

2013



The Guilds of Vara

CONTENT

CONTENT	1	THE KNIGHTLY ORDERS	33
IMPORTANT!	2	<i>The Code Of Chivalry</i>	33
THE GUILDS OF VARA	3	<i>Fairness</i>	33
<i>The Legion of Battle</i>	4	<i>Nobility</i>	33
<i>Notable members</i>	4	<i>Valour</i>	33
<i>The Fellowship of Hermes</i>	5	<i>Honour</i>	33
<i>Notable members</i>	5	<i>Courtesy</i>	33
<i>The Children of Shashay</i>	6	<i>Loyalty</i>	33
<i>Notable Members</i>	6	<i>The Spirit of Knighthood</i>	33
<i>The League of Pathfinders</i>	7	<i>The Wolves of Calsmeer</i>	34
<i>Notable members</i>	7	<i>Notable members</i>	34
<i>The Trade Guilds</i>	8	<i>The Red Falcons</i>	34
<i>The Guild of Alchemists</i>	8	<i>Notable members</i>	34
THE SPECIAL GROUPS OF VARA	9	<i>Knights of the Blazing Sun</i>	35
<i>The Guild of Bards and Heralds</i>	10	<i>Notable members</i>	35
<i>Notable Members</i>	10	<i>The Valkyries</i>	35
<i>The Bounty Dogs</i>	11	<i>Notable members</i>	35
<i>Notable members</i>	13	<i>The Storm Knights</i>	35
<i>The Order of the Broken Sword</i>	14	<i>Notable members</i>	35
<i>Current Members</i>	14	<i>Tiger Bloods</i>	36
<i>The Guild of Incanters</i>	16	<i>Notable members</i>	36
<i>Shining Rain School</i>	19	<i>The Order of the Hawk</i>	36
<i>The Red Sun School</i>	21	<i>Notable members</i>	36
<i>Notable members</i>	21	<i>The Knights of Vara</i>	36
<i>The Silverwing Faire</i>	22	<i>Notable members</i>	36
<i>The College of Brehons</i>	23	<i>The Knights of the Iron Heart</i>	37
<i>Notable members</i>	23	<i>Notable members</i>	37
<i>The Order of the Rajnee</i>	24	<i>The Order of Lanius</i>	37
<i>Notable members</i>	24	Criminal Organisations of Vara	38
<i>Dwarven Warrior Societies</i>	26	<i>Black Orchids</i>	38
<i>The Order of the Bronze Light</i>	26	<i>Black Wolves</i>	38
<i>The Order of Brackzer</i>	26	<i>The Purple Brotherhood</i>	38
MERCENARY GROUPS OF VARA	27	<i>Magatanolier Cartel</i>	38
<i>The Silver Swords</i>	28	<i>Cartielli Cartel</i>	38
<i>Notable members</i>	29	<i>The Shadow Claw</i>	38
<i>The Crimson Blades</i>	30		
<i>The Heartbreakers</i>	31		
<i>Notable members</i>	31		
<i>The Goblin Free Company</i>	32		
<i>Notable members</i>	32		

IMPORTANT!

*The information in this document should NOT be considered known in full by all characters. Details of specific guilds and groups should be limited in the most part to Characters who are members or those with a high 'Lore' skill. When in doubt always check with a Ref.
A good example would be the existence, history and weapons of the Bounty Dogs.*

The Pathfinder system and rules are copyrighted under current United Kingdom Law and are the property of the author, Mr. Royce Porter. All Rights are reserved. Permission given to store the manual in electronic form is granted via issue of a copy of the manual by the author or downloading it from the Internet. No part of the manual or associated documents may be reproduced in whole or in part without permission of the author. Permission to reproduce for personal use ONLY is granted.

All NPCs and records of characters are covered by the copyright. While all Character backgrounds remain the intellectual property of their respective creators, should the player leave the system then Pathfinder retains the right to use the character for story-line purposes unless said creator requests in writing that this not be done. Any ideas that are submitted to the rules that are incorporated into the system become the sole property of the System.

Now bugger off and have fun, that's what it's about after all!

THE GUILDS OF VARA

The Legion of Battle

Guild master:



Lord Eric Firebrand. This Erinite noble has earned a reputation for heroism and courage. Standing a good five foot six in armour and wielding a long-sword and shield he has faced down larger opponents and won with good humour and manners, not to mention also rendering immediate healing skills if needed. He is a man that does not love to fight, merely one that is skilled at it and knows when a fight is worth fighting. The only things to match his prowess on the field of combat are the tales of his ability to drink and carouse with more gusto than any other member of the guild. He is always the last standing after a drinking binge, regularly with a comrade slung over each shoulder to take them home and with a pretty maiden on each arm.

The Guild:

The Legion prizes heroism, courage, the protection of those unable to defend themselves and above all force of arms. They love to hear tales of their members told and sung in taverns, and can be relied upon to be at the centre of most brawls during peacetime. However in times of trouble they are one of the most powerful and readily available sources of troops on Vara, as anyone attacking a fortress city of Erinan will attest. If you need a fighter and want one who will fulfil the job with skill and fortitude, then the Legion of Battle is where you go! The Guild is also highly involved in the organisation an administration of bounties, generally any major Guildhouse can be used to deposit a person with a bounty on their head (in the correct country or area) and obtain payment once identity has been confirmed.

Notable members

Conan – this Wyldman has become well known for his daring and sheer strength.

Talwain – Hero of the Battle of the Escarpment.

Baron Storel of Navarre – this noble of Calsmeer has become something of a poster boy of the guild in the last few years for his valour in battle and willingness to help others.

Lord Kyban Pyrothalas – Lord of the Ember-eyes.

Jason Giantsbane – long seen as a hero of the Guild; since his death and resurrection he has become one of their training masters.

Baroness Ragnhild Pure-snow – The Frost-mane head of the Valkyries.

Marquis Ectheow Storm-Fjord – The Frost-mane head of the Storm Knights.

The Fellowship of Hermes

Guild master:

Little is known to the general membership about the head of the Fellowship, as he attends only the inner councils and few have seen him. It is said he is very old, is a sage of immense knowledge and learning, and is capable of magic at a level of power not possessed by any other user of the Art on Vara.

The Guild:

The oldest Guild of Vara, mages of renown have always sprung from the Fellowship. Their Guildhalls are places of wonder and treasure. They are open only to members, with small chambers separate for the transaction of business with non-members of the guild. They test all initiates with puzzles and proof of skill and insight. They are also known for a tradition of a Guild meal on Thursday afternoons at which the drink flows freely, which means no-one ever tries to go to the hall for business on a Friday morning unless it's truly a matter of life and death. They tend to command high prices for their services however they broker jobs out to those with the right skills, so it can be cheaper in the long run to go to them first than to a freelancer who might not be able to do the job but will take your money anyway. However, before you join you must be sure you want to be a member, as if you leave or are cast out every Fellowship member's hand will be turned against you, and facing down ten mages with spells from the sphere of energy can be an almost impossible task. Anyone trying to break into the Guildhall will face more magical wards, traps and alarms than the rewards could offer him.

Notable members

Carnak – High King of Vara, and powerful Ember-eye mage.

Lord Kierron Summoner – Erinese noble, member of the Order of the Broken Sword, and noted capable mage.

Tink – established a school in the Troll Lands for the teaching of magic.

Baron Sir William Grey – jack of all trades noble of Gralamire.

Sulwyn –past guild-mistress of Foinaven in northern Calsmeer.

Kings Bard Arwenna VorSael – also a mage of some considerable ability.

Ashym – this Newfolk Elf had gained certain notoriety within the guild for being capable of acts of great power, and as a rising authority on ritual magic. However he was reported to have passed away in 1514.

Elandria of the Mountains – one of the Gralamire guild-mistresses, her acts have brought the Fellowship and the Legion of Battle into closer association, especially in the early days of the last Shadowling War.

The Children of Shashay

Guild master:

Davon. There is a master of this guild and many guildhalls have tales of him visiting them and pilfering most of the loot, then sending it back to them with a record of how he did it, but no one has ever seen him and known who he was.

The Guild:

They have few laws, but those they do have are strict and harshly punished if you flaunt them.

It's okay to pickpocket from each other, but no raiding each other's safe houses.

Don't pull any big jobs without guild sanction.

A tithe of what you get goes to the guild.

Spill each other's blood only in defence or in secret: they don't fight in the open.

Always aid a fellow member in need, but only for one night.

Don't involve innocents, children, simpletons, pregnant women or the old and infirm.

Never betray the guild.

Don't get caught!

Because there must be a form of trust in the guild or honour among thieves these are their laws. If you break them then you will be subject to 'Sanction', that is everything you own will be taken and given to the needy, your family will be thrown out of the area on pain of death, and you will be killed. There is only one chance for appeal and that is if you can prove your innocence to the master of the guildhall at your execution when you are given a small amount of time to speak.

Before you get the wrong idea about them however, the Guild serves a good purpose too. They look after the underdog, keeping the poor in food and clothing, helping struggling businesses to start if they look like they will be of use to either the slum areas or to the guild itself. They do run protection rackets, but they DO protect the shops unlike the street toughs who wouldn't even if the shopkeeper paid them.

By the Compact of Erinan they will defend the cities of the kingdom in times of war, and they are the best spies around. In street fights they are merciless deadly, and woe betide any soldier that tries to harm the poor in the sight of a Child of Shashay!

Notable Members

If you're a notable member of the Children of Shashay then you're doing it very wrong.

The League of Pathfinders

Guild master:

Uiel Gladeheart. This Newfolk elf teaches by example. He is known to have no tolerance for anyone who breaks the code of the Pathfinders. So skilled is he that there is a well-substantiated tale of him alone guiding and protecting a trade caravan in Calsmeer from a band of Orc and Goblin raiders for well over a week, mainly by sneaking into their camp and leaving all manner of surprises, traps, interesting herbal additions to the food, and slain sentries; that the raiders were afraid to sleep and could not mount co-ordinated attacks. This and the unnerving accuracy of his bowshots brought the caravan through with minimal losses.

The Guild:

NEVER, EVER, leave your charges lost! A Pathfinder will not abandon his comrade alone in the wilderness. They guide home the lost and hurt and seldom ask payment from those in trouble, be they a child lost in the street of a city, or a merry band of fools out adventuring without a good map. If a member is killed then he knows his family will be looked after and never be allowed to fall on hardship.

