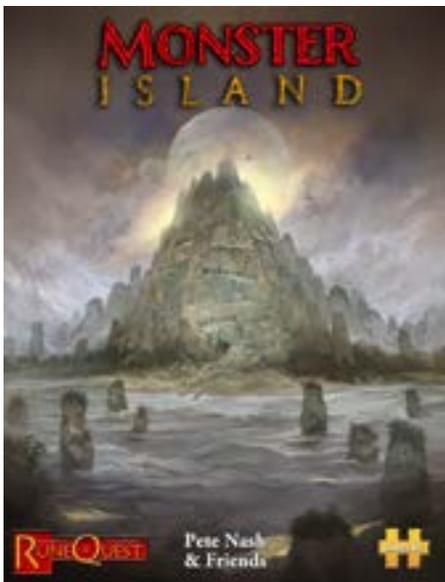
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