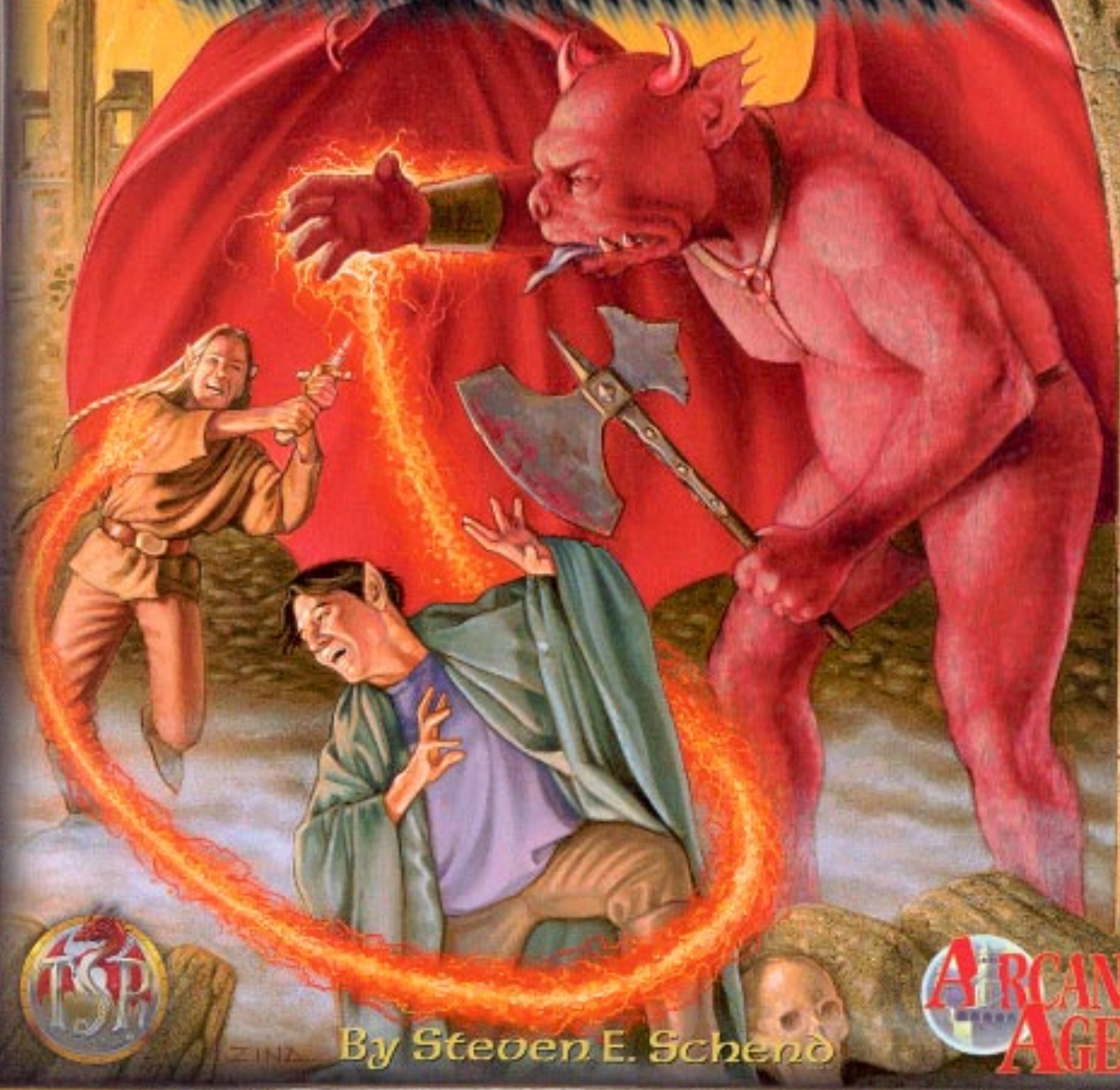


FORGOTTEN REALMS
ADVENTURE

the Fall of Myth Drannor



By Steven E. Schend





ARCANE AGE™

Fall of Myth Drannor

by Steven E. Schend

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INTRODUCTION



Welcome ye back to the so-called Arcane Age, youngling. This is the closing tale of fabled Cormanthyr. Still brings a tear to this grizzled old mage's eye to remember the realm and look back upon those mistakes of youth that might have been avoided. Hrmph. Well, know ye that time is ever so short, even for those who believed their mythal afforded them all the time on Toril; I pray that ye learn better from their mistakes than they did themselves –for the dead know many things, but grasp truth and grow in knowledge they are rarely able to do. . . .

– Elminster of Shadowdale, Year of the Gauntlet

What Came Before

Looking for the city details of Myth Drannor in here? Well, this product is, in that regard, incomplete. It is only a partial history of a very troubled time, chronicling the end of a great civilization. While this entire product (as the title proclaims) deals with the Fall of the great city of Myth Drannor and the empire around it, the city and its better times are detailed in the **ARCANE AGE™** *Cormanthyr: Empire of Elves* supplement. Many notes herein refer to that product, and little is repeated in this supplement. While this product provides the minutiae on its end, that book shows the rise of the elves and the great empire in Cormanthyr with its capital, the magical Myth Drannor. With all this history between both products and many more references among established Realmslore, you've now got to decide how to use the **ARCANE AGE** products in your campaigns.

The Purpose of Arcane Age Campaigns

In short, the **ARCANE AGE** product line serves a unique two-fold purpose for the Realms. Used as a new campaign, it opens the door for PC time travelers (with all the restrictions noted in past **ARCANE AGE** products) or natives of that time and place. This simply grants the PCs another campaign setting in the Realms. The other purpose for the **ARCANE AGE** products is its histories. Instead of looking back within "modern" Realms products, these products give us a firsthand look at the past and show the Realms when it was new. Now, when adventuring in the "modern" Realms, DMs no longer have to guess at what a ruined city and its treasures might look like: Simply extract an **ARCANE AGE** site and age it a few centuries! Obviously, placing these supplements at the most pivotal times on Faerûn allows a more thorough look at the cause and effect of the events. Cultural details and expanded histories allow for greater depth of understanding about the people, places, and situations of the modern Realms, and also expand the broader understanding of Faerûn as a continent.

Atypical Adventuring, or What to Expect

This supplement is less an adventure for PCs of X-level than a breakdown of the 60-year-downfall of Myth Drannor, peppered with a wide array of adventure hooks for DMs. In this format, DMs have the freedom to create and expand on events, places, and battles that interest them and their players. The sheer number of stories and incidents all crowded

into the relatively short period herein render it impossible to offer more than basic hooks and ideas. This format, while a bit more work for DMs, allows them to create a decades-long campaign for the PCs during the twilight of Myth Drannor.

First and foremost, the history is a short but important span of time. The 70 years from 651 to 720 DR link up and complete the major timeline begun in *Cormanthyr*, from Myth Drannor's zenith through its despairing Fall to the hope in the Harpers' revival. Throughout the 70-year span, a number of minor plots provide grist for the PCs' participation.

After the full history and timeline, the next chapters break down the battles and the major campaigns of the Weeping War (the elves' name for the years-long conflict known to humans as the Fall). Here are loads of opportunities, whether the PCs are freelance adventurers or spies or soldiers. Each campaign has adventure hooks and possibilities for the PCs' involvement, and since not all the battles are detailed beyond a name, the PCs can easily be the heroes of one of the skirmishes during one of the battles of the Woodheart War, carving a niche for themselves in Myth Drannor's history. Of course, mere scouts always became embroiled in skirmishes; as a guess, beyond the 85 distinct, major battles of the whole period, armed conflicts between scouts of either side would total over 300 across three years! In other words, if the PCs go looking for trouble, it will most certainly find them.

The last chapters detail magical items and spells indigenous to Myth Drannor. Only a precious few magical items (like *Heartcleaver* and the *Baneblades of Demron*) are items of such importance and power that they are assigned to NPC control. Other items, while they have timeline ties, can easily be shifted into other hands or used as adventure hooks by the DM. Besides, wouldn't you be disappointed without new magic from this last and most storied of magical cities?

Little detail is given on the time between the Fall (714 DR) and the modern (1358 DR) details on Myth Drannor (found in *Ruins of Myth Drannor*, TSR #1084), so there are more than 600 years during which the PCs could adventure in and around Myth Drannor. Be warned, though. Try claiming the many lost treasures of Cormanthyr, and you'll find the elves a bit less friendly than they were in the Days of Brotherhood, and the other monsters (from baatezu to sharn) even less so.

Designer's Notes & Thanks

To Thomas & Karen, for their patience and willingness to let me ramble;

To Eric & Bryon, whose comments helped keep me from destroying more of Myth Drannor than was necessary;

To Dale Donovan, for the strangest method of dragon slaying I'd ever heard of; and to Ed Greenwood, for his laughter, support, and for knocking this city over in the first place.

THE LAST DAYS OF MYTH DRANNOR



Myth Drannor's death-rattle sounded in The Year of Doom (714 DR), fallen to the Army of Darkness after a protracted three-year-long war against Cormanthyr's mythal-cloaked capital and surrounding lands. The City of Song grew to heights of wonder and accord such as never had been seen before or since. Why was its fall so swift and tumultuous? As in all great tragedies, many components conspired against the city from both without and within. To determine how it fell from its lofty heights, we must look at its history from that time until its dying days.

— ELÉNARIL Nharimlur, *Towers Fallen*

Apex of an Empire

No city could compare to Myth Drannor at its height. Magic flowed within the surrounding air, water, and land, and peace and prosperity second to none gave every citizen reason to be happy. For once in the history of Toril, elves, dwarves, humans, gnomes, and halflings (as well as other races more sylvan) all learned to live together in harmony. The races merged and formed many alliances amid the Akh'Faer and Akh'Velahr militaries, the guilds, and the armathors. At the Opening of the City and the rise of the mythal, only Myth Drannor was considered safe for the elves to live in harmony with others. By the Year of the Bloody Tusk (661 DR), more than a score of smaller tree villages and grounded settlements scattered all about Cormanthyr evidenced a growing unanimity among the elves and the N'Tel'Quess races.