Notable members

Uiel Gladehart – current master of the Guild.

Jonathan Archer – Guildmaster and notable participant in the Clarion Tourney in 1515.

Lady Katrina Lonebar – advocate and representative to the Erenite Court for the Guild.

Phayd – notable pugilist and participant in the 1515 Clarion Tourney as an unarmed fighter.

The Trade Guilds

Trade guilds include (but are not limited to):

Brewers, Vintners and Innkeepers.

Entry requirement would be 3 Levels of Make Other, either Beer, Wine or Spirits.

Benefits: +2 Levels in your highest Make Other and +1 Level in a second.

(The higher the level the better the brew and the more it is worth)

Dye, Ink and Paper Makers.

Entry requirement would be 3 Levels of Make Other, either Dye, Paper or Ink.

Tailors and Seamstresses Guild.

This could include weavers, seamstresses and embroiderers. You would have to have the relevant skills.

Stone Masons.

Weavers

Carpenters.

For prices, we will create a list with characters as we go. Remember that the sale value of something comes down a lot to what the character thinks they can get for it and what the customer feels it is worth. Use existing items as a guide. But use quality to raise the price.

Beer takes only Lv 1 make to create, but that is basic good beer like in any IC Inn, worth 1 G per pint.

Beer made with Lv 9 skill would be worth 9G + per pint.

Each level of the skill over that needed to make an item should add to the base value of the item.

Here follows a sample structure of how one advances within a trade guild.

The Guild of Alchemists.

Guild Master:

Orlando De Lariamond of Erinan

Guild:

Enrolment Requirements.

3 levels of Make Alchemy.

Enrolment Benefits.

+2 levels of Make Alchemy.

+1 level of Hedgebrew.

Apprentice Title: 50G/Ad.

Rank Structure.

Apprentice

Title: 50G/Ad, Enrolment Benefits.

Journeyman

Title: 150G/Ad.

Master

Title: 200G/Ad. You can take on Apprentices (i.e. induct other s into guild).

Guild House Master

Title: 350G/Ad. You are responsible for 1 Guild House; at the very least you will have 8 Levels in Make Alchemy.

At this level you will have Guild Masters and a number of apprentices under your command, i.e. you can order them not to sell to a given character; however you are also responsible for their actions.

Guild Area Master

Title: 700G/Ad. You are responsible for all the Guild Houses in 1 Area; at the very least you will have 8 Levels in at least 2 potion Makes.

Appia or Clarion would count as an area, as would the Northern Valleys of Calsmeer (Liathatch – Illevar).

Grand Master of Calsmeer

Title: 1500G/Ad. You are responsible for all Calsmeer, at the very least you will have 8 Levels in all 4 Potion Makes (though poison ONLY for knowledge of antidotes).

Position based on ability and election from the area masters.

Grand Master of Vara

Title: 5000G/Ad. You are responsible for all of the Guild Houses in Vara. You will have all the Potion Makes at Level 9 (though poison ONLY for knowledge of antidotes).

There are some set items tied to the position.

Position is either nominated by last Grand master, or elected from the grand masters of one of the countries.

THE SPECIAL GROUPS OF VARA

The Guild of Bards and Heraldry

Guild master:

Unknown, even to the vast majority of the Guild.

The Guild:

The Guild of Bards and Heraldry comes from the Duchy of Kiral, although not every member is from that secluded island. Bards are held in high regard by all and are seldom refused welcome or hospitality; they are repositories of knowledge and they embody the tales of living history and can inspire men with words from the past. They keep information flowing in the lands of Vara and lift the hearts of the sad with songs. They bring in more business for a tavern if they perform there, and frequently get very good deals with the owner for the cost of their stay. Many adventuring parties will gladly guard one who is travelling alone simply to benefit from the hospitality that normally extends towards the Bard to cover them as well. Many a wet and tired group has found shelter in a warm barn when the farmer would otherwise have turned them aside thanks to the polite charm of a Bard in the group.

Also members of the guild are the only persons entitled to award heraldry or expand upon existing heraldry. More senior members of the Guild are also empowered to revoke heraldry from the register, although they do need to have a royal command in order to do so.

Heraldry is only awarded for acts of extreme valour or skill; killing an dragon might net you one, killing a dragon while saving the daughter of the local lord with little in the way of protection or powerful weaponry is probably guaranteed to get you the award of a crest.

Benefits: +1 Lv of Lore Skill, R/W Bardic Code 1, Recognise Heraldry, +1 Level of Make Heraldry, Journeyman Title (200 G/Ad), Bardic Immunity.

Lore Skill: The Ability to recognise Items and people from the tales told about them; the more famous the thing the easier it is to recognise them and get some information about it. Mostly this will take the form of a story the ref will hand you. The more Lore you have, the more likely you are to recognise something/someone about which there are few stories.

There are four Levels of the Skill. (For the cost of higher levels see a Ref.)

Level 1 (25pts). Will allow you to Recognise Legendary Items (IE Artefacts) and characters of Levels 8 to Quest.

Heraldry Skill: Allows the character to glean some information about the subject and/or their family from looking at their crest.

Make Heraldry Skill (30pts / Lv): Allows the character to create Heraldry for another character, possibly granting them magical abilities (as per the effect of a spell cast on it by the bard, 1/Ad for each time the spell is cast on it). This works in the same way as the 'Make Minor Item' skill but for heraldic crests (and must fit the deed and image on the heraldry), in that the TOTAL of the levels of the spells cast on it must be the same or less than the Level of 'Make Heraldry' skill. Please note this ONLY works for a spell-casting bard, a non-spell-casting one may still make heraldry, and the skill level denotes the quality of the work. But it will have NO magical properties in such a case. It costs 25 Guilder per level of spell when making heraldry.

Bardic Immunity: Bards are the main means that history is kept and news is passed on, thus the lord of a domain protects them or he risks having the guild both black-list his domain (meaning no news is brought in) and having many satire songs sung about him in the surrounding lands. Thus a bard is granted limited protection; as long as he breaks no law nor draws weapon in anger, no weapon shall be drawn, or be allowed to be drawn against him by the lord or his vassals.

Note to monsters: please pay attention to this rule UNLESS the ref tells you to do otherwise!

Notable Members

King's Bard Arwenna VorSael – notable for her deeds in Calsmeer and her position as King's Bard for Robert Pedrianly.

Terain – Speaker for the Duchy.

Mark – scribe for the council and in charge of the Duchy's archives.

Harrallion – Master-Bard of all Vara (but not in charge of the Guild) and composer of the epic ballad of the Battle of Mara. The single most respected Bard on Vara.

The Bounty Dogs

Guild master:

Unknown.

The Guild:

The Bounty Dog Guild is very old, it's roots lost far in history. The Bounty Dog Guild is known and tacitly accepted as an effective force for order. Originally, they were called the "Borella Dekannon Guildec", an ancient term meaning the "Group of hired killers". The Guild members were usually referred to as "Bora-Deks" or "Paid killers".

The activities were originally simply the recovery of criminals for a fee. This changed about five generations ago when a nobleman of a now lost city in eastern Gralamire commissioned the Guild not to find and capture a criminal, but rather to collect and protect his daughter as she was taken to her place of marriage. A somewhat bemused Atrik the Silver was given what became known as a "Silver Bounty" or Milk-Run after the incident with Kadey Smithson and the Royal dairy herd.

Atrik managed to bring the young lady to the altar bang on time and was very surprised to find that he had just proven himself worthy and honourable in the eyes of the Father – who promptly revealed that he was welcome to marry the young lady. Atrik, being of noble blood, found a mutual attraction with the young lady and became the first Bora-Dek member to give his entire bounty to the Fund.

This set the trend for the next three decades; with the ascendance of Atrik to the city leader, he granted a full charter to the Guild and it became widely recognised as the place to go for problem solving. The fact that the Guild is also effectively a Guild of Assassins was glossed over and its activities in removing problems far out-shadowed the other areas of concern for the more lawful of Vara's populace.

In the year 1485 a druid came to see the guild. She had found an interesting artefact and was willing to share it in return for an "Open Silver Bounty". The guild was very intrigued. A Silver Bounty is a 'hunt and defend' commission, not an unusual one for the Guild. An Open Bounty is one that will remain in force until all of its specified targets are fulfilled, paying a percentage of the total or a fixed fee for each target. Usually this was for gangs or small tribes of Orcs.

However an "Open Silver Bounty" is very unusual, particularly when the Guild heard the subject of the deal; Wolves, all Wolves, no exceptions, exemptions or legal jiggery pokery. (This is in fact exactly what the young druid insisted on being written on the Bounty contract. It is now framed and in the office of the Guild-masters of the Bounty Dog Guild.)

In return for hunting and protecting all wolves in the world, the Bora-Deks would receive a gift of near divine dimensions; it would forever change the way the Guild worked and how it was received. One of the 1st changes was the name: among the bounty hunting groups of Vara it became apparent that there was a group that actively defended wolves, and who had a great deal of competence at their work, some of them would talk a little with the non-guild hunters and soon this group became known as "Bounty Dogs" when talked about. This became its official name in about 1500 when the leadership realised that even they referred to the BOUNTY DOG GUILD in that term.

While the majority of Vara does not know of the guild (at least by name) those who move in bounty hunter circles, deal with the administration of bounties, or make their living in the criminal underworld and organisations will sometimes talk of 'Bounty Dogs'. Relentless, dedicated and highly competent these Bounty Dogs are your worst enemy if on your tail, or your most staunchest protector if under their watch. If you need someone killed, and can find a contact, then the most sure way to have your victim die is to engage a Black Bounty.

Requirements:

Must be Rogue type.

Train in at least one weapon.

Two Discern, Recognise or Read/Write skills.

Ability to hide in at least one type of terrain.

At least one level of Art.

Knowledge of the spell "Energy Arrow".

Suspension of ability to cast magic. Innate race abilities and items are not affected.

Benefits:

1st Weapon and 1 Crystal

+1 Level of Art in all Spheres

Magic Focus (Weapon)

Casting Damage 1

+10pts of Art

RANGED Knockout 2/Ad (higher level weapons do 'Heroic Knockout')

Title: 'Bounty Dog' 100 G/Ad

Tenets

It is okay to incapacitate a fellow guild member in pursuit of a bounty, but do not kill

The Guild posts and maintains bounties and can arrange a contract but they never openly arrange a death bounty.

Always aid fellow guild members in fights unless they were asking for what they got.

Hide the Bounty Dog at all times.

25% of bounties go to the guild.

Conditions of Guild Membership.

Lifetime commitment – they will look after you cradle to grave.

Resignation is not possible. You MAY retire, but not leave.

Your oath to them is binding upon your life: a suspended 10000-guilder bounty is held on you until the day you die. If you leave it becomes valid.

Your Duties are:

To hunt and recover ALIVE subjects of Gold bounty orders.

To defend with your life the subject of a Silver bounty order.

To hunt and KILL subjects of Black bounty orders.

To never harm an innocent, or cause an innocent to be harmed.

To never allow the subject in your care come to harm until it is transferred to the Guild.

To provide 25% of your bounty to the Guild to care for those injured or those leaving dependants due to loss of life in service.

To provide all support possible to other Guild members.

To record all possible information for the areas you visit.

To show no mercy to the condemned other than a swift death.

To take no bribes or threats that deter you from your duty.

And the gift?

“Symbiotic Tools”

A living being that is melded or tuned to the wearer. It derives its life force from the wearer, and the wearer gains some kind of special ability. In most cases this is the “Symbiotic Weapon”.

The Channelling Matrix is an incredibly complex life form that allows the wearer to release vast magical energies without having to learn to be a Mage. Of course there are many limitations. But the ability for a Sword wielder to cast waves of death-dealing magic generally outweighs them.

“Channelling Crystals”

Each crystal allows you to alter the ‘flavour’ of the energy you fire to one type. E.G. “Fire”, “Frost” etc.

Once bought, providing they are looked after, they can be moved from YOUR weapon to another of YOUR weapons. The skill of ‘Make Weapons’ is required to fit the Crystals to the weapon. The Guild can do it for you at a cost of 50 Guilder.

The Channelling Crystal is absolutely useless without the weapon itself barring its intrinsic monetary value.

“Symbiotic Weapon”

The creature lives with you; you do not suffer from having it on you.

The creature can be enhanced at the main guild-house to allow it to grow to the next stage of development. This will increase the level of damage you can release through it and the number of crystals it can hold and make use of.

The symbiote will die if separated from the host for too long a period of time. Normally it is placed on one of the arms, although it can be moved to the other arm or another part of the body. However the process of attaching it is painful. If the user dies then the symbiote dies shortly afterwards. Symbiotes cannot be given to another person as they are compatible with one person ONLY.

When firing the weapon, the user merely expends the art to power the level of the spell and chooses which crystal is being used to colour the magic. They can release any level of damage up to the maximum the creature is capable of; they CAN even use life-force to power the blast of energy, however any “Over casting” once they reach zero Life-force WILL result in PERM LF loss equal to the amount by which they “overcast”.

“Spitting Ant” class weapon.

*1st weapon, handed out to new members
Magic channel for Arrow (1/1, 2 Hits) spells only.
Energy Arrow Crystal comes fitted.
Crystal slots for 2 other crystals. (Player buys later.)*

“Howling Wolf” class weapon.

*2nd weapon, Enhancement on 3rd Bounty collection or
payment of 1000 Guilder and Trade in.
Magic channel up to Blast (2/2, 4 Hits) spells only.
Crystal slots for 4 other crystals. (Player buys later.)*

“Roaring Lion” class weapon.

*3rd weapon, Enhancement on 30th Bounty collection or
payment of 5000 Guilder and Trade in
Magic channel up to Burst (4/4, 8 Hits) spells only.
Crystal slots for 6 other crystals. (Player buys later.)
Ranged ‘Knockouts’ become ‘Heroic Knockouts’.*

“Death Dragon” class weapon.

*4th weapon, Enhancement on 60th Bounty collection or
payment of 25000 Guilders and Trade in.
Magic channel up to Lance (6/6, 12 Hits) spells only.
Crystal slots for 10 other crystals. (Player buys later.)*

“Bounty Dog” class weapon.

*Master class weapon. Adventure request ONLY
Requires the returning of all other weapons and
Crystals.
(All weapons of this class have a unique name.)*

*Magic channel of any ranged spell known to the
wielder.*

*Separate organism, does not need to be bonded to a
particular wearer.*

*Built in channelling matrix; does NOT requires any
Crystals.*

*Defensive matrix; weapon can be charged with a
single touch effect spell of any type. The spell goes off
if anybody other than the owner touches it. The spell
must be learned and cast before this is active.*

*Duration is length of adventure. May be recharged
after it has detonated.*

Notable members

The Order of the Broken Sword

Guild Master:

The Broken Sword has no master, ruling instead by council.

The Guild:

They are a select few numbering no more than eleven. Marked by the circlets of silver they wear on their brows they stood against the Shadowling Lord and were instrumental in his defeat. They were known to have a keep in the woods of Erinan, and have numbered among them the last High King of Vara but after the 2nd Battle of Mara the surviving members disappeared one by one. Only in recent years have they been seen once again, and until the 3rd Battle of Mara even then only recognised in the main by those of a very learned nature. They were instrumental in the defeat of the Shadowling Lord at the 3rd Battle of Mara.

Why the Guild Exists.

The Order was created to find and keep safe the three parts of the Broken Sword (hilt, pommel gem and blade). It is the weapon of the Darkling Lord, and with it he would have greater powers and would be able to marshal his forces faster than he can now. The Lord escaped his confinement by possessing the body of the son of the last member of the old order. He was a Frost-mane boy; he touched the pommel gem that was held in the castle, and was consumed by its power.

Later the aim of the order was to increase their skills and the power of their circlets, re-build the Castle, gain the recognition of the Rulers of the five kingdom's, and help to prepare the land of Vara to fight the Darkling lord. Also they should strive to pull down every plan of the Shadowlings and their master every opportunity they get. Now, with both the membership and support of the High King, and the resources of those in the Order, the goals of the group are a more generalised protection of Vara from threats internal and external, and a focus on continued opposition of the forces of the Great Evil, the support of forces of good within Vara, and the safeguarding of the pieces of the Broken Sword.

Current Members

Those currently possessing circlets are the following:

Carnak Muzak	<i>Ember-eye warlock, acknowledged High King of Vara.</i>
Lord Kierran Summoner	<i>Mage scout elevated by marriage to the nobility in the kingdom of Erinan.</i>
Hamfast	<i>Halfling able to get information on almost anything, anywhere, and possibly sell it to you.</i>
Baron William Grey	<i>An adventurous sort of fellow with many diverse skills; holder of an island off Gralamire</i>
Lady Nerys Briar-Dasmius	<i>Known for her skill with the dagger, her dedication to her people, her scathing sarcasm and her knowledge of languages.</i>
WooYah	<i>An elegant and cultured lady.</i>
Arran	<i>A warrior of fearsome recklessness, but dubious sanity.</i>
Past Members Include:	
Kyrus Earthmane	<i>A half elven warrior, he fell to corruption and his circlet was retrieved by other members; however his spirit did not pass on into the circlet.</i>
Morden	<i>High Priest of Starsha the Serene in Calsmeer, a Newfolk known for his loathing of the supernatural. Returned his circlet in order to follow a higher calling of organising 'The Celestial Wings' a group of devout followers of several faiths that fights against the demonic and followers of the Great Evil.</i>
Sylvana of Foinaven	<i>Treewalker warrior of surprising strength who was ennobled by Robert Pedrianly for her services to the Crown in the civil war, but returned the title to live a more simple life.</i>
Ashym De'Liadon	<i>Fell Elven mage of enormous power with little time for fools. Died in the year 1514.</i>
Heleen Tanner	<i>Village publican, and descended from a past holder of a circlet.</i>

Initiation & Group rituals

When a new member joins the Order the person inducting them must perform a small ceremony: using their weapon, they must tap the new member upon each shoulder, saying the following:

"By the powers vested upon me, I dub thee Sir (lady)... Member of the Order of the Broken Sword. I charge you to defend Vara and to uphold our charge, even to the cost of your life. Be true in honour and good in your heart."

When members meet each other, they clasp each other's forearms, and say these words:

"Brother (sister) to brother (sister), we stand as one!"

The Castle of the Broken Sword

When the order was first rediscovered by Heleen, Kyrus and Carnak, they found its keep that lies in the woodlands of Erinan, near the mountains bordering with Dralazar. It is in the region known as Danesford, near a stone circle of ritual power.

The castle is a large keep with a dry moat; it was guarded by a small number of Skeletons, the honoured members who wanted to serve on after their deaths, as well as a force of Treewalkers that now maintain the keep.

Rooms included in the keep are:

The Chamber of the Sword, where the three parts of the sword are kept and held securely. As a final measure and protection it has walls several feet thick and a stout defensible door.

The council hall (off of which is the only entrance to the Chamber of the Sword) which has a circular table in it with seating for eleven.

The Library; this is a well stocked resource of knowledge that has slowly been assembled by Lady Nerys for research and preservation of what it contains. Also in this room are display cabinets holding some of the more interesting finds made by members over the years.

The castle looks like it could hold one hundred comfortably, but be pushed to three hundred inhabitants at a pinch. It is a sound structure and looks imposing as it is made to hold out against a large and prolonged siege if required.

The Current garrison of Treewalkers is led by the capable Lially Stillmere, reinforced and bolstered by forces supplied by the High King.

The Guild of Incanters

Guild Master:

Unknown

The Guild:

Basis:

An organisation founded to promote the protection and expansion of the source of magic. Once outlawed throughout the lands, the group is small and used to hide its numbers among other organisations, particularly the warlocks. They are extremely skilled manipulators of magic, using magic to aid their martial skills. To them, the source is the supreme essence of creation: anything else is merely part of the source, even gods.

Now legally recognised the group has begun to slowly recruit again: there is still some mistrust of its members, particularly those who have come out as belonging to the group when members of other organisations such as the Fellowship of Hermes.

Locations:

Members are spread throughout the lands, with masters taking in students, training them up and then sending them round other masters so faces change regularly. There is a central hall in the capital of Erinan, which is over a ritual circle, disguised so that none may discern its location and track them there.

Organisation:

Three Elders are chosen every few years to hold residence in Erinan and control the organisation, using the ritual circle to collect information on where the source is growing weaker and where it could be strengthened. The fourteen Masters are trainers of recruits, teaching them basic magic, as well as the philosophy of the source. They tend to move every ten to fifteen years to avoid suspicion of large numbers of powerful mages being trained, and drift throughout the world of Vara, settling, making a household, and taking in those with potential.