The city and realm prospered for centuries under its protective mythal. To become a native of Cormanthyr was a matter of prestige, and a number of cooperative villages and smaller settlements of elves and N'Tel'Quess nestled about the trees around Myth Drannor. Even with these expansions and homesteading, the true mark of distinction was to live within the hallowed streets of the City of Song. Since the Year of the Empty Helm (462 DR), no new homes were constructed above, on, or below ground within Myth Drannor, as the elves panicked when two mere centuries of settlement by N'Tel'Quess nearly doubled the population and size of Myth Drannor. Therefore, one could move to Myth Drannor only if accepted into a guild or school, or granted the property via an inheritance (an unlikely proposition until closer to the Fall).

The Sister Cities

As the mythal-cloaked City of Song grew in prominence, many questioned how its wonders could be shared with others. As one eloquent young elf writer penned in *Silverymoon*, "The Coronal's dream is too great to be limited to one city and one realm. We must take this message of peace through unity and magic and found other, sister cities, to show all the Realms that the dream is worth dreaming." And so, beginning about two centuries after the Opening, colonies and connections were made all across the Realms.

In this 27-decade period of colonization, over 12 separate settlements became new homes of magic and learning across the Realms. Thus, in the city's golden era, sister settlements in the High Forest, the Yuirwood, Shilmista, the Moonwoods, and other forests farther south embraced the peace and magic of Myth Drannor's unity. Other previously established settlements such as *Silverymoon* also grabbed hold of the dream and linked their fates and magic to that of the City of Song in Cormanthyr. *Silverymoon*, most of all, became a center of knowledge of things elven, though few elves of Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr migrated here until the Fall (and fewer still would mention the relatively close ruins of *Aryvandaar* and its satellite realms from the Crown Wars era).

Contact was even reestablished with long-isolated *Evereska*, though only among the High Mages and Court higher-ups; it was not deemed efficacious to allow even the most honorable of N'Tel'Quess to learn of this well-hidden and thriving elf-home, for fear it would fall after untold millennia.

Still, with all these colonies and allied settlements growing slowly and steadily across the centuries, the dream grew. By the early sixth century, the Coronal and the High Mages secretly (and later publicly) established gates to link



these many places with their spiritual and magical home in Myth Drannor. Most were controlled gates, their use contingent on connections within both cities. Many others, including those to Silvermoon, the High Forest, Shilmista, and the Yuirwood, were relatively public gates and required small fees of users who would travel from one city of wonders to another. These gates served the Coronal's dream well, drawing the tribes of lands even farther afield together; unfortunately, they also helped bring down both Myth Drannor and the growing mythal city in the Yuirwood. (See the later happenings during the First Sieges and the Final Fall.)

The Passing of Eltargrim

The mythal's ability to counteract aging allowed many to live far longer and healthier lives than they ever had before. Still, this magic could not overcome those without the will to continue or those unfortunates whose ravaged bodies made life a chore rather than a blessing. Folk still died in Myth Drannor, such as armathors, military personnel, or adventurers too grievously wounded for magic to save in time. For other less-active natives of the city, it was often the conscious choice of an elderly elf to simply let go and pass on to Arvandor. As a result of the life-sustaining magics, the end of an elf's or other elder's life rarely brought much sorrow; elders made their own funerals into galas to celebrate their lives. These galas were preceded and followed by mourning periods for the families, but their grief was mitigated by the fact that it was the will and conscious choice of the departed, and a solemn admission that their mortal lives were over, without the shock of loss normally attributed to death.

None were prepared for the dawn of Midsummer in the Year of the Bloody Tusk, when the Coronal passed beyond. The city had been in full festival mode, as Midsummer was always a time of celebration for all the races. The Coronal, his niece Aravae, and the Srinshree had spent much of the past ten days walking throughout Myth Drannor. Wherever they went folk lived, loved, and worked in harmony and peace. With the streets crowded with summer's trade and festivalgoers, Myth Drannor was as delighted and alive as ever. The Coronal smiled, for his dream was finally and fully achieved. He had no fears for his people, for the long-held aspirations set by the Coronal Oacenth at the founding of Cormanthyr were met at last: All the tribes of the forested land lived in peaceful unity.

Many folk in Myth Drannor talked later of speaking to the Coronal in his last days. Never once did he seem morose or distracted from things mundane; in fact, most remembered him as being more alive and vibrant than the ancient elf had been in centuries. While he bestowed a Coronal's blessing upon all those he met, none thought more of it than a ruler content to see his realm in splendor. Even those who often disagreed openly with Eltargrim could remark only that "the old man simply wished to pat his children on their heads for their goodness, nothing more." With the mythal supporting the life under its protection, the Coronal had ruled the City of Song for more than 800 years and had lived for four centuries before then too. While his constant companion, the Srinshree, was far older than Eltargrim, he had not the benefit of her mysterious rejuvenation at the hand of Mystra, and he looked every bit an ancient elf of most advanced years. The spring in his step and the light in his eyes, in retrospect, could have been anticipation at his coming rest in Arvandor, though most believed he was merely happy to see his dream realized so perfectly.

As is still often the case, Midsummer festivals and revels continued nonstop from one dawn through 'til the next and beyond. Thus, many folk were still up and about as the first fingers of light shone in the east. As was his ritual for more than a millennium, the Coronal Eltargrim arose and went to the top of the Rule Tower to greet the dawn. However, even the most drunken revelers noticed a difference this morn. He was not clad in his usual robes of state but in his ancient warrior's armor all polished to blinding brilliance. The scabbarded Ruler's Blade, the primeval

elfblade unseen since the time of Cormyr's founding, slapped restlessly against his leg as he climbed the tower. To all those who met him with questions, he simply smiled at them, laid a calm hand on their shoulder, and continued on his journey.

Wordlessly, he exited the tower at its top, the dawn yet to break over the city. Cheers rose amid the revelry below to greet him, but they were answered only with silence. With a telltale crackle of elder magics, the drawing of the Ruler's Blade silenced all convened below as they saw rare magic openly at play. Raising the blade high over his head with both hands, the Coronal lifted his voice in an ancient tune often sung when he was young by victors of a great struggle. The crowd joined in, and the city sang with the Coronal in exultation of their mutual achievements in peace. When the final refrain rose over Castle Cormanthor, the first blinding rays of dawn struck the Coronal and his *elfblade*. With a smile and a strong but final note of his song, the Coronal Eltargrim greeted the dawn by merging with it. His body dissolved into rosy light and he walked like a phantom on the air into the sunbeams as he willed himself beyond to Arvandor. The city gasped in wonder at the beauty of the magic, and then in shock and disbelief. After a number of moments, the reality began to set in, as the Coronal's *elfblade* still hung crackling in the air but magic, not the Coronal, held it aloft. The Coronal had passed on, and Cormanthyr mourned.

The Tragic Farewell of Aravae

Aravae, the Coronal's maiden niece and now the sole surviving member of House Irithyl, had been raised for centuries to be the Coronal's heir. Since her second century began, her life had been naught but training for her eventual succession of her many-times-great-uncle (and fending off the numerous romantic advances of the sons of the noble Houses). Her training under the Srinshree and a select group of elder priests of elf and human gods (notably Corellon, Sehanine, Eldath, and Mystra) made a merry elfchild into a woman of obvious and formidable magical power, soft-spoken yet hard-edged diplomacy, and great beauty tempered by wisdom and humility. Aravae loathed the attentions lavished upon her by the noble houses and their sons, for they sought either to curry favor with the one they assumed to be the next Coronal or to place their boorish and arrogant sons in place where (they foolishly believed) their House could become the most powerful in Myth Drannor.

A fact she admitted only to the Srinshree, Aravae (whose name translates to "Felicity" or "Great happiness") secretly loved only one elf from her second century onward: Josidiah Starym, the bladesinger. While it began as a young maid's crush on a dashing young warrior, it blossomed into true love as the two grew. Aravae, well aware of the bad blood and long centuries of mistrust between House Starym and the Coronal, hoped a marriage with the heir of House Starym would heal that rift between Cormanthyr's eldest House and its rulership. Unfortunately, Josidiah disappeared for more than 15 decades while on a quest to recover the long-lost Ary'Velahr'Kerym *elfblade*. Still, Aravae never lost hope of his return, and she held her vows to him as sacred.

After the mysterious passing of the Coronal, all eyes (and political aspirations) turned to Aravae. Heartbroken, she insisted on the ancient mourning rituals for the Coronal, which seemed more fitting for the city in shock. This afforded her five years during which she could have agents seek out her lost Josidiah and also time for her to learn the responsibilities of the *elfblade* that hovered atop the Rule Tower from the Srinshree, her mentor and sister-at-heart. Aravae and the Srinshree went into slight seclusion, as they planned how to maintain the Coronal's dream, but only the Srinshree knew how tenuous the peace truly was. Of course, their time in mourning set ears buzzing with rumors that the Srinshree had a secret hand in killing the Coronal (rumors set in motion by the noble Houses, who wished to see the Srinshree removed from a position of influence she had held with the Coronal for more than six centuries).

The Mourning Days also allowed Aravae insulation against meddling House politics. Many of the noble Houses immediately reacted to the Coronal's death with a push for their House heir to marry "the grieving niece." By ancient elf traditions, no marriages or binding contracts could be entered while a family, clan, or House was in mourning; by her rights as heir and supported by the Srinshree, Aravae's setting of Mourning encompassed all within Myth Drannor. Thus, she could not be forced to marry, even though she also saw the need for immediate heirs for the Coronahship, nor could she be forced to draw the *elfblade* and become the Coronal before she wished to do so.

Given the seclusion that Aravae kept after Eltargrim's Passing, it is a great mystery as to what killed her only three years into the Mourning Days. All that is truly known is that Aravae Irithyl, last heir of House Irithyl and Coronal-to-be, died in her sleep on the night of Cinnaelos'Cor (Shieldmeet) of the Year of the Falling Petals (664 DR). Deep black bruises in the elongated shape of elf hands surrounded her throat. Her personal guards, three armathors who had guarded her from her birth, were also found dead with the same marks on them, one inside the chamber and two without and all in their usual posts. No amount of magic, High or otherwise, could discern the identity of the killer or killers, nor could any magic revive them. The only clue, left behind at the scene, were some splashes of black mud on her bed and on the wall opposite her window, but not on the white carpets on the floor outside or inside the room. The mud never corresponded with any mud or dirt within 500 miles of Myth Drannor, despite broad investigations.