Archons are those trained by the order. They are the knights, sent out to deal with problems as and where they are needed. They are fully trained up, and have been sent out with trusted individuals to gain the experience needed to deal with the world. They have spells to directly access the source, as well as a copy of the warlocks sphere to help them battle any who oppose them. They are free to act as they see fit, although they may have to answer for their actions later to the Elders.

Journeyman are those in training, they are still tied to a specific master and follow his instructions about training and companions. They do go out into the world, acting to solve problems and gain experience in areas that the masters feel will be valuable for them. It is during this time that an apprentice will study and learn the martial skills they will need to act as an archon, should they qualify and be accepted.

Apprentices are housed by the master, and normally spend their time studying the theory of magic. They are concentrated on learning all about the source, so they clearly know why it is so important. While some martial skills are taught, it is only near the end of their training, and only as preparation for their journeyman stage.

History:

Our order began around the year 850, before the 1st Battle of Mara, when a high king still ruled. King Telefalion amna Rio to be precise. At the time, most of the world was at peace, battles being fought were political rather than with armies, although intrigue and even assassination were a lot more common.

In the year 824 a human male was born, named by his parents Roland Trique. He had an amazing aptitude for magic, and studied with Elves to perfect his understanding. He was an entertainer and soon earned the name Trix among his friends, for his minor displays and simple conjuring. However, such blatant manipulations of magic were hardly his main interest, for he soon realised that any mage can perform such feats: all they have to do is work at it. As he grew older, he began an understanding of the wellspring of power that fuels all magic, the semi-sentient connection between all living beings that we now know as the source. His magic left the realms of the direct action, and he moved to performing rituals, experimenting to try and obtain a better understanding of what it really was that powered our world.

At the age of 34 he was the most established Ritualist in Vara, and regularly took in pupils to train in the ways he had learned. He had found out much about the source, and although such information is surely for another tome, some is pertinent here. The basis of the source is that it is in essence an amalgam of the wills and desires of all things. Sentient beings such as humans and elves have powerful wills and hugely shape the source, warping it around them greatly, particularly magic users. Lesser animals have an influence and a natural area rich in life will slowly accumulate power; even non-living matter such as rock can make a difference. However, this power is not shaped simply: dump lots of sentient life in an area and you don't have an instant connection to use the source as you will; that is simple a well spring from which it can flow, like a river over terrain, with dips and wells where the magic of the source can accumulate, and then maybe accessed through spells and rituals.

A ritual circle is simply a specially treated conduit to access the massed power of the accumulation of all those millions of influences. The use of a ritual circle is then controlled by the will of the ritualist, and the hearts and desires of those that have contributed to it. Magic is the world around us in a very real sense.

Roland Trique, having worked this out, realised how much magic needed to be protected, to be spread throughout the world. For as more people believed in magic, and wanted it to become more powerful, the more powerful it would become. Or more worryingly, as people saw less of the magic, then the magic itself would dry up, becoming nothing more than a rumour of what once was. Magic was a necessary component of things, for just as magic could not exist without those things that provide it, equally, they could not exist without magic binding them together. This is what he taught his disciples, that magic was to be protect and nurtured, for without it magic may leave the world, and the world may follow after.

At the time while Roland was working on his research, training new disciples, spreading the word and learning of magic, there was trouble in the court of King Telefalion amna Rio. The sixth son of the king, only 8 years old, had fallen into some sort of trance. Magic was indicated, although how and of what sort was unknown. The King's adviser, high mage Lorden Anrith had worked for weeks to find a cure, yet none seemed to be available. He recommended that a ritual be performed on the boy, and offered to lead the ritual, claiming that he could purge all magic from the boy, and thus remove the enchantment. However, the king had been paying attention to the recent training of his 4th son, who was studying magic himself. This son had spoken often of the mage Trix and his prowess, and had asked the king to meet him. The king sent for Trix, hoping something could be done by a mage greatly more adept in the ways of the source than his own magical adviser who, while a man of great sense, had practiced diplomacy more than actual magic over the last 30 years.

Upon receiving the summons, the choice wasn't hard for Roland Trique. A Royal summons, a chance to garner royal favour and the money and influence coming with that would greatly help his cause, maybe allow him to erect a building over his current ritual circle where students could be trained and assisted in the ways of the source, rather than the crudities of such trivial magic as spells.

He arrived, and while his own practice of spells was insufficient to help the young prince, he agreed with the idea of a ritual, though a somewhat differing approach. Removing all magic from the boy would destroy him totally, even if it were possible. The trick, he claimed, was to separate the magic of the prince's life from that of those influencing him that they may detect the evil influence, and then cast it out allowing the natural life force free reign again. This was a much more complicated ritual, and Lorden Anrith was adamant that such a cause should not be allowed. Many things could go wrong in a ritual he claimed, and the simpler the ritual, the more chance of success. The King however was impressed by Trix, and granted him permission to perform the ritual. Anrith was ordered to assist and contribute as one of the ritualists. He also picked many others who would assist.

On the day Trix performed the ritual everything seemed to go well, however, as the magic was put back into the body, the boy did not stir. The ritual finished, the young prince was quite dead, despite the removal of the magical concoction that he had obviously been infected with.

The king went into a rage, yelling and screaming, and Trix, having failed for reasons unknown to him took his leave. On his way out, the elder prince who had originally recommended him to the king cornered him. The prince, Elbryan by name, had been arguing with his father over the recent failure, and requested Trix take him out of court that he might study the magic. Again, for Trix, this was no choice at all; his entire philosophy was to spread the knowledge of magic, and one of royal blood could bring much needed assistance and a reputation that would assist him no end.

Unfortunately, he hadn't counted on either the King's rage, or the words of the supposedly loyal adviser. It was only later after much investigation the truth was found by Trix and his followers. Lorden Anrith had been behind the magical curse. His time tending the prince had been enough to renew the spells every day, but a ritual was needed to make the spell permanent so the prince would never awaken. Anrith would use the daily reports to get closer to the king, telling him news of his son and consoling the king's grief, but then also manipulating the king for Anrith's own ends. The introduction of an alternative ritualist was a complication, but one Anrith twisted to his own ends: his choice of ritualists ensured that the ritual could be corrupted and would result in the boy's death, whereupon Anrith could blame the upstart Trix and still get access to the king. Elbryan leaving at the same time was just an extra edge allowing him to push through a royal charge of treason, murder and kidnapping against Roland Trique and all his followers, and to declare his entire order of followers outlawed under penalty of death.

Now, over 650 years later, we are the followers of his teachings. Our spells have of necessity become more martial in nature; we often masquerade as warlocks, and have copied their spells to make our disguises more complete. Many of our members are even registered as warlocks, despite our allegiance being to the Incanters.

As of the year 1513 and due to the efforts of Tellor the guild as a whole are exonerated from their outlaw status, and the guild is able to operate in public once more. However in the course of this the true facts of crimes only Roland Trix is responsible for have come to light, and High King's Justice is served on his mortal remains as they are ritually destroyed in prevent his spirit ever being able to appear on the face of Vara again. It is noted that in no way does the pardon extend to any crimes committed by individual members of the Guild, only to membership of the guild being seen as a crime.

Shining Rain School

Guild Master:

Master Erasmus Valdran

The Guild:

The Shining Rain martial school exists to train those who show flair at arms to reach their full potential.

Normally entrance to the school requires beating one of the more advanced students or fighting one of the masters and holding your own for a certain period of time.

The students of the school seek to challenge themselves in combat and duelling scars are common among them. However they are normally very careful not to kill a defeated opponent as they see that losing is enough, if only to drive a person to excel further next time they fight.

The actual founding of the school is somewhat lost to time, although the masters will often tell tales of Treewalkers stranded from a foreign land. Who saw a lack of focus and honour. They set about teaching those who were willing to put in the time and effort to learn the methods that they themselves had been trained in. So it was that the school slowly came into being and became an institution that existed across Vara. Small villages and enclaves were set up, and a link formed with the Treewalkers of Vara who learned some of the Druidic methods used by these strangers to build their homes and live off the land, and the tie between the school and these Treewalker tribes remains strong to this day.

The invitation to join is and always has been open to those who can prove themselves to be capable and more importantly, willing to listen and to learn. Over the years there have been those who have grown impatient and left, most notably Eloise VorSteiven and Julien de Vielloux who went on to found the Red Sun School.

The ethos of the school is and always has been about focus and patience as much as going out and fighting duels as a way of proving and honing one's talent. Over more recent years, as the school has dwindled somewhat in size because of war and as the older Elven masters have died and been replaced by humans, there has been more of a shift towards the propensity for duelling, although there is still enough respect and importance held in the old teaching ways that they are not being replaced, so much as more is being added alongside them.

From the original masters of the school, the lessons of patience and perfection of form and style are still there, reflected in the emphasis on practice drills that all students are expected to engage in on a daily basis, and which masters continue to perform so as not to lose form. There is also some import placed on observing others and breaking down a duel to see what worked, what didn't, and where one might improve on one's performance. Understanding is the key, and that only comes with time.

The Villages

The school is more than just a place that people go to train; they live there for the duration of their training and so the schools are more like villages, something that is enhanced by the link the school has to Treewalkers and the continued association between the two groups. More often than not, the school becomes an extension of a Treewalker settlement, and benefits from the usually out of the way locations and the aid that the Treewalkers can lend in defending the school and setting up the villages.

The central part of the school village is usually one or more training arenas, sometimes sunk into the ground, sometimes marked with old carved marker stones that were brought to the school by the original Treewalker masters. Surrounding those arenas are smaller areas for training, and then the buildings that the students and masters live in. There will be one communal building where food is prepared and eaten, and where there is enough potential open space for it to be used for training, and then a multitude of buildings that people actually live in.

The buildings themselves are unique in Vara, not so much in the way that they are partially grown by bending whole live trees to create the frames and then changing their shape or adding walls to them, but because the style of them matches nothing seen on Vara. The branches and trunks of the trees are bent to fit the uprights and supports of the building, sometimes with an upper floor built onto higher branches. Smaller branches become window frames and frames for panels filled in with thin sheets of wood. Upper floors tend to have terraces built onto them, and the roofs are, where the trees permit, curved to form natural gutters into which water catches and supplies the village.