If ever there were any facts, they are long destroyed with the city, and all that remains are rumors and conspiracies. Some N'Tel'Quess hinted that the new heirs of House Starym secretly slew Josidiah and his kin to inherit the House and hopefully marry a grieving Aravae to bring them back to true power. Others suggested similar stories of different Houses. The Houses, of course, trotted out the old rumors that the Srinshree was out to claim the Coronal's seat for her own, despite the fact that she had supported the Coronal since her arrival in the city more than a millennia ago. Wilder rumors grew by the season, and soon drow or maluagrym or sharn or phaerimm were responsible, or even the ghosts of the past Coronals of Cormanthyr (who allegedly strangled her to keep Aravae from claiming their Throne).

The Claiming Ceremony

Despite a surge of political furor to end the Mourning Days after Aravae's death, the Srinshree and the High Court Mages deemed it necessary to honor the fallen lady's wishes. The noble Houses bridled under the wait, but took that nineteen-month span to prepare their Houses for the Claiming Ceremony to come. For the first time in millennia, the succession of Cormanthyr's leadership was open, and it was possible for any House (or even commoner, though no noble would admit this) to inherit the Throne. For the past few years, a few flying elves had attempted to touch the *elfblade* as it hovered above the Rule Tower, and found it sealed behind impenetrable magic. Now, with the official ceremony at hand, the key to Cormanthyr lay within reach of more grasping hands than were seen at Midsummer's Revels.

On Midsummer's Morn of the Year of Stern Judgment (666 DR), the Claiming Ceremony for the Ruler's Blade began. The Srinshree, clad in her usual black, was as the officiator and Center of the High Magic that opens the ceremony, and her words spread throughout the forest of Cormanthor so all could hear: "The Coronal is dead. Long live the Coronal. If ye wouldst take up this mantle, be ye elf noble or other, attend me. Where the rule began, the rule shall continue for one worthy. All are welcome who believe themselves estimable enough to rule the City of Brotherhood and staid enough to accept the responsibilities of that rule. Six shall reach for the Ruler's Blade each day, until Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr have a ruler once more." After these words died out, the Srinshree and four hooded and masked High Mages drew



magic from the mythal itself and wove a translucent sphere around the top of the Rule Tower that would allow one to pass from any side every four hours. These same five figures remained atop the Tower, attending the Claiming Ceremony.

Over the next four days and nights, each of the noble Houses sent at least one heir to the Tower to touch the blade and gain its power. No feet touched the stairs of the Rule Tower's interior, and it was not the barring by the armathors that kept the stairs clear. All the elves flew to the Tower in full regalia and honors, and one by one the result was the same. The elves, no matter how penitent or honorable they seemed to themselves, reached for the *elfblade* and were found wanting. The gold arc of light that crackled along the blade flared into fiery life, crawled down the blade to engulf each elf, and consumed the body utterly in arcane fire, ending the elf's life in a bolt of eldrith flame that blasted skyward to explode high above the Tower, signaling yet another failure. By the dawn of the sixth day, a noble from each of the 24 different gold elf Houses had been consumed by the Claiming Ceremony, and their Houses wept. Even in grief and in this time of trial, conspiracies abounded.

By early morn of the fifth day, the other noble Houses of moon and sylvan elf ancestry demanded the golds relinquish their claims of seniority to allow them the chance to ascend to the Throne. The fifth and sixth days of the Claiming Ceremony saw open skirmishing and assassinations in the streets of Myth Drannor for the first time in ages. The clan heirs of Houses Aunglor, Hawksong, Iliathor, Maerdrym, Nightstar, and Omberdawn lay dead in the streets, the moon elves poisoned or slain by fell magic. Others made it to the Rule Tower only to die, along with the golds that yet pressed their claims, as pillars of failing fire under the touch of the Ar'Cor'Kerym *elfblade*.

With open warfare among the nobles disturbing the peace of the city, the N'Tel'Quess began to see that the greater Houses were lacking true leaders. Despite the tradition that made this ceremony for the elves alone, they saw their peaceful city and the Coronal's dream in tatters around them, and sought to end the strife. Thus, on the sixth day, a contingent of half-elves, dwarves, and humans approached the Rule Tower, with three honorable men and two women among them steered for their trial by fire. Unable to fly the span to reach the Ceremony, they approached the inner court where they could reach the stairs—and found their way blocked by many elves who once called them comrades.

The peace of Myth Drannor perished as elf turned on dwarf and human equally. The armathors came to battle, and while some held the Coronal's wishes and tried to break up the skirmish, others broke into House ranks and laid into "the mob of despoiling N'Tel'Quess." Despite their best efforts, good folk on both sides lay dead in the courtyard. Still, nine dwarves and twelve humans mounted the stairs, now fired by opposition to restore the peace, though none reached the top alive. To this day, none know who unleashed the killing magic within the Rule Tower, only that the Tower exploded in arcane fury at dusk and none walked away. Under the thrall of their own hubris, the children of Cormanthyr, rather than risk the fate of rule by a non-elf, sundered the first and purest symbol of their fair city. Though few were surprised, the explosion affected none of the High Mages or the *elfblade* within the Ceremony Sphere, which still floated serenely and silently above the chaos. Despite the discord below, six more elves had tried and failed to become Coronal that day, though these elves were bold commoners, servants who sought to reclaim sense and peace while their masters warred. In all, 40 elves had tried, and the People had failed on two fronts that day.

Departure of the Srinshree

As the sun set and the stars winked into sight over a torn and divided Myth Drannor, the Srinshree's voice again rang out over all Cormanthyr. This time, however, it sounded heavy with both power and weariness. None who heard her could tear themselves

away or shake a chill from their bones upon the hearing of prophecy.

"Peoples, attend me. Look ye upon your works and deign to despair.

"A great gift was given to ye, and it lies ashambles. A gift given freely is to be treasured, but one scorned and abused is a gift undeserved.

"Two score have lit the heavens and scored the Weave in their arrogance. Two score have tried to uphold peace and unity but were found wanting of peace and unity in their own hearts.

"The spurned gift might have allowed one to rise above to truly become Coronal and rule well. Instead, the Coronal's Rule lies ruined under my feet.

"In time, ye shall understand what has been lost. In time, ye shall either forget or learn a lesson of it.

"I reach for the responsibility, for my slight shoulders can more bear its weight. Carry not I the onus of yore.

"Should I prove less than worthy, the Claiming shall continue. The gift and ye earn their own fates thereafter.

"Should I prove worthy, I would make ye so. Should I prove worthy, I shall give ye hope."

With the word "hope" lingering in everyone's ears, the Srinshree floated so the Ar'Cor'Kerym *elfblade* hovered before her, and a great hue and cry rose up from all around. The assembled elves who stood firm against N'Tel'Quess now blasted the Ceremony Sphere with their great magic, anxious to halt the usurper from claiming the sword and position they all coveted. Prominent among the twelve attackers were the Archmage of House Maendellyn and her apprentice-son, made the last heir to his House after the death of three brothers before him. While spells of power unseen in ages battered the Ceremony Sphere, the Srinshree grasped the *elfblade's* hilt with both hands. . . and lived. The *elfblade's* golden energy leapt from the blade and infused the Ceremony Sphere with its own color, and still the rebel elves blasted on with their own magic. The Sphere now fought back, and any spell that contacted it was met by fierce arcs of golden lightning which wrapped about its attackers and crushed their mantles in upon them, their lifeless bodies hanging pitifully amid empty air. Those who stood witness beneath this spectacle swore they saw tears awash on the Srinshree's face, but a tense, silent peace now took hold of those assembled at scarred Castle Cormanthor.

A third and final time, the Srinshree cried out to the forest and its folk. The unmistakable magic of her words held all rapt and not a little fearful in their power, volume, and conclusive tone. Only once did her tears choke her, and all began to weep with her.

"I have proven worthy, but . . . Coronal I will not be. I shall not rule from the Throne but from the Heart.

"Look not for me to rule the realm, people, or Court. Look for me to rule war and hate with peace and love.

"When the dream truly becomes your own, I shall return. When elf and N'Tel'Quess alike truly accept the gift, I shall return.

"When Oacenth's Vow is fulfilled in the stars above and below, I shall return.

"When I am wanted truly, I shall return. When I am needed truly, I shall return.

"Peoples, attend me. Look ye upon my work and dare to hope."

The golden Ceremony Sphere now pulsed with ancient magic along with the crackling energy of the *elfblade* the Srinshree now bore. Golden lightning arced between her hands and the blade as she launched it downward into the rubble of the Rule Tower. All assembled gasped as the blade rose as it did in ages past, and the Rule Tower grew anew beneath it! The rubble seemed to leap back into place, mortared by golden energy. In a moment that spanned lifetimes, the Rule Tower stood restored beneath the feet of the Srinshree and the High Mages.

The golden energy now receded upward, leaching itself from the stones to collect in the Sphere, which slowly rose as well. Now, however, the Sphere was elongating into a diamond shape, which stood near to dwarfing the Rule Tower, and the Srinshree placidly

floated at its center, surrounded by the quartet of chanting High Mages. As the magic crystallized and became more a diamond with passing moments, the glow grew brighter, and gold energy flashed about Myth Drannor like no other. The mythal itself reflected the glow and sent its own arcane lightning into the crystal itself. When the chanting of the High Mages reached a crescendo, lightning of all hues, colors, and scents flashed along the outer edges of the mythal and arced along and into the crystal. With a resounding roar of one hundred thunders, the golden Diamond Tower (as it became legend), the Srinshree, her High Mages, and the *Ruler's Blade* of Cormanthyr disappeared from mortal realms.