The trees are cared for and tended so long as the school resides in that place, and when they leave, so long as they go willingly, they try to ensure that the trees are returned to their original forms, so far as it is possible.

Notable masters and associates

Master Erasmus Valdran – Master of the Shining Rain School across Vara.

Master Corran – the master of the southern Calsmeerian school, this elderly man is said to have more than a bit of Elven blood in his family, and he has certainly stayed spritely far longer than one may expect a human to. His focus is the two handed sword, and even though he is elderly, he still teaches by example.

Master Riv – one of the younger masters currently teaching at the southern Calsmeerian school, his specialty is the one handed hammer. A quiet man in his early forties, he has a reputation for being utterly focussed in combat to the point that no one or nothing can break that focus until he chooses to, but also as a skilled healer.

Avarion – the head druid working with the Southern Calsmeerian school, this elderly Treewalker woman is well respected, although sadly she is nearing the end of her life, and has been slowly passing over her duties to her grandson.

The Daenead

“Small like pot, strong like ox.”

The Daenead is one of the relics of those who came from the far lands, and has been with the school since it was founded. As Masters move from school to school, so does she, helping with the building and maintenance of the schools and sometimes training students in her own unique way.

Her tree is an old and carefully tended maple kept and tended in a red earthenware pot bearing the school's symbol. Because of the miniature size of her tree, she too is small, about the size of a ten year old child, and her skin echoes the reds and browns of her tree. She isn't a child - she's older than any of the living masters - but she often gets treated like one by the newer students, and she is quite happy to play along with this idea; playing tricks on people, sulking and climbing all over everything to get to where she wants to go.

Despite her size and personality she is still a force to be reckoned with, having control over the plants and land in her vicinity.

She is not under the command of any of the masters of the school, but she does respect them and responds to them accordingly.

Benefits:

2/2 Life Gain

Mighty Blow 6/Ad

Light Blade 1/Ad

Enhanced in 1 Weapon

Never refuse a challenge

Only ever initiate 1 on 1 combat

Always be the last to retreat

The Red Sun School

Guild Master:

Master Eloise VorSteiven and Master Julien de Vielloux

The Guild:

The Red Sun School is a fine example of the disgruntled student trying to outdo the master, and actually not doing too bad a job of it.

Established in 1477 by Eloise VorSteiven and Julien de Vielloux who both left the Shining Rain School disgruntled by the way that the generally Elven or half-Elven masters put too much focus on patience without taking into account the shorter human lifespan. After many discussions and arguments on the subject they were asked to leave, and on doing so set up their own school, using many of the same teaching techniques as the Shining Rain, but placing an emphasis on faster learning and so many, though not all their students tend to come from the shorter lived races, although they are quite happy to accept Elves into their student body.

They do have a code of honour: it just tends to be more flexible than that of the Shining Rain School, and its members somewhat more mercenary in their outlooks on life.

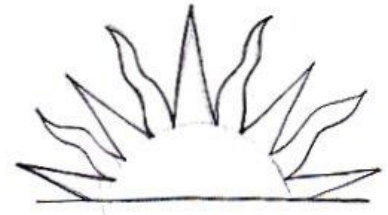
Many of their students are those who have left or been asked to leave the Shining Rain School, or those who have failed to pass the entry requirements. These people are often sought out by the Red Sun School, and through these rejects there is a fair amount of resentment and animosity towards the Shining Rain School, animosity which is sometimes as simple as challenges, and in more extreme cases, attacks on Shining Rain training camps and villages, as well as attempts to discredit them.

The Red Sun School is not so spread out as the Shining Rain School, with camps mostly in southern Calsmeer and Erinan, the kingdoms from which its founders originated.

Rather than setting up permanent villages in which to train and live, the Red Sun School tends to move its training groups around, with masters moving from group to group as there is need for them.

Masters of the school wear red sashes with a sun embroidered onto the ends, while students wear plain red sashes. Those who complete their training either stay on as masters or leave, some retaining alliance to the school, others cutting ties entirely. Allegiance to the school is not required, and a student only needs to complete as much training as they wish to; either dedicating themselves to one weapon or branching out into many different forms, it is entirely up to them, although it is their responsibility to find the appropriate master and be accepted as a student.

Eloise, although sixty six years old now, still trains new students and continues to perfect her own form with her chosen weapons. She is considered a Grand Master in hand to hand combat and highly proficient with a number of other weapons. Julien is still alive, although at seventy five is now too frail to still train students, but he does a lot of the organisational work to do with the running of the school. Prior to his retirement he was considered a Grand Master with a two handed sword.



Benefits:

2/2 Life Gain

Mighty Blow 6/Ad

Light Blade 1/Ad

Enhanced in 1 Weapon

Never refuse a challenge

Only ever initiate 1 on 1 combat

Always be the last to retreat

Notable members

The Silverwing Faire

Guild Master:

Silverwing Franklin

The Guild:

The faire is a travelling carnival of talented individuals that has existed in a form for several centuries. The faire was established by Silverwing Franklin, who went to the royal kingdoms with an idea for a travelling group of entertainers to travel throughout the land with a royal charter to set up camp in a town for several days and provide entertainment and trade to the locals. Following much discussion the royals were all against Silverwing Franklin, but decided that the faire that could go ahead on one provision. The faire had to travel to all the main towns in Vara within the year to keep its royal charter, completing the year end in Pironeas.

Silverwing had already made provision for this by having several splinter faires sent to reach all of the towns within the year. To this day no one knows how the faire really operates as Silverwing travels and operates in secrecy. The faire would appear in the town overnight and disappear just as quickly several days later.

The splinter faires are all named after different aspects of the moon as to where and when they appear. No one knows which the 'true' faire is; Silverwing Franklin is present at each and every one of the faires.

The faire houses typical aspects of travelling faires. This includes an acrobatic troupe, seers/palm readers, hedge witch types, tattooists, charmers, fire walkers, jugglers, traders and musicians. The faire has an edgy feel to it and nothing is as it appears in the faire. Members of the faire regularly wear masks to disguise how they look and men dress as women and vice versa.

The faire does not exactly have a bad reputation with locals, but no local would attend the faire by themselves in the evening, going to the faire after dark is sometimes seen as a rite of passage by younger people and certainly no-one would bring young children with them. Instead the daytime tends to be more for children and families and the night for adults and thrill seeking adolescents.

The members of the faire are made up of different races. No one can join the faire (run away to the circus): you have to be asked to join. Anyone who is a member knows that you can't join the faire and you can never leave the faire: you are 'taken in by the faire'. Normally members are stolen from families when they are babies and become part of the faire family. However, Silverwing does take in retainers, but they rarely become part of the inner sanctum. These members are not referred to as his children.

The College of Brehons

Guild Master:

Chief Brehon Montgomery DanTavish

The Guild:

In the country of Calsmeer the enforcement of law is fulfilled by the Brehons. Rank within the Brehons is separate from both the nobility and church hierarchies, with promotion open to both men and women based on academic achievement.

Structure:

Dalaigh *Dalaigh act in a similar way to constables or sheriffs. They are assigned to work in a town or region, where they are to investigate and prosecute crimes before a local Lord or Brehon. They also sit in judgement over civil cases such as divorce settlements or land disputes.*

Brehons *After several years as a Dalaigh (or a few spectacular cases) he or she will be promoted to the rank of Brehon. A Brehon advises a local Lord on legal matters and sits in judgement on cases brought by the Dalaigh. In a dispute between two local lords, Brehons act as their advocates before the King and his Chief Brehon. Only a Brehon can bring a case against a Local Lord or against another Brehon. Also they form the "Senate of Brehons" who elect only a few candidates to go before the King's approval for Chief Brehon. They meet to discuss Laws and possibly change the interpretation and codify new ones, as well as repeal old ones. This creates a little bit of manoeuvring for the King's favour as the Chief Brehon.*

Chief Brehon *The role of Chief Brehon is a royal appointment, acting as personal Brehon to the King. The Chief Brehon sits in judgement in disputes between local Lords, or in complaints brought against other Brehons. He also advises the king on the passing of new laws and acts as his legal representative in diplomatic disputes between kingdoms.*

Entry Requirements:

Lawful Alignment

At least 3 Recognise skills

At least 3 Discern Skills

Access to level 3 knowledge spells

Benefits:

Discern Criminal Act ("is this legal?" give Y/N answer)

Dalaigh Title (150 G per Adventure)

Able to dispense Law to the common people.

Notable members

The Order of the Rajnee

Guild Master:

Unknown

The Guild:

Started by a few priests of Lanokash who survived the slaughter and pillaging of their small temple during the period of chaos after the slaughter of the last king. Those that were assigned to protect the temple were few and when faced with overwhelming odds simply turned and ran. It was only due to the actions of the few soldiers who remained putting up a rear guard action that allowed some of the priests to survive.

Of the surviving priests one that continued to follow the path of Lanokash vowed that simply collecting knowledge and seeking truth was futile if not securely protected by those who are trained with the wisdom, knowledge, magical and physical ability to protect such knowledge. To this end he petitioned the order for the right to start a small force taught not only in the ways of sword, but also in the use and care of magic, as well as other esoteric knowledge.

He not only started up the order of the Rajnee (based on the name of an old and now defunct order that perished more than a thousand years ago – so as to distance it from the temple of Lanokash) but began and succeeded in building ties and methods of communication between the temples. This enabled better organisation of the sources of knowledge that each site contained and to call for help in emergencies.

The order is based on three inter-related principles. Knowledge, Truth and Wisdom.

This information is not available to anyone outside the order of the Rajnee and only after commitment is assured. A few persons within the church of Lanokash know of the true link to the order, most others know very little about the origins of the Rajnee. Very little written information about the Rajnee exists outside of the order.

Of course through various links and those that decide to leave the order a varying degree of knowledge about its locations, purpose and origins are known to some.

Since its creation the order has grown slowly but steadily due to the specific candidates that are selected, for the most part. Only 4 temples exist at this current time, one in Calsmeer, another in Erinan and two others based elsewhere. All are close to a transport circle and are fairly isolated.

The Rajnee have five training camps. The first to be built was in Dralazar, a desert testing ground, just north of the western edge of the Dralazar mountain range. However it has since been destroyed. The second, a wooded area, is just south of the western edge of the Dralazar mountain range and the third is in Erinan, a swamp/wooded area located near the Central Region, south of the great southern road. The fourth is in Calsmeer at the north-western edge of the forest. The fifth to be built was in Erinan, east of the great southern road.

Structure:

The ranks within the order is as follows:

Novitiate *A person who has just joined the order. Basic training is given.*

Oblate *Once accepted into the order, further training and schooling in the ways of the sword and ways of the world and magic begin.*

Journeyman *A phase anyone can undertake at any point during their service to the order. One is allowed to follow their own path, but a series of tasks will be issued to them by the order at any time.*

Acolyte *One must journey to become an Acolyte. This stage is normally marked as a significant right of passage. An Acolyte is meant to assume the same, if not slightly more hazardous duties as a journeyman. They are often ordered to seek out more specific long term goals that the order is interested in. Training of Novitiates and Oblates often begins at this level.*

Master *A master's role will vary from that of an Acolyte in terms of more consecutive training and handling of journeymen through to organising the order business inside and outside a guildhouse.*

Grand-Abbot *A title passed onto those with enough wisdom and knowledge to run the order.*

Notable members

Kiall Anarn – Heroically passed away in the defence of both the Rajnee and the wider group of the Silver Swords.

Expanded Information (A Novitiate View)

The Novitiates selection is based on both innate natural ability (both magical and physical) and willingness to learn. Some are selected but are refused by their families, some are orphans, the exceptional few have no choice except pain and/or eventual death due to untreatable illness. They are selected at various ages up to 15 years old. A few were selected at older age, but only a few as training in the mind set is best taught when young.

They are schooled in the basics and those that excel are taught further. They are also taught the use of a weapon. Throughout this three basic precepts of knowledge, truth and wisdom are drilled into them.

After a few years of teaching they are selected at various times to complete several tasks and tests. Even if a test is failed, it rare that anyone is sent away.

After this the tests come more randomly.

The tests become gradually more severe as the years go on up until they become a journeyman. This can range from a simple conversation had on a two day journey to deliver a message to a test of endurance or combat.

Once out on the road the journeymen are expected to follow the basic precepts set out by the order to gain knowledge, truth and wisdom. With each of these will come power that can be wielded when they see fit, hopefully in a well-judged and wise manner.

The journeymen are otherwise allowed to do as they please and are requested to respond to any message from the order with the appropriate haste. The messages normally come via couriers, but in case of dire emergencies from a telepathic broadcast received via an item they possess.

There is a series of tests that a journeyman is required to complete during this period. They can occur at any time. Those that have done them are sworn to silence to anyone outside of the order.

The journeyman's time is finished when a certain task, set by the order (but otherwise unbeknownst to anyone else) is completed successfully. The task is based normally on the strengths and weaknesses of the person's abilities and character. Sometimes it is based on other reasons.

During this phase they are given the opportunity of going on a quest to forge a sword of the finest quality that can be magically imbued to grow with the person (master crafted and extendable): the symbol most recognised by those who know the order. It glows with bright white light when evil magic is about. Other than that its other abilities are based on specific mentality of the person wielding it.

Over half those who undertake the title of journeyman either don't survive until the journeyman phase is considered over or don't otherwise complete it due to corruption or lack of faith in the order's goal.

Dwarven Warrior Societies

The Order of the Bronze Light

These are dwarves who take the smithing legend of Morri Hammerthief literally. They believe in the divine power of the flame, and the light it brings from Osrose and the power inherent in creation in the form of smithing. As such they follow the edict that the forge is a sacred place where creation takes place and is a veritable chapel to Osrose and his creation of dwarven kind. The order are ritualist types and regular smiths as well as priests and wise men who have faith in life through their metal art and connect with their deity through their own creations.

Requirements:

Faith sphere
Make 2 kinds of master crafted armour
Craft weapons
Craft missile
Make 1 kind of master crafted weapon
Receive the blessing of a forge elemental or spirit
Prove your skill as a smith by creating a magically imbued item.
All followers must openly wear the symbol of a flame over an anvil in a circle of yellow at all times

Benefits:

+1 Level of Art
+5 Art Points
Access to one sphere of choice
Make one master crafted weapon.

Tenets:

The perfection of one's art brings you closer to Osrose
To smith is to understand his power better and to create as he does and so commit an act that pleases him
As he crafted us so we craft in an effort to follow in his footsteps and learn of his wisdom

The Order of Brackzer

This Order of holy warriors believes in the sanctity of life and in protecting it at all costs. They are considered valiant, if over zealous, killers of demons and other unnatural evil creatures. They are often a ferocious challenge against any vile creatures the dwarfs might unearth whilst mining in their holds. The nature of these berserkers is one of extreme and constant controlled fury.

Requirements:

Follow Osrose
Enhanced mastery in axe or hammer weapon
Be a dwarf of good or lawful alignment
Faith sphere
To kill and take a prize from the body of a demon
Followers must openly show a flame crossed by a lightning bolt at all times

Benefits:

Berserker Rage 1/Ad
Halt undead 2/Ad
Recognise undead
+1 Level of Art
+5 Points of Art

Tenets:

Life is sacred, do not waste it.
That which defies life must be removed, that which is an abomination to it must be destroyed. To bring Osrose's light unto the souls of darkness
Kill evil only to save good and innocents; do not risk life where the risk can be avoided

MERCENARY GROUPS OF VARA

The Silver Swords

Guild Master:

Unknown

The Guild:

The Silver Swords was created about 400 years ago, after the 2nd battle of Mara (approx Year 1100). Formerly a military unit involved in protection of knowledge and people alike. It was formed and operated during the war until it found itself in need of alternative funds after the war, when those supplied by the churches and guilds were being re-diverted to the task of rebuilding Vara. The usefulness of the unit was at its apparent end.

Taking the name of the Silver Sword, the guild hired its services out to those who wanted reliable good quality people to escort, protect or otherwise guard people, locations or information. No task is too small or too large to encompass.

The wide ranging skills of the founding members had been passed their knowledge onto all new guild members via numerous and varying methods of training over a few years. Every guild member is taught the use of sword and shield and they are encouraged to diversify their skills where possible.

Children are taken in for testing and training from a young age, be they orphans or otherwise.

Over the last 400 years the guild has built upon its reputation to become respected in all Kingdoms except Amatukiland and the Troll lands. This is despite having only a few guild houses in Gralamire. The guild is still relatively small as they only take the best. Their charges are reasonable, but not cheap and do vary depending on what they are being hired for.

There is known to be an elite core existing within the guild that takes some of the tasks which are considered more dangerous and/or important. Little is spoken about this from the higher ranks in the guild, although it is suspected that the High-Guild Master belongs to this elite core.

The size of things

The guild has grown to encompass about 30 guild houses, outposts or Barracks in 4 kingdoms. In total there are about 1500 to 2000 guild members. The numbers in each guild house can vary depending on the number of people and/or guild members passing through at the time. There are at least 3 to 5 permanent staff stationed at all small and medium sized guild outposts at all times, more if the outpost is situated a more exposed or isolated location. The offices situated in towns will only have a staff of 2 or 3, as larger facilities will have more capacity to hold more guild members. The larger operations, such as the Barracks facilities or some of the outposts in Dralazar will hold a lot more people, due to the large amount of land owned by the guild in these locations.

Locations

The largest concentration of guild houses and other outposts is located in Erinan. Second to this is Calsmeer and Dralazar, which have less coverage due to less land and progress of distribution. Gralamire has less than half a dozen guild outposts situated in the kingdom.

Development Geographically

Starting off in Dralazar, the guild established a firm foundation for itself. However it needed room to expand into other kingdoms in order to spread its influence. Deciding to increase its influence along the great roads to begin with five new outposts were established to decrease the distance between existing outposts along the road. Occupying land in Pironeas, the capital of Erinan, the guild rapidly expanded throughout the kingdom. After solidify their position in Erinan, the guild expanded west into Calsmeer and east into Gralamire. Due to the incursions into the occupied lands of Vara by the forces of the Shadowlings, Orcs, rogue trolls, Beastmen and Wyldmen half a dozen of the guild outposts were destroyed: another half a dozen were abandoned. Some have been reclaimed and other alternatives are being adapted to suit the guilds purposes.

Structure

The guild is organised into seven ranks. A larger guild house (up to 200 people) is usually run by a person of the rank of Master. A barracks facility (300 to 400 people) is usually run by a person of the rank of Captain. A medium outpost (up to 100 people) is usually run by person of the rank of Lieutenant. A small outpost (up to 40 people) is usually run by person of the rank of Sergeant or Corporal. Reports are sent via courier once a week under normal circumstances. Meetings with all the guild masters are held four times a year, to discuss matters of importance. Other urgent meetings are held when needed. The meetings are held at locations that change on a rotating basis.

Ranks

Trainee	<i>A person who has just joined the order. Basic training and tests are given to decide if you are fit for the guild.</i>
Soldier	<i>Once accept into the order, further training and schooling in the ways of the martial weapons begins.</i>
Corporal	<i>A soldier who is given the responsibility of running a small outpost and/or basic training or aiding in the basic training of up to 5 men at once in the absence of a Sergeant. These are normally Trainees or Soldiers.</i>
Sergeant	<i>Usually put in command of up to 4 Corporals and their troops. They are responsible for the primary training of the ranks of Corporals, Soldiers and Trainees. They also have the authority to run a medium sized guild outpost in the absence of a Lieutenant.</i>
Lieutenant	<i>Usually put in command of up to 4 Sergeants and their troops. They are responsible for the primary organisation and day to day running of a guild outpost. They also have the authority to run a medium sized guild outpost and in the absence of a Captain can assume control of a Barracks facility.</i>
Captain	<i>Usually put in command of up to 4 Lieutenants and their troops. They are responsible for the long-term smooth running and upkeep of up to 3 guild outposts (small or medium). They also have the authority to run a barracks facility and in the absence of a Master (which is rare) they can assume command of a large guild house.</i>
Master	<i>Usually the role can encompass any of the duties of the Captain, Lieutenant or Sergeant. Their primary responsibility is the day to running of guild affairs, both in their own guild house and in other areas if need be. They have the authority to assume command of any other guild facility owned and run by the Silver Sword, but only in the absence of another guild member of master rank and only in extreme circumstances.</i>
High-Guild Master	<i>This individual is little known about and often controls matters from behind the scenes. Only those of the rank of Master have the potential to know the identity of the High-Guild Master.</i>

Benefits:

*Train in 1 Weapon
Mastery in 1 Weapon
2/2 Life Gain
Shield Use
Disarm 1/Ad
Lightning Strike/Reaction 1/Ad
Title: Stipend (50 G/Ad)*

Notable members

The Crimson Blades

Guild Master:

Darlan is the eldest son of a wealthy family from Erinan; he has a younger sister who fairly well ignores him just as much as Darlan ignores his parents. He was always getting into fights when he was young and strutted around as a noble brat with many cronies.

It wasn't until, almost by complete accident, he rescued the daughter of a more powerful noble house that his education really began. As a reward he could study with a weapon master; here he realised his full qualities and natural disposition to martial prowess. His father had a different future in mind for Darlan though, and, as they grew further apart his aunt Giselle tried to manipulate her own son to become heir in place of Darlan. Darlan was paying far more attention to his lessons, although this was now mainly due to the girl he had rescued had now matured into a beautiful woman; they fell in love and had a brief affair until Darlan joined the army and was called away to fight a campaign against a marauding Orc tribe in the north.

The fighting raged on for several months, Darlan was quickly promoted and was tasked with leading the final strike against the Orcs. Unfortunately Darlan fell from his horse and was presumed dead. He was found six months later with no recollection of the events since the battle.

Eventually Darlan returned home to a hero's welcome after his victory against the Orcs. His father was now proud of his son, and could understand why he had chosen the way he had; he made Darlan heir to his estate once more, but when he was thought dead his love had married his cousin instead.

After realising his Aunt's manipulations Darlan swore she would not gain control of the family estate. However his Aunt had other ideas and had manipulated one of the generals to send him on command of a suicide mission to Amatukiland.

Darlan's old mentor came with him, as he had fought the Treewalkers before. They could not really prepare for the jungle terrain and through a gruelling six months the troops were worn away. They had no choice but to return, but one final ambush was laid; Darlan and a handful of men escaped but Darlan's old mentor had given his life with the rearguard.

This time Darlan returned home with shame. The general, under the guidance of Darlan's aunt, stripped him of all rank and Darlan left the army. The other survivors and a few other men that had served under him before left and persuaded Darlan to become the leader of a mercenary group. He named his group the company of the Crimson Blades.

They became renowned fighters during the war with the Beastmen and helped defend Pironeas from the Beastman siege. The company grew and gained a good reputation: the hardened core, the men who survived Amatukiland were experienced fighters now and when the troll king came to defend Pironeas he picked his own council of war, not just the existing generals. He chose Darlan because of his bravery and because the Crimson Blades had been where the fighting was thickest. Now that Darlan could see the highest levels of military organisation he discovered his aunt's insidious plot involving the general. The older general was made to retire and keep his dignity, and his aunt's plans were foiled again.

After the war was over, Darlan found that after equipment used and new recruits were added he was in debt to the Legion of Battle. To raise the money needed to finish the repayments Darlan and the remainder of his experienced and capable soldiers headed overseas on a dangerous contract. This turned out to be an understatement: Darlan had never faced the Shadowlings before and didn't know what to expect, their magic and appearance unnerved the men and they were caught in a devious trap. Darlan and only a few of his men survived. They had enough money to get transport home where they could return to their mercenary guild house and help train new recruits. Darlan however knew it would be a while before the company was at full strength again and desperately wanted to get the money to repay the Legion of Battle. He chose to return by land and gain the money along the way.

The Guild:

The guild is very much a product of its master and currently seeks to gain new members and rebuild as quickly as possible.

Benefits:

1/1 Life Gain

+1 DAL

Mighty Blow 4/Ad

Fire Blade 1/Ad

Lightning Strike 2/Ad

Never leave a comrade behind even if dead.

Always honour a contract

Never surrender.

Always be the last to retreat.

The Heartbreakers

Guild Master:

Kijartan Bjornson

Guild:

The company of adventurers known as the Heartbreakers originates from a small town in Gralamire. The group originally consisted of five members, all of whom had a love of adventure and wanted to make a name for themselves, while getting as much attention from the opposite sex as they could.

The group approached the Lord of the area and were granted a Letter of Marque, immediately getting roped in to a job that consisted of going to rout out a band of outlaws harassing a village to the east of the fief. They were successful, but not a one of them did not receive some kind of disfiguring injury or scar in the process. Now this band of hard livers and lovers journeys throughout Gralamire looking for jobs with a core of three members while they tend to have a floating membership of two to four more; they live hard, fight dirty, and still break as many hearts as they can.

The company iconography is of a cleft heart on a blue field.

Notable members

The Goblin Free Company

Guild Master:

The Goblin Free Company is lead by a Goblin named Pulcher. He runs the Goblin Free Company with an iron hand. He makes sure the company is well equipped and well organised and he is not averse to cracking a few skulls, or worse, to keep order.

The Guild:

The Goblin Free Company is a proper and legal mercenary company. They have a Letter of Marque. Each company has a chit/letter to show they are members of the Goblin Free Company.

Basic organisation

The Goblin Free Company is split in to 9 squads, each squad normally comprising around 8 goblins:

One Sergeant

One healer

Six or so regular troopers

Some squads are much larger however

Most squads will have goblins with the following skills:

Build Traps

Make leather armour

Make short sword

A few goblins with some more 'exotic' skills

Some of the more long standing and experienced squads will have a low level magic user and a healing priest as well as maybe a magic item or two.

Mercenary Code

Once a contract is accepted you must not break it if a counter-offer is made

Don't accept a suicidal contract

Be sensible about who you let hire you

Don't kill innocents or those who can't defend themselves

Notable members

THE KNIGHTLY ORDERS

Any member of a Knightly order **MUST** be Lawful.

The Code Of Chivalry

All sworn Knights of Vara **MUST** follow the tenets of the code, although Lawful Evil knights may try to circumvent them but will **NOT** break them. The aim is to define the parameters of action but to still allow room for people to role play and explore their character.

“To live thy life such that it is worthy of respect and honour by all.”

Fairness

Never attack an unarmed foe

Never attack from behind

Never cheat

Avoid torture

Nobility

Exhibit self-discipline and self-sacrifice

Respect authority and nobility

Obey the law

Administer justice as laid out in law

Administer mercy (always accept the surrender of a foe)

Protect the innocent

Respect women (especially non-combatants)

Valour

Exhibit courage in word and deed

Defend the weak and innocent

Fight with honour and fairness

Never abandon a friend, ally or noble cause

Honour

Always keep one's word of honour (however it was given)

Always maintain one's principals and morals

Never betray a confidence or a comrade

Avoid deception

Respect life

Courtesy

Exhibit good manners

Be polite and attentive

Respect host, authority and women

Loyalty

(In no particular order)

To Deity

To Liege

To the code of chivalry

To country

To comrades

The Spirit of Knighthood

“A knight is sworn to valour, his heart knows only virtue, his blade defends the helpless, his might upholds the weak, his word speaks only truth, his wrath undoes the wicked.”

The Wolves of Calsmeer

Alignment: Neutral/Good Country: Calsmeer Race: Any

Calsmeer, bordered to the north with the Wyldlands and facing the brunt of most of the attacks from the unmapped region. The Wolves guard that border and the rest of the country. But their relation with the ruling family is strained as the Wolves once removed a tyrant from the throne, and the successor ruled that the Order would always have the right to remove any ruler that they thought was abusing the trust of the people. They are the most finely trained and organised warriors within the borders of the country and they can well enforce that right if they need to use it. Lord Tertinius DanRevor, a man of courage and valour always accompanied by a snow-white wolf, leads the Order.

Requirements: The Wolves never take applicants; they offer membership to those that have shown themselves to be honourable, brave, and above all staunch defenders of the populace of Calsmeer.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad

Mighty Blow 4/Ad

Wolf Leap 2/Ad

2/2 Life Gain

Animal Sense 1/Ad

Notable members

Lord Tertinius DanRevor – Master of the Order and councillor to the King of Calsmeer

Chevaillier Vak VorTorias – Defender of the Banner and scourge of the Black Wolves

Sir Petronius – Bannerman of the Order, charged with protecting the colours.

Sir Caldain DanRevor – Retired knight of the Order, living on his modest estate in the North of the country.

The Red Falcons

Alignment: Neutral/Good Country: Erinan Race: Any

The Red Falcons are based in the city-port of Celtar (Kel-tar) where the River of Dreams meets the Eastern Sea. They are named after the blood red velvet cloaks that they wear. They have no allegiance to any god or guild, only to their Queen. They form the personal guard to their monarch and will protect her at the cost of their own lives. Each of them is a master of weapons and they all wear vembraces, leg greaves and a breastplate made of finest steel; these are presented along with the cloak to each new member at their investiture.

Requirements: Must have enhanced mastery in at least three weapons, one of which must be a sword. Must never have been a member of a Guild or Church. Must be sponsored by an existing member of the Red Falcons.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad

Mighty Blow 4/Ad

1st suit of plate-mail free

Forearm Parry

+1 DAL

Disarm 1/Ad

Notable members

Altos – a hard drinking officer in the Falcons, known for having little patience for fools and a temper like thunder.

Aramand – a ferociously smart officer in the Falcons, known for also being one of its more adept rakes.

Palthos – one of the more approachable knights, known for a passion for life, drinking, song and women that would stagger most other men.

Sheen – personal bodyguard to the Queen, a female troll who wields a sabre anyone else would use as a great-sword.

D'atalno De Celtar – Royal consort and living proof that a common man can rise to the heights of power and prestige.

Queen Elenora – Monarch of Erinan, claimed a position in their number for herself and backs it up with training and valour as demonstrated at Mara. Official not one of the order it claims her as one of them, and Gods protect any man who argues.

Knights of the Blazing Sun

Alignment: Good Country: Dralazar Race: Suntop or ½ Suntop only

The Knights of the Blazing Sun were formed to protect the desert caravans from the raids of the bandit lord Devidik. The usual tactic of the bandits was to get a group of them hired as guards for the caravan, then during the night deep in the desert they would allow the rest of the robbers into the camp and slaughter the drivers, ransom the passengers and steal the cargo. One of the commanders in the army of King Shamizel, who was to retire soon, suggested that the king commission a troop that could be requested by the caravan leaders to guard them and that could be trusted without question to do so. Within a year not only did all the caravans get through but also the Knights had mounted a campaign to find and destroy the headquarters of Devidik. Any law abiding citizen of the deserts knew that they could rely on the incorruptibility and support of the knights. Many a lost traveller has been found and brought safely home by a stranger bearing a sun symbol upon his silk tabard.

Requirements: Must be recommended by the master of a caravan you have protected in battle and must complete two years of apprenticeship under an existing knight.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad
+1 DAL

Mighty Blow 4/Ad
Hide in Desert 2/Ad

Shift 2/Ad
Create Water 1/Ad

Notable members

Lady Khalidah Sai-Draga Clan Mordici – head of the Knights of the Blazing Sun, this Suntop lady is said to be able to read the sands after a storm and still find tracks.

The Valkyries

Alignment: Neutral/Good Country: Gralamire Race: Females only

The Valkyries were formed in the far past of Gralamire; along with their counterparts the Storm Knights they form the defensive guard of the land. They tend to be given the charge of watching over the Capital city at the foot of the great mountain of Ice-heart. They also act as secure messengers as their generally lighter build allows them to push their mounts faster and longer. Members of the Valkyries tend to belong to both the warrior guild and to choose Bronwen Stormbrow as their patron deity; indeed the Paladinic order of the warrior goddess draws many of its female members from the ranks of the Valkyries.

Requirements: Any female warrior may petition to join the Valkyries as long as she has lived within the borders of Gralamire for the majority of her life. After a test by the priests of the order to confirm the honesty of the applicant they must then complete a period of apprenticeship culminating in a Quest on their own.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad
2/2 Life Gain

Mighty Blow 6/Ad
Lightning Blade 1/Ad

Storm Shield 1/Ad
(Q.v. Force Shield)

Notable members

Marquesa Raghild Storm-Fjord, Baroness Pure-Snow – head of the Valkyries and councillor to the Queen.

The Storm Knights

Alignment: Any Country: Gralamire Race: Males only

The Storm Knights are the male counterpart to the female Valkyries. While the Valkyries guard the inner kingdom, the Storm knights are the guardians of the border and the enforcers of the Queen's law within those borders. The Queen also sends them on quests to destroy monsters plaguing the populace. The men of this order tend to spend time in physical pursuits rather than academic studies. As with the Valkyries they tend to follow the Warrior Goddess and are members of the warrior guild.

Requirements: The requirements are the same as those for the Valkyries.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad
2/2 Life Gain

Mighty Blow 6/Ad
Lightning Blade 1/Ad

10ft Knock-back 2/Ad
Rage 1/Ad

Notable members

Marquise Ectheow Storm-Fjord – Master of the Storm Knights, and councillor to the Queen.

Tiger Bloods

Alignment: Any Country: Amatukiland Race: Tribe-member only

The tribes of Amatukiland have no formal 'knights' but they do have a special caste of warrior that is only joined by a select few. These Tiger bloods are noble in a world that is all too often savage and wild; however they still carry a feral danger about them wherever they go. Tales are still told in Erinan about these red daubed barbarian warriors and the feats they performed during the battles of the war: the country of Erinan lost many good and skilled defenders in those battles

Requirements: A warrior must request from a shaman to be tested to become a Tiger Blood and then quest to find an elder Tiger Blood to participate in the ceremony. Then they must slay a great beast using only a dagger and no armour before being anointed in its blood and mingling their blood with that of a Tiger Blood Elder.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad

Mighty Blow 4/Ad

Talk to Animal or Plant 2/Ad

2/2 Life Gain

Power Armour 1/Ad

Notable members

The Order of the Hawk

Alignment: Good or Neutral Country: Any Race: Any

The Order of the Hawk is dedicated to protecting Vara from evil people and monsters. They tend to be wanderers with little in the way of organised power bases. However they meet several times a year at ritual circles to perform the ritual needed to induct new members, arranging on each occasion the next meeting place and time. One can only join if you meet and prove to an existing knight you are worthy of membership.

The ritual, a much kept secret, creates a set of wings that grow on the back of the new knight; the ritual must be renewed once a year or the wings will shrivel and die, hence they meet three to four times a year. Many knights are mistaken for Skywise elves at first however some of the more interesting members, such as Half-Orcs or Trolls, soon dispel that myth.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad

Eyes of the Hawk 5/Ad

Talk to Bird 2/Ad

2/2 Life Gain

(Spot hidden doors/pits etc while

Lightning Strike 1/Ad

Mighty Blow 4/Ad

concentrating. Lasts for 1

Fly (Physical) 2/Ad

encounter)

Notable members

The Knights of Vara

Alignment: Neutral Country: Duchy of Kiral Race: Any

The Order of the Knights of Vara is an old and dying order, as only the High King may induct new members from those that prove themselves worthy of the honour and as having only the best interests of the people of the five kingdoms in their hearts. At present they are only a few old (Over 430 years) Elves with a couple of Dwarves and a blonde haired youth that appears in all of the paintings that are commissioned every fifty years, as he does to this day. However they may be old but they are far from inactive, they just prefer to keep life quiet these days. After the first hundred years all the parades and honours lose their charm, and sitting in the main hall of their keep in the Duchy, surrounded by paintings with fewer and fewer people in them serve only as a reminder of friends and lovers painfully long gone. Each and every one of them will gladly lay down his or her life for Vara, but they are just so good at staying alive. They are known to shamelessly poke fun at any monarch that they meet, but the royalty all bear this with good grace as they know that it simply reminds them of their time with their beloved boy-king that they lost so long ago.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad

2/2 Life Gain

Mighty Blow 4/Ad

Notable members

Deali and Mirel Fass-Hamver – a Suntop couple who are among the last few living members of the Order.

The Knights of the Iron Heart

Alignment: Good Country: Any Race: Any

The Knights of the Iron Heart is a Varan-wide Nightly Order. It is dedicated to upholding the Code of Chivalry. All members must be of the Lawful Good alignment: worshippers of Shashay and The Crone are not allowed to join the order.

The Order is made up of a series of 'Circles'.

The Inner Circle is comprised of the Three Leaders of the Order.

The First Circle is comprised of the leaders of the Chapters, so only has five members.

The Second Circle is comprised of the senior members of the Order, which generally comprises of twenty or so members.

The Third Circle is comprised of the general members; there are generally forty or so members of this circle.

The Fourth Circle is comprised of the probationary members; the number of members varies.

There are five Chapters within the Order, one for each Kingdom of Vara. There is a chapter stronghold in each Kingdom, run by the leader of the Chapter. The leaders of each Chapter make up the First Circle. The Three Leaders of the Order are usually drawn from the First Circle, however in unusual circumstances they can be drawn from any circle including the Fourth c. There is no strict procedure for choosing leaders of the Order or of the Chapters. They are generally chosen by the membership as a whole. No self-respecting member would put themselves forward for a position.

New members of the Order must be sponsored by an existing member of the Order. They then join the Fourth circle for a year until the yearly meeting of the Order where their membership is either approved or disallowed. The yearly meeting occurs in the Stronghold of one of the heads of the Order. They take it in turns to host the meeting.

Knight Title 300 g/Ad

Lightning Strike/Reactions 3/Ad

Disarm 1/Ad

3/3 Life Gain

Knockdown 2/Ad

Mighty Blow 6/Ad

Knockout 1/Ad

Notable members

The Order of Lanius

Alignment: Any Country: Any Race: Dwarf only

This Nightly Order is centred on the clan Daemar holds and the house of Lanius in particular. The warriors from this order have sworn to protect the holds, tunnels, mines, canals and caravans of Dwarven kind and as such are masterful in combat and defence. Their word of honour being their bond they are trusted and much loved by traders and miners. They also have to double up quite regularly as healers and cavalry for caravans and so have some rudimentary triage skills as well as tracking.

Requirements:

Undertake a one-year squire's position with a willing warrior

Mastery in hammer or axe type weapon

Follow the Code of Chivalry

Complete a test of honour to gain full acceptance as a tunnel warrior of

Lanius

Knights must openly show the symbol of a lit candle on their person

Benefits:

See through magical darkness

Title: Knight at 300 G/Ad

2/2 Life Gain

Dress Minor Wounds

Dress Major Wounds

Set Bone

Make Lv 1 Alchemy

Tenets:

Protect the tunnels for they are the holds innards

The goods carried along them are the holds essence and its livelihood

Protect the caravans and canals for they are the holds veins

The veins carry the goods and they are the lifeblood of the hold

Protect the holds for they are your homes and heritage

Do your ancestors proud

Criminal Organisations of Vara

There are several organised criminal groups on Vara. Most of the time they are in conflict with each other; some of them have ongoing conflicts with the Children of Shashay but this is not by any means a given.

Black Orchids

Organised bandits, stealing carts and acting as highwayman groups; they are more likely to raid a way station than a warehouse. They focus on waylaying people, fencing property, thuggery, extortion and protection rackets in villages. They operate by intimidation, fear and killing. It is known that they have corrupt druids working for them.

Benefits

*Silent Move 2/Ad
Backstab 4/Ad
Hide in Any 2/Ad
Recognise Value
R/W Thief Code 1*

Requirements

*Tithe 10% of treasure to band
must give equal shares to all in a raid (Leader gets 2 shares)
Wrist tattoo of a black flower. If discovered then character is noted as an outlaw*

Black Wolves

Calsmeer only bandits involved in a turf war with the Orchids; they only want to control Calsmeer, and they want the Orchids out. They specialise in impersonation, taking over toll booths, that sort of thing. They are known for showing no mercy to members of authority and will happily catch innocents in the middle of their turf war without caring.

The Purple Brotherhood

A group of raiders and bandits who operate most extensively as pirates on land in both approach and code. They wear deep purple sashes round the waist or over the shoulder while engaged in active raids, and work on a strict rank of 'shares' for all prizes and booty taken.

Benefits:

*Mighty Blow 2/Ad
Backstab 2/Ad
+1 DAL
Recognise Value
Lightning Strike 1/Ad*

Rules:

** All that participate in a raid may share in the booty.
* If you duck out of a raid do not expect a share.
* Wear your sash with pride; it shows that we are not 'common bandits'.
* Any acts against the group will be punished.*

Magatanolier Cartel

This crime cartel specialises in drugs, prostitution, blackmail, extortion. They are based mainly in east Erinan.

Cartielli Cartel

Much the same as the Magatanaliers, and trying to take over where that family is falling apart based in west Erinan.

The Shadow Claw

A loose organisation of men trained in unarmed combat and fanatically dedicated to the group; sometimes specialising in assassination or thuggery. Thought to be based somewhere in the mountains between Erinan and Dralazar.