Falling Chains

The Three Losses of the Coronal Eltargrim, his niece, and the Srinshree are now seen as the earliest precursors to the Death Knell of Myth Drannor. In a short span of six decades, what took millennia to build and nurture would fall to ruin due to pride, arrogance, and magic from a number of sources. While the Coronal lived, he sustained his creation; he had drawn together the disparate tribes and peoples and given them peace and prosperity, whether they initially wished it or not. Without him, that peace became a hollow shell, for his life and his work were the only true underpinnings of the great society. The Coronal Eltargrim had dreamed a dream, made it reality, and handed it to his People; while many shared the dream and believed in it, none could truly shoulder the burdens taken on by Eltargrim, and the dream truly began to die with his Passing.

In retrospect, many historians ape an elf scholar who looked back on Myth Drannor's fall while ruling in Silverymoon. The great elf historian Elénaril Nharimlur of Silverymoon set forth the coda that "the fragile chains that bound together Myth Drannor were broken so softly and so slowly that none heard the clatter of fallen links until far too late." The chains of which the Lady and High Consort Eléraril spoke were those of benevolent and selfless rulership, the open exchanges of craft and magic and learning, and the mutual love and respect among Myth Drannor's people for themselves and others. While a bit contrived and oversimplified, all scholars of Myth Drannor's Fall follow her suit in respect for her losses and her work to keep some pieces of her lost home alive.

The First of Chains: The Rulers

The loss of so many noble house heirs and elders due to the Claiming Ceremony and the chaos surrounding it put the succession of leadership, both for the realm and the individual noble Houses, on unsteady ground. Still, after the Srinshree and the Diamond Tower disappeared, the four highest ranking officials in the city—the Arms-Major, the Spell-Major, and the two High Court Mages—convened an Elven Court with the Grand Mage Ualair the Silent. The Tree Spirits seemed hardly surprised in the disappearance of the Coronal or the Srinshree, and in fact, hinted that "one is within Cormanthyr now and ever, until it is the time to sprout." After two days of discussion and frustration over the spirits' seeming indifference over the realm and its leadership, they simply said, "If one star cannot guide you in your travel, look to them all for guidance."

After the Court's judgment, High Court Mage Shyael Ildacer then called a Nobles' Council. Despite the usual objections of the haughty elves, known and worthy representatives of each of the races of Myth Drannor were also brought to Council. The five senior statesmen of the realm argued for nearly half a year with the nobles and the other representatives before deciding that the Court's message meant for a representative body to rule instead of a new Coronal. By Midsummer, Myth Drannor's Council of Twelve convened within the Coronal's Court.

The Council's Follies

Now, the Council's work maintained the same structures and services as normally overseen by the Coronal, and things seemed to return to normal within Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr. However, the flaws soon became evident in both this system and the representatives among the Council.

Unlike Eltargrim, many of the Councilors put their own agendas and their own gains above the work of the Council and the good of the city and realm; rather than rule for the betterment of all, they worked for the betterment of themselves. From their exalted positions, few could gainsay their manipulation of trade to favor one House over another, and those who objected found "disfavor" from the powerful friends of the Council.

While they continued the colonization efforts among the sister cities of Myth Drannor, some members (especially Lord Venali Starym) used their influence to gain favored status for their Houses or clans among the sister cities. Thus, as the exoduses began in later decades, some entire Houses emigrated to other cities or realms without losing much, if any, social status or power. This was only true among the haughtier elder Houses of elves, since they were among those most likely to think of abandoning Myth Drannor due to "N'Tel'Quess infestation."

The Ruling Council, while many members were upright and honorable, soon became merely a focal point for many political gambits, as the Coronal's goal was soon forgotten. Half or more of the Council's time was occupied by squabbling over power plays by its own members. The upkeep and unity among the people got less and less attention. When the Court Mages split over ideological differences and the Eternal Srinna formed, people

The Council of Twelve

The members that comprise the Council at its forming are as follows:

Name	Race	Status/Position
Ualair the Silent	gold elf	Grand Mage
Khyssoun Ammath	moon elf	High Court Mage
Shyael Ildacer	moon elf	High Court Mage
Kelvhan Olortynnal	gold elf	Arms-Major
Paeris Haladar	gold elf	Spell-Major
Venali Starym	moon elf	House Lord
Kharis Maerdrym	moon elf	House Lord
Phraan Audark	green elf	House Lord
Mentor Wintercloak	human	Incanist
Ailos Starlaughter	gnome	Armathor officer
Kovimal Honedaxe	dwarf	Clan Chief
Heumar Tankardtoes	halfling	Hill Voice (elect)

After 50 years, some members had been replaced, due to the return of the Spell-Major's elfblade (and subsequent replacement of the Spell-Major) and various mishaps (resulting in the deaths of two members). These are the Councilors who led Myth Drannor at the start of the Weeping War:

Name	Race	Status/Position
Ualair the Silent	gold elf	Grand Mage
Khyssoun Ammath	moon elf	High Court Mage
Irhaal Argentaamn	moon elf	High Court Mage
Kelvhan Olortynnal	gold elf	Arms-Major
Josidiah Starym	gold elf	Spell-Major
Venali Starym	moon elf	House Lord
Yrneha Maerdrym	moon elf	House Elder
Phraan Audark	green elf	House Lord
Trasaal the Gold Mage	human	Senior Armathor
Artair Tromostar	gnome	Akh'Faer officer
Kovimal Honedaxe	dwarf	Clan Chief
Jarrod Tallhill	halfling	Hill Voice (elect)

began to see the cracks in the Council's leadership. While the majors and the Court Mages still kept much of the city's and realm's services going, the rest of the Council's squabbles soon spilled over to public debates. While no outright battles grew from the dissension among the peoples, once-peaceful taverns where elves and halflings previously shared philosophy and music over drinks now became the sites of brawls and factionalism. Racially motivated vandalism against businesses and homes within the eastern end of the city made its first impressions upon Myth Drannor.

In elf culture, the leader of a realm is the realm. Whatever that leader does and says, the realm reflects the same. This certainly held true during the Coronal Eltagrim's lifetime, as the Coronal's wishes and hopes held the fragile bonds of peace and brotherhood together. With the divided Ruling Council in charge of Cormanthyr, the realm itself became divided. While most of the non-elf cultures merely saw some long-buried biases rear their ugly heads, some wiser elves recognized the corruption of the rulers manifesting in the realm. Within 40 years of the Coronal's death, the other major settlements of Cormanthyr had little traffic with Myth Drannor, even though it was technically the realm's capital. Even more unsettling, the Ruling Council was so embroiled in bickering and shoring up their own positions that they hardly noticed that Cormanthyr had nearly become individual city-states and settlements rather than a unified country.

The Second of Chains: The Craft & Knowledge

Despite the foibles of the leaders of the city, Myth Drannor might still have survived. However, its lifeblood had ever been magic and craftsmanship, and these too suffered without the caring attentions of the Coronal and the Srinshae. While craftsmanship and magical knowledge increased tremendously within the city, the colonization efforts of the sister cities sent many of Myth Drannor's best elsewhere. Indeed, sharing the knowledge seemed much easier when those with that knowledge went beyond Cormanthyr's woods and spread the learning to those who never walked Myth Drannor's streets.

The Mages & Wizards

The emigration of the mages or their extended sojourns to other realms and planes spread the learning of the city's schools of magic to many who had only heard of such places. Early on, while the Coronal still lived, many left the city reluctantly and only when necessary, as they enjoyed Myth Drannor's wonders and were loath to leave them behind. As the colonization ideas spread, many wizards who had studied in the City of Spells took the mission to heart and went where their Coronal bid them, often with their apprentices and in two noted cases, the school itself. The migrations to sister settlements in the other sylvan lands to the west and south and east spread Myth Drannor's magic and lessons of peace far and wide to many people who would otherwise never hear of it. Even already established places such as Silvermoon embraced the magic of the elves and raised themselves immeasurably in doing so. There is no argument that the raising of the sister cities was not without its downfalls, however.

These trends of training mages and sharing knowledge imperceptibly weakened Myth Drannor's arcane defenses. As more wizards trained in Myth Drannor and then left to show its wonders to the world, little new blood was introduced into the Akh'Faer or the armathors for centuries. The trend of missionary mages establishing libraries and mages' schools in the Coronal's name was popular through much of the 5th and 6th centuries Dalereckoning, and it accelerated significantly in the decades after the Coronal's demise in the 7th century. Notable examples of wizards who took the teachings of Myth Drannor abroad to other lands

and planes included (under their later, more famed monikers) Abarat the Alabaster, Ecamane Truesilver, Jlacathra Vorn of the Circle of Flame, Tulrun of the Tent, Archveult Tattercloak, Schimae Anuaer the Elfblade, Llaerjôn "Eyestar" Extynyam, Saerangol the Hooded One, and many more.

The migration of practitioners of the Art need not have been so devastating to the city's magical might, for the City of Song was still the premier center of magical scholarship in the Realms at the time, and it attracted numerous other wizards to its schools of magic. However, many of the newcomers were more motivated by their lust for power than their love of Mystra's gifts. While most did not work against the city's interests, neither did they work toward them. After the Passing of Eltagrim, fewer than half the normal number of students of Myth Drannor's wizard colleges became N'Tel'Quess armathors or Akh'Faer.

When the Army of Darkness engulfed the city during the First Sieges, many of these newer, less-devoted wizards showed their true colors and either deserted the city in its time of need or cowered in fear far from the battles in Myth Drannor's streets and groves. Some, falsely believing that appeasement might dissuade the nycaloths from their purpose or at least spare their own lives, even turned traitor on their own people and joined the Army of Darkness. Notable examples of these craven mages include Azimer, Druth Daern, Nezas "the Traitor," and the mysterious, emaciated, and bitter half-elf known only as "the Nomad of Scars."

The Craftsmen

No less dangerous to Myth Drannor's viability, but far less obvious, was the significant exodus of craftsmen from Myth Drannor in the years following the Coronal's death. The withdrawal came, in part, from opportunities offered by new or expanding settlements to the north and south such as Hillsafar and Moondale. The true, primary factor for skilled craftsmen to leave was the gradual calcification of Myth Drannor's craft guilds. Thanks to the mythal's indefinite extension of lifetimes, there was very little turnover in any of the city's craft guild hierarchies. Diminishing or nonexistent opportunities for new immigrants or the apprentices of the city's established masters to advance in status or wealth provided little incentive for the true artists to remain with the guild and the city. (On the other hand, the guilds of merchants and traders experienced very high turnover and showed no signs of stagnation, merely due to the fluctuating nature of trade and money.) As a result, the youngest and most innovative artisans began leaving the city in large numbers just as a burst of innovation and inspiration was most needed to reinvigorate Myth Drannor in the wake of the Coronal's death.

While the crafts of the City of Song were inarguably fabulous, there were few innovations or novelties brought to the forefront after the 5th century. Though their products exceeded the expectations of their trading public, the native artisans became stagnant and complacent, and merely continued their work and craft rather than improving or expanding it. Like the wizards during this time, the new ideas and those most in tune with the dream sought to spread beyond the limits imposed by the mythal itself. So, like the others, the true artists of the realm came to the sister cities and others nearby, improving the world beyond with the knowledge they brought while equally weakening the central city of Cormanthyr.

The Third of Chains: The Allied Respect

Due to the vigilance of the Coronal's followers (or the deviousness of his detractors), true solidarity was the hallmark of Myth Drannor and all its people, from the eldest gold elf to the youngest halfling infant. For once, the races learned that their

lives together were all far richer than had they been apart and alone. Each race had respect for the talents of the others, and they all learned more of each other as friends rather than as rivals or enemies. With the passing of the Coronal, much of that respect and love fell apart quite suddenly, as if the beating of the Coronal's heart was what held the city together.

Swiftly, just as had happened before and immediately after the rise of the mythal, a number of elf clans and families and individuals broke rank and rebelled against the order of Cormanthyr. The groups, tired of the constant insurgence of the N'Tel'Quess or for various other reasons, pulled up stakes and left the City of Song. Most simply migrated out to form new communities in the eastern and southern forest of Cormanthor, while others moved farther afield, spreading tales both true and false about Myth Drannor to Evereska and elsewhere among the sister cities.

Take note that these migrations were gradual, like those of the wizards and craftsmen. While hardly noticed by the humans and others of the City, the Coronal's grand aspirations were a source of concern to the elves. The decades after his death saw an increase each year in elves moving away from Myth Drannor. Soon, rich decadent humans and dwarves occupied the hallowed halls of lesser elf nobility, buying the vacant villas of elf noble Houses long gone. The elder Houses maintained their distance and never gave up any land to non-elves. Nevertheless, these movements brought back all the old fears of the elves about the ever-encroaching humans (rather than the reassurances that they lived together equally and as allies). As a result, the exodus increased again, as the paranoid elves saw the humans "grabbing ground wherever they could." Either they could not see or they chose not to see that their own Peoples' departures were the main cause of this land-grabbing, not human greed. As always, a cycle of fear fuels itself, and this began to slowly erode (and later shatter) the trust among the races built by the Coronal Eltagrim.

The Standing Stone's Telling Tale

To the elves' constant surprise and the humans' defense, the Standing Stone still bears mute witness to the accords set between elves and humans. Among the Dales, the folk adopted a number of elf practices to provide them settling areas without clearing the land of living trees. In accordance with the elves, dead trees are chopped and harvested, while seedlings that might grow in that place are transplanted elsewhere to allow for a clearing to form. This is among the few human activities that pleases the elves, for so many believe humans take the shortest route and ravage the land for what they need. Their surprise over this shared practice and the begrudging respect earned by the humans are among the few true bridges built between elf- and humankind.

Life During Myth Drannor's Fall

With all the gloom and doom and portents of disaster noted above, did folk realize Myth Drannor was nearing its end? Hardly. In fact, while immigration to the city by outsiders (sometimes other elves but mostly N'Tel'Quess) lessened after the Three Losses, it continued until the Final Fall. While we can look at it with clear hindsight and see all the steps taken toward ruin, we still wonder what was it like during the city's final 53 years.

The elves, as was and is their nature, refused to recognize the changes in the air. Change is not something they accept lightly, and the elves of Myth Drannor either struggled to maintain the dream of Myth Drannor (the younger elves whose lives were molded in this time) or worked to restore hegemony (the elders

whose biases never died). In general, no matter what their age or temperament, the elves sought to "keep things the way they always were meant to be," no matter how they each defined that. In some cases, this viewpoint led to utter denial of the facts around them, while others cloaked themselves in righteous tones and claimed that another group "perverted the true dreams of Cormanthyr, not us." Whether they accepted the non-elves or loathed them, most of the elves simply wanted things to remain as they had been. Thus, the massive changes forced upon them during the Fall were even more jarring and disturbing, thus earning the conflicts the title of the Weeping War. While they truly loved their City of Song, many of the elves abandoned it as "a failed experiment" or "a once-holy place of the People, brought low by the taint of the N'Tel'Quess." Those few elves who remained to guard the City were alternately lauded for bravery and jeered for futility by their People.

As for the collective N'Tel'Quess races of Myth Drannor, the elf histories paint a poor picture of them as the true insidious and divisive elements that helped bring on the Fall. Most gold elf histories written within a century of the Fall are more filled by conspiracy theories, seeing every dwarf and human allied with the Army of Darkness in secret. In truth, those immigrant non-elves fought longer and harder for Cormanthyr and Myth Drannor than three times their number of the People. In hindsight, their passions to defend Myth Drannor and keep her alive are understandable, since it was the best life most of their kind had ever had, and they were not as willing to let it go quietly. In all, it is just as interesting to see other races' views of the whys and wherefores of the Fall, and how they viewed the elves.

Only four dwarven battle-songs survived the Fall of Myth Drannor, and all sing of the valor and strength of the dwarves in battle; while normal dwarven songs compared the dwarves against their ancestors' deeds and accomplishments, these four songs also compared them against the elves. While not necessarily vindictive or petty, comparisons are made between the immigrant dwarves' actions in battle and the seemingly weak actions of the elves. In fact, only one elf ("Khatar, the elf who proved he was so tall to contain the mettle of Clangeddin's kin") gains any begrudging respect in the Song of Sacrifice at the Lost Trench. In the tragic ballad, he dies valiantly fighting back to lust with his dwarf comrade Dumar Snowsbattle, both singing lustily and battling on as they tragically succumb to an overwhelming ogre horde.

The gnomes and halflings, while rarely respected greatly by any of the other races of Myth Drannor, proved the greatest of Myth Drannor's defenders. Cannily and strategically placed illusions and savagely accurate hit-and-run missile sorties from halflings under cover cost the Army of Darkness more patrols and scouts than any other deterrent. After the first year of the Weeping War, the elves and dwarves and humans gained new respect for their shorter allies, who were nonchalant about their accomplishments and the accolades that followed: "All we do is defend our homes... what's so astounding about that?" The gnomes' matter-of-fact nature and the halflings' willingness to share shamed some elves and their condescending outlooks, though not on purpose.

Humans, to believe some elves, were and still are the root of most things evil on Faerûn. Yet, of all the races that stood their ground to defend Myth Drannor to its dying day, none fought more desperately or paid with more blood than the humans. In all, nearly 60% as many humans died in the Weeping War as elves, though this fact is glossed over by the military histories as well. The innate prejudices of some commanders forced the N'Tel'Quess troops into the most savage battles under the worst conditions, and no amount of loss deterred the commanders until the People began taking more casualties, leading to withdrawal. This practice was evident in the first five campaigns against the Army of Darkness, until halted by the Arms-Captain due to moral outrage (among all but the gold elves). And yet, when the Army of Darkness closed at last over the City of Song, humankind stood firm against overwhelming odds to provide a chance for a few

more civilians to escape the slaughter (as evident in the bards' song "Charge of the Last Guard"). The humans' love for the City rivaled that of the elves, and their anger and hatred in seeing it fall even managed to impress such masters of hate as their nycaloth enemies.

The Rise of the Factions

As noted above, it only took mere decades to polarize the once-peaceful people of Cormanthyr into various camps. The fellowship everyone found under Coronal Eltargrim had fallen away, and now only the familiar served to unite people. The forms and motions of Myth Drannor's city continued, but now it mattered less that a person was of Myth Drannor and more that he was a particular Guild member or she was an Akh'Velahr. Mentioned in general above, here are some of the factions that cropped up in the years after the Three Losses, and their effects upon Cormanthyr.

The Akh'Velahr (Soldiers' Army)

Among the few good deeds of the Ruling Council were the improvements in the military's efficiency. The years after the Coronal's passing saw increases in recruitment in the Akh'Velahr, as the non-elves saw that any group without their input or participation could possibly become an enemy (as happened during the Claiming Ceremony). In fact, at the start of the Weeping War, more than half of the junior officers (and even a few senior officers) were half-elves, dwarves, and humans. While some credited him with great prescience, Arms-Major Kelvhan Olortynnal drilled his army into a tightly controlled and organized fighting machine far more prepared for war than it had been in centuries. His detractors noted that, while an honorable elf in all ways, his near-brutality with the discipline of his troops caused concern among some venues. Indeed, any non-elf soldiers among the Akh'Velahr learned to expect far more severe penalties and disciplinary actions for mistakes than those suffered by the People. Still, despite the major's prejudices, the Akh'Velahr fused into a highly organized and efficient force, with the cavalry, the scouts, and the main troops all working together with only a fraction of the divisiveness seen among other groups in Myth Drannor.

Arms-Major Kelvhan Olortynnal, as a Ruling Councilor, was impatient with politics and deal making and compromise, and frequently lost his explosive temper while in Council due to the machinations of the House lords. As a military strategist, he was second to none and he never lost a battle in which he had direct command. As a politician and Councilor, his temper continually saw him on the losing end of political battles, whether right or wrong (as his temper often cost him allies as much as it gained him enemies). Thus, as the Council began fracturing, Major Kelvhan focused more on his troops and preparing for a war that (he was certain) was to explode from the elder Houses against the non-elves. While he was not exactly a great fan of non-elves himself, he took his oaths seriously: He had vowed to serve Cormanthyr, the Coronal, and to maintain the peace, and if that meant preparing to war against the hatred-filled elder Houses, so be it. (This war, of course, never arrived, but Kelvhan's paranoia served the realm well in preparing them for the Army of Darkness. If not for this, Myth Drannor's Fall would have been far more swift.)

The Eternal Srinнала

While the Srinnshee was the senior High Court Mage, she brooked little conflict among her lower Court Mages or the armathors. Upon the disappearance of the Srinnshee, division soon emerged among the Court Mages high and low, the commanders of the armathors. Within 20 years of the tragic Claiming Ceremony, Myth Drannor's elite spellguards' upper echelons were in chaos over the directions they should take. With the two senior High Court Mages on the Ruling Council, their political battles spilled

over into the armathors' hierarchy. While the majority of the Court Mages and armathors wished to remain the elite defenders of Castle Cormanthor, Myth Drannor, and its leadership, others saw a different path that had been ignored for 20 years.

In the Year of the Wraithwinds (685 DR), two among the six senior officers and one junior officer split off from the other armathors to join the former High Court Mage and Councilor Shyael Ildacer and pursue a new course as the "followers of the Srinnshee's dream," the Eternal Srinнала. As an independent group whose members each had tremendous political pull, they were no longer tied to the present government, and they could pursue the directives of the previous administration. The Eternal Srinнала sought to live up to and defend the ideals and objectives of the Coronal Eltargrim. However, they more fully embraced the teachings and practices of the Srinnshee, whose interpretations (and enforcements of the same) were often broader than those of Eltargrim.

Shyael Ildacer became the Telessrin, the leader of the Eternal Srinнала. She sought to rally folk to her side in search of the hopes, gifts, and peace promised by the Srinnshee's final prophecies. She believed that, with fervent faith, those of the Srinнала would safeguard at least some of the peace and love of Eltargrim's and the Srinnshee's lifetimes.

Over time, the order grew from the founding quartet to 18 within a year, and eventually to over 100 wizards, bladesingers, fighters, rangers, and priests of all creeds and races throughout Myth Drannor. About a dozen members even remained among the Akh'Faer while working amidst this group of idealistic crusaders. More than half of the group was of half-elf heritage, and elves and humans combined made up only 35% of the Srinнала. While they did not originally intend to make it so, this faction developed a restricted female membership. After the initial two years, many men assumed it was exclusively for women and never attempted to enter the group, though many whose lovers and mates were members acted unofficially as allies and aides.

The order's headquarters was the small estate of Rirose, a ground-and-tree villa holding of the Ildacer clan given over fully to the order. Within and above its rose-covered walls were the main assembly hall and offices, a separate training hall for the warriors, a laboratory, subterranean spell-dueling chambers, and a private bathhouse and pool. Within the offices of the central petrified tree dwelling lay the order's armory, treasury, and magical items cache. This remained the central base until the Year of the Emerald Citadel, when the Ildacer clan inexplicably fell into ruin and Rirose was claimed as property of the City. While financially and socially ruined, the family (including Srinнала members Shyael and her cousin Aolis) and its personal codes of honor survived intact despite all attempts at further slander by various sources. With this loss of center, the Srinнала collectively moved their belongings and their treasury (which remained intact, despite attempts by the Starym to drain this money along with the resources of the Ildacers) into the groves north of the city. There, a member gave the order three long abandoned mages' towers from before the Time of Opening as their new home.

The Eternal Srinнала spent its entire existence attempting to duplicate many of the Srinnshee's feats and accomplishments. While they unofficially helped the armathors keep the peace in Myth Drannor, they sought out historians to collate a well-rounded history of Myth Drannor from all the races' perspectives. They managed to acquire a healthy number of magical items, even creating a few whose secrets never were revealed, except to those who wielded them. Sages of the modern world would give their lives for the secrets of such items of legend as the *Diamond Band of the Blind Archer*, the animal figurines called the *Constant Companions of Reocet the Hunter*, or the most-fabled *Bandolier of Power*, allegedly worn by Telessrin Shyael at the time of her death and disappearance at the Honorsgate Battle.

If any ill could be said of the motives and actions of the Srinнала, they thought too much and acted too little to truly be representatives of the Srinnshee. Even when the Weeping War was well

into its second campaign, they held their forces in reserve. The Telessrin believed that the Srinshree would return as promised in Myth Drannor's time of need, and she kept the Srinнала from entering the fray, leaving them for the Srinshree to command. They fervently believed that Cormanthyr was the center of civilization (believing Evermeet merely a stepping stone to Arvandor) and that the Srinshree must return when such dangers threatened Myth Drannor.

The War Years

With the First Sieges seeing the mythal's first corruptions and nycaloths walking the streets of the City, some lost hope; if the Srinshree did not return to save the city now, what other disasters lay ahead? A brief visit by the human armathor and Chosen of Mystra, Elminster Aumar, helped restore the troops' faith. He had known the Srinshree well, and reminded them that, even without her physical presence, they had to keep her heart in them and use their knowledge for the City's good, "for as careful and crafty as she was, the Srinshree would not have ye sit upon your hands without raising a finger to save Myth Drannor." Shyael rallied her Srinнала and helped the allies win the Battle at Silversgate after the Nameless Chosen drove more than a third of the Army's main force through a gate into Silverymoon. Hereafter, while others puzzled over their seemingly failed interpretation of the Srinshree's prophecies, Shyael led small groups of Srinнала on missions for both the N'Vaelahr and the Akh'Faer. After the catastrophic Mezzoloth Marches, though, more than half of the Srinнала (those more suited as scholars and oracles) recovered what hidden magic they could and joined the emitters heading out of Cormanthyr to safety. While the last remnants of the Srinнала fought until the bitter end, the Srinнала lived on in the Moonwood (though their secrets never left the woods to enter Silverymoon).

The Guilds

Not unlike the situations in some human cities, the guilds soon became controlling parties among the city trades. While no guild-sponsored vandalism ever cropped up, guildmasters engineered many a tavern brawl to disable or merely warn other guilds about interfering with their business. Soon, some guilds even dictated to their members that certain businesses were to be favored and others shunned. Taverns and inns throughout Myth Drannor became known for their factionalized patrons. For example, "Only the furriers and bookbinders guilds are welcome in that one." The guild factions rarely interfered with trade, though prices for goods and services wildly fluctuated (depending on one's race, guild affiliation, and social status).

The Priesthoods

Many assume that the inherent nature of priests is to believe only in the truth and teachings of their temple and god. Thus, it came as a great surprise that many temples of all the races came together during the Weeping War with almost divine zeal to fight off the threat to them all. Battling seven different sieges about the city, the elves and their allies fought losing battles until they saw their oldest temples under attack.

Formed under fire during the First Sieges, the churches of Moradin, Garl Glittergold, Labelas Enoreth, Selûne, and Mielikki all banded together to fight off the Army of Darkness and preserve the temples of Sheshyrinnam, the Temple Ward of Myth Drannor. The Templestars, as their unified army later became known, survived and brought in other creeds and grew stronger still. Aside from the Akh'Velehr, there was no larger unified force within Cormanthyr that stood against the Army of Darkness. Priests and clerics and acolytes all, the Templestars followed the most senior clergy of each of their founding temples, and the quartet of dwarf, elf, gnome, and human priests kept them all unified. While individual squads followed their particular faiths (as

the squads remained the battling priests and crusaders of each temple), the entire army of the Templestars followed a simple doctrine adopted by the battle cry of Artox Frayhammer that had parallels in all their faiths: "All creeds are of one truth when we stand together. No matter the voice you follow, its truth stands strong and brave in alliance and unity with the voices of other gods. Stand apart, believe your creed stands alone, and you die alone. All are the truth and all survive together, or none are true and all die alone."

The War Years

The Templestars were instrumental in both turning the tide and stopping the advance of the Mezzoloth Marches, and assuring victory in the Third Court Crusade. While the bulk of the elf forces withdrew from the Templestars after that campaign to tend to the rebuilding of the temple city of Elven Court, the Templestars battled on through the last campaigns of the Weeping War, winning more victories for the allies even at their reduced strength. The Battle of Templestars' Fall was the second disastrous loss in the Final Fall for the allies, but one final act accomplished two minor victories. The senior dwarf and gnome clerics of Moradin and Garl Glittergold both managed to collapse their temples rather than see them desecrated by the Army of Darkness. The temples both crushed large numbers of yugoloths and orcs and fell (as the priests and engineers knew) such that the besieged forces in the City gained a defensive wall of rubble that deterred and broke the main charge of the horde.

Studies Gone Awry

Sometimes entitled the "Beast-Tamers' Folly" in various texts, the events and actions of the Guild of Naturalists both embraced what Myth Drannor represented (the quest for and sharing of knowledge) and reviled (the segregation and secrecy of a group of peoples causing problems for others outside their own circle). Had the guild known what results their works would bring, no doubt they would be remembered much today beyond some transformer's arcane texts on biology.

The self-styled Guild of Naturalists was founded in the Year of Three Setting Suns (561 DR) by Myth Drannans who were interested in learning more of the natural habits and pursuits of wild creatures. While they did not discriminate in their membership and many members of all races joined, no dwarves ever even considered becoming a "Beast-Tamer." The guild's studies resulted in much of what is now considered crucial ranger lore. The Naturalists traveled far and wide in the Realms to observe creatures of all lands, their early studies granting many creatures their now-standard names.

When the majority of known flora and fauna had been studied within Cormanthyr and the surrounding Heartlands, the Naturalists turned to more fearsome beasts: the monsters of the Realms. While their previous duties stressed observation without interference or action to better understand the animal's natural tendencies, their researches with monsters also involved capture and dissection in order to discover whether creatures were naturally, artificially, or magically created and how. Already known disparagingly as the Beast-Tamers by those opponents of their work, the guild decided to conceal the extent of their researches by enlarging the cellars beneath their guildhall offices and working underground. They moved creatures in and out of their laboratories and studies by means of magical gates and other spells. In their zeal, the Naturalists unwittingly weakened Cormanthyr in two ways.

Due north of Myth Drannor and due west of the site that would later become Hillsfar, the guild established a colony of deepspawn in a series of caves they named the Breeding Caverns. When members of the guild brought back rare monsters from distant lands, the beasts were immediately sent to the Breeding Caverns by means of a two-way gate and fed to a deepspawn. This practice ensured that the guild would effectively have a limitless



supply of subjects for their investigative experiments. When the captive deepspawn eventually escaped into the surrounding Underdark, the guild quickly abandoned the site and covered up their involvement. The results of their folly, however, lasted for centuries. The Beast Marches, as the region came to be known, occupied the attention of Cormanthyr's armed forces and outlying colonies, such as Hillsafar, until several decades after the Fall of Myth Drannor.

One of the sites the guild commonly plundered for new species to study was the abandoned dwarven delvings of Clan Melairkyn on the western coast of Faerûn. Later known as Undermountain, this extensive labyrinth had been carefully stocked by the archmage Halaster Blackcloak (previously known as Hilather) with creatures either as guardians of his magical knowledge or as a monster-riddled gauntlet through which heroes were either made or eaten. Discovering the dungeon and its monstrous inhabitants by accident, the Guild of Naturalists believed it to be an abandoned area with wandering creatures and saw opportunities for study. They opened a two-way gate into the Underhalls and spent several decades stealing Halaster's most prized acquisitions. Within 30 years, Halaster began to notice the theft of his "pets" and cast about for which enemies had dared tempt the fates by crossing him. His response to the Naturalists' expeditions was an icily calm decision of *quid pro quo*. For every dozen beasts removed from his demesne, the Master of the Underhalls in turn selected (magically abducted) one wizard of equal value from Myth Drannor to serve him, and smaller creatures or vermin merely cost an apprentice, each of whom soon became a new student of Halaster. (It is suspected that Halaster either used his acquisitions to lay down many of the spells that now enmesh Undermountain or to test the defenses and the monsters therein.)

Leaders of the Guild of Naturalists did not connect the disappearances of wizards throughout Cormanthyr with their raids for nearly fifteen years, as Halaster neglected to inform them of the deal and their single-minded focus on their work kept them ignorant of the dangers until some of their own began disappearing. In addition to contributing to the severe depletion of the city's magical might, the Beast-Tamers' folly also contributed to Myth Drannor's collapse. In fall of the Year of the Firedrake, nearly two dozen wizards of the guild fled from the fighting into Halaster's domain. Pleased with these new "gifts," Halaster apparently honored his bargain in reverse and sent a torrent of nearly 300 bestial acquisitions that appeared throughout Myth Drannor within the following tenday. The Bestial Dawn (or Halaster's Payback, as it became known to those who studied the Beast-Tamers and the Mad Mage's link with them) saw the sudden appearance of hundreds of monsters amidst the ranks of two closing armies at the Grove of Seven Shadowtops. Monsters from gorgimera to darktentacles engaged both the Army of Darkness and the Allied forces equally, decimating any semblance of order. The battle-lines broken, the elves and allies fled with minimal casualties as the barely organized orcs and hobgoblins fell to fighting a young black dragon and seven ettins. The battle was considered a victory for the allies, although over 150 monsters (not including the Army of Darkness) still roamed the central forests of Cormanthyr for years after that.

Return of Ancient Evils

An old elf adage warned us, "An enemy forgotten is an enemy returned." Would that Cormanthyr's elves had remembered this, despite all their other conflicts. An evil long imprisoned and forgotten to all but the High Mages, the Khov'Anilessa were reduced to horror stories to cow misbehaving children. Eighteen centuries after they last trod in Cormanthyr, whatever the Trio Nefarious once was had become formless horrors waiting under the dead, shadowed branch of an elf's tree for naughty children to

sleep. Little did folk know they were real, and they would bring about their undoing.

The Nycaloths of Netheril

More than 1,800 years before the Three Losses, numerous settlements and many more elf patrols fell before a trio of nycaloths ram-paging through the forest. Rumors said jealous Netherese archwizards summoned and sent the yugoloths into the Elven Woods merely to test what magic they had to array against Netheril. In truth, the archwizard Aldlas Sodhese sought the long-missing Nether Scrolls (the source of Netherese magic). He had tracked the artifacts to somewhere within the Elven Woods, and he summoned the greater nycaloths Aulmpiter, Gaulguth, and Malimshaer to wreak havoc and uncover his ancestors' greatest magic.

The nycaloths, while normally competitive and argumentative, worked well together in their roles as strategist, stealthy warrior, and terrible berserker. Under Aulmpiter's direction, the trio destroyed many villages of elves, whole tribes of satyrs and centaurs, and at least two green dragons under Cormanthyr's boughs. With Aldlas believing himself in charge of them (since he too fell victim to Aulmpiter's able manipulations), the evil quartet spent three months harassing the Akh'Velehr and the Akh'Faer with a great degree of success. Finally, by early summer, the four approached within a few hundred yards of the city of Cormanthyr, where the elves stood firm.

Despite his not-inconsiderable power, Aldlas Sodhese was sorely outmatched against elven High Magic and bladesingers armed with magic enough to give the Khov'Aniessa (the elf name for the three nycaloths, the "Trio Nefarious") pause. While elven casualties were still high over the daylong battle, they managed to nearly slay Gaulguth and Malimshaer and subdue Aulmpiter. Aldlas died when, in a spellbattle against the Grand Mage, an arcane hand reached out to wring and twist his mantle around him, crushing him under the power of his own shattering magic.

Coronal Miirphys, the High Mages, and a number of priests then used the *N'Quor'Khaor* High Magic ritual to bind and imprison the Khov'Aniessa. The nycaloths' invisible undetectable subdimensional prison floated high above the city of elves, unnoticed by all. It could be permeated by all sorts of energy and matter, yet it held the nycaloths as if its walls were adamantine. The nycaloths kept all their items and weapons, since their prison rendered both them and their equipment powerless and unable even to return to their home planes. They floated more than a mile above the capital, where they looked down upon the growing splendor of the city they failed to destroy. The elves set the binding ritual so that the only key to freeing the infernal trio was when a "red dragon that never knew malice or greed in its heart flies over the Coronal's throne."

The Escape and Summoning

Early in the days of Myth Drannor, the mage Saeval Ammath procured a dragon's egg and through various arcane rituals altered its physiognomy and innate nature. He hatched a red dragon with the physical characteristics of a blue dragon and the mixed magical natures of both; the strangest change he worked on the dragon hatchling was its lawful and good nature, making it a friend of Cormanthyr. Over the years, Garnet the dragon and Saeval were inseparable, though they were more friends than servant and master.

As was their habit, Saeval Ammath and his adopted dragon-mount Garnet often flew over Cormanthor, keeping in touch with various and sundry settlements and developments throughout the forest. As they flew high above Myth Drannor at night, they unwittingly weakened the dimensional prison enough for the three nycaloths to shatter the magical binding and escape. The Khov'Aniessa also were aided by the summoning rituals being performed (poorly) by a flind shaman far to the north, above the

Dragon Sea, and they teleported to it immediately upon breaking their prison, so none knew of their breakout. After nearly two millennia, the nycaloths Aulmpiter, Gaulguth, and Malimshaer flew free, and despite the beliefs of the flind shaman, they were free of anyone's control.

The Trio Nefarious slew the flind shaman that "summoned" them within eight months, pretending all along that they were his to control. Soon after, they initiated a plan of Aulmpiter's, which had formed over 18 centuries of captivity. Over the next years, the nycaloths began consolidating the leadership of numerous orc, gnoll, flind, bugbear, troll, and hobgoblin tribes into one massive and militarily organized horde. Their reputations grew as they themselves took personal hands in assembling the armies, including Malimshaer's slaying of one black wyrm and subsequent ascension to the leadership of the orc tribes the dragon had enslaved. To help them maintain control of this host, they summoned many lesser yugoloths to their side as officers among their growing Army of Darkness. But with the army growing into more massive numbers than any horde in history, Aulmpiter waited for the timing and strategy to favor his forces. Soon his forces would be unstoppable, and then the elves would pay for daring to imprison Aulmpiter the nycaloth and his allies.

The Spreading Shadow

Like goblins, trouble always travels in threes. Atop the internal social problems of Myth Drannor and the impending doom of the Army of Darkness, Myth Drannor's ancient enemies, the drow, began resurfacing during the city's time of relative instability. From their redoubt in the Twisted Tower and other dark tunnels between it and ruined Sarphil, the dark elves had harried the western and northern reaches of Cormanthor time and again. Although the drow did not begin to operate on the surface in the Dalelands and western Cormanthor until later in the coming conflict, the decades leading up to the assault by the Army of Darkness were busy for them. The dark elves and their proxies worked to destabilize minor elven outposts and holdings, and they sowed discord among the neighboring areas, attacking and enslaving humans around Cormyr, the Moonsea, and the Dalelands. In fact, from the Year of the Earnest Oaths to the Year of the Lost Lance, drow attacks within Cormyr doubled each year and then suddenly dropped off (as they saw enough weakened forces all around to reclaim and refortify the Twisted Tower to the north). Of course, all these forays against the surface helped establish the basic slaving runs the drow used for centuries.

While it is unclear whether the dark elves were aware of or had predicted the impending war between the Army of Darkness and Cormanthyr, they were certainly well positioned to exploit the conflict when it erupted and their efforts ensured that no outside force was able or willing to come to Myth Drannor's assistance. Some greedier drow joined as officers and advisors for the Army of Darkness, but most saw any interaction with the nycaloths as traitorous (since "those Lower Planar beasts are ours to command by Lolth's will and our magic, not to join as allies!"). In fact, the Spiders' Truce later in the Weeping War was considered treason while it was merely a change in target priorities for the drow. The participating drow (and some elves of the *N'Velehr*) who set up the truce were forever branded traitors, though they actually did the best possible deeds for their respective peoples. Still, as the battles raged on, both armies ran across drow interference and sabotage. Whether they fought the forces of Cormanthyr or Darkness, the drow never held any interests at heart beyond their own survival. With the return to the Twisted Tower in the second year of the Weeping War, drow activities subsided as they consolidated their power base once again and solidified the slave trades that would support their activities.

The Forces of the Fall

Now, with all the internal strife threatening to shatter the tenuous peace held by the Council (more aptly by the common folk of Myth Drannor), there came a great evil that had not stalked the lands since Eltargrim was a child. The portents told of coming darkness throughout the portentously named Year of Despairing Elves, though until the danger struck, the portents seemed to have been ignored by the powers of Cormanthyr.

The Army of Darkness

The primary enemies of the realm and the force that brought about the Fall of Myth Drannor, the Army of Darkness, was the first time the Realms had seen so many disparate evil races consolidated toward one goal. True, there had been orc hordes to rival its size, but such hordes never had the organization and military savvy that drove the Army of Darkness. The orc hordes also lacked the drive behind this force: three nycaloth leaders with strength, power, savagery, and a taste for revenge.

Amassing the Army

Through sheer happenstance, the Khov'Anilessa escaped their prison and temporarily played "servant beings" to a flind shaman whose ego far exceeded his power and ability. His summoning allowed the nycaloths to avoid the elves for a time, granting their revenge the proper amount of plotting. Soon, the nycaloths abandoned the pretense that the shaman controlled them, and slew him and all his allies. In a massive show of force over a few months, the nycaloths conquered one, then three tribes of flinds. After six months, the trio controlled the five largest and most powerful flind tribes north of the Dragon Sea; with that control, over a dozen gnoll tribes fell in line behind their new leadership.

With this initial force assembled, the nycaloths spread out across the northlands and Thar, recruiting more and more fell creatures into their army. Some joined for the promise of treasure, others merely for revenge. Others they gained as allies through the sheer intimidation of their personal and amassed military power, thus increasing both ally's and the Army's power. Within a span of two years, the nycaloths had forged a massive army of nearly 3,000-score creatures, all poised and ready to begin the destruction of Cormanthyr.

Roles of the Khov Anilessa

Aulmpiter, without any doubt among the nycaloths or the Army itself, was the primary leader of the Army of Darkness. A strategist and a thinker, Aulmpiter engineered both the amassing of the Army and the planning of its attacks. Later on, as the hordes became more spread out, the controls and discipline began slipping, but Aulmpiter's tactics made the increasing chaos and descent into horde (rather than army) status work for them. Until the third year of the Weeping War, Aulmpiter was never seen about the battlefields, as he preferred to direct his troops from his command post in the northern forest. By the time his two brethren were eliminated, even a cold and calculating being like himself was angered to action.

Despite a missing right eye, the nycaloth Malimshaer still noted minute details and had a knack for collecting information, and thus acted as the Army's commander of spies and intelligence gathering. Malimshaer routinely wandered the forest in various magical disguises, uncovering information and enemy locations. If situations presented ambush possibilities, he would reconnoiter with parts of the Army and command the troops into well-planned sites for ambushes. Later in the war, Malimshaer's summoned mezzoloth troops formed the core of his semi-successful campaign in the north to uncover more magic to use

against the elves. Unfortunately, his grand plan would later backfire, as the discovery of ancient magic led to his own end.

Gaulguth, the nigh-berserker warrior of the trio, took on the post of field commander for the heart of the Army of Darkness. The most active and feared of the trio, Gaulguth had as many scars as scales covering his form, due to his overwhelming eagerness both for and in battle. Even his troops learned to grant their leader a wide berth due to his berserker rages and wild flurries of action. Outside of battle, Gaulguth was crafty (but not as much as he believed), though he followed the directions of Khitax, a mezzoloth general that communicated Aulmpiter's plans to the Army. With quite a temper, Gaulguth earned his fearful reputation by personally slaying any lesser officers who failed him; General Khitax or one of the other Khov'Anilessa could sometimes get him to spare the life of an underling, though he rarely did so.

Organization

In all, while the trio of leaders acted as tactician, saboteur/spy, and field commander, the actual Army of Darkness was broken down racially. The senior, secondary officers (general, colonel, and major ranks) were summoned mezzoloths personally loyal to the trio and the chiefs of the Army's many legions. Their junior officers (captains and commanders) were again either mezzoloths or the sons (or daughters) of the chiefs. The Army of Darkness also followed the loose standards of normal collective hordes of this size in their power structure (i.e., the social order of size, strength, and aggressiveness). The ogres and hobgoblins commanded the orcs and goblins, and the flinds commanded the gnolls; the mezzoloths overruled them all, as did the few giants that joined the Army (though most were hill giants who commanded by allowing their mezzoloth seconds-in-command to suggest tactics). Thus, the lowest standing (in status, not rank) were the goblins and orcs, followed by the gnolls, hobgoblins, flinds, ogres, giants, and mezzoloths and other lesser yugoloths.

Unofficial scout bands or foraging and hunting bands would often comprise one lowly sergeant leading four soldiers or companions (5 total); these bands were not recognized officially by either army at large, and encounters between such bands were never recorded, despite their frequency. Skirmishes could be band or party encounters, while battles required at least the presence of a squadron on at least one side to be mentioned and remembered. Thus, even with the organization of the forces and the high number of major conflicts, the lesser conflicts among smaller bands along the fringes more than triples the total number of conflicts between Cormanthyr's allies and the Army of Darkness, despite their barely remembered status among historians of the Fall.

The smallest official units of the army were parties (for scouting duty or perimeter patrols on encampments), consisting of one

Army of Darkness Rank & File

These groups graduate up and become part of the next highest group as the high command shifts up (captain in charge until major steps in, etc.).

Group	Led By	Components
Band	Sergeant	4 soldiers & Sgt
Party	Commander	5 bands
Squadron	Captain	5 parties
March	Major	5 squadrons
Regiment	Colonel	5 marches
Battalion	General	5 regiments
1st Legion	Gaulguth	5 battalions (direct)
2nd Legion	Aulmpiter	6 battalions (direct)
3rd Legion	Malimshaer	5 battalions (direct)
Army of Dk.	Aulmpiter	16 battalions

commander and 24 soldiers of either singular or mixed races. The standard configuration was one ogre commander leading 24 orcs, ogres, hobgoblins, or the like. The next largest groups were squadrons (five standard parties) under the command of a captain, then marches (five squadrons) under a major, and a legion (five marches) was the largest official mobile group, commanded by a single soul, the colonel. In terms of massive troop movements, a general oversaw a regiment, which was five legions often spread out across miles of the forest. In turn, the generals were under the command of the Trio Nefarious.

As the previous breakdown clearly reveals, each upper rank was always followed by five lessers; in other words, five commanders follow each captain, five captains to each major, five majors to each colonel, five colonels to each general, and five generals to each nycaloth commander (plus one additional general as an aide to the Supreme Commander Aulmpiter). Thus, if a major led a scouting march, there were never less than five captains followed by 25 commanders and 25 parties (total of 631 minimum forces). Bear in mind that these are minimums, and individual groups can increase in size, depending on the situation among the command staff; in other words, a group that has lost two officers either promotes someone on the battlefield or divvies up the troops into others' commands. More competent and more powerful leaders gained more troops as well (i.e., giants and ogres led larger troop amounts than gnolls or orcs, just as more mezzoloths led them). In all, there were at least 16 generals at all times operating under the direct orders of either Gaulguth, Malimshaer, or Aulmpiter. However, the mezzoloth General Nyzhink permanently acted as Aulmpiter's exclusive attache, granting him direct command of six generals as well as overall command of all 16 generals and forces.

Equipment among the Army of Darkness was whatever the troops could scavenge or what they previously held. The Northern Massacres and Mezzoloth Marches gave many of the mezzoloth forces access to many magical weapons and equipment, which was either stolen from fallen elves or uncovered caches of older artifacts. Use the standard weaponry attributed to the monsters as noted in the MONSTROUS MANUAL® tome, unless the Army can lay claim to spoils of war (i.e., any group which won the previous battle may have members with special equipment looted from dead foes, like elven chain mail on mezzoloths or belluth of magic missiles).

The Defenders of Cormanthyr

Given the social unrest and factionalism among the races of Cormanthyr leading up to the Weeping War, the response against the first campaigns was less than effective. Most believed the Akh'Velehr should easily handle the matter and thought it not their problem. Soon enough, the defense of the realm would be everyone's concern and problem.

Assembling the Allies

The early stages of the Weeping War saw many losses among the elves and humans of the Akh'Velehr. Not until the First Sieges literally brought the dangers to Myth Drannor's doorstep did the races truly pull together to defend the city and Cormanthyr. Once faced with the enormity of the forces amassed against them, the races of Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr set aside most of their prejudices and petty concerns to defend their realm against these infernal invaders.

Obviously, the military remained the first line of defense, and conscription of all able-bodied elves and N'Tel'Quess began. Elders, children, expectant mothers, and pacifists were given the option of traveling to Sembholme to relative safety, a choice few made this early in the war. So the ranks of the Akh'Velehr and Akh'Faer swelled with new recruits, nearly quintupling the numbers of both forces. However, from early estimates, the Army of

Darkness still outnumbered Cormanthyr's Defenders by nearly five to one.

With these odds, the Arms-Major (as the realm's Defender by Arm and a senior Councilor) resolved that the war could only be won with carefully planned and executed spellcraft to winnow down their foes' numerical advantages. Whether a wizard belonged to the Akh'Faer or not, nearly every spellslinger within Cormanthor was conscripted into service, establishing hundreds of spells and effects throughout the forest that served to confuse, misdirect, or sabotage the Army of Darkness. For the first time in over two millennia, the High Mages of Cormanthyr acted openly and in conjunction with the military, creating major amounts of magical weaponry and establishing escape gates in Myth Drannor through which civilians could flee if necessary. So many magical plans were in motion in the Year of the Lost Lance that many believed Mystra herself took notice of the war.

Roles of the Leaders

All the races of Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr united under the Arms-Major as the senior Defender and commander of all the realm's forces. While Major Kelvhan Olortynnal left the commands of the High Mages and the Akh'Faer (and the covert N'Velehr) relatively independent, all troops and leaders understood that the Defender by Arms stood as the primary commander without a Coronel to guide them. A calm, patient commander who weighed all his knowledge and that of his underlings equally before making a decision, Kelvhan's thoughtful nature allowed the elves and their allies to hold out for nearly three years against the overwhelming odds. If not for Major Kelvhan's intellect and control, far fewer folk would have lived to tell the tales of the tragic Fall of Myth Drannor. Though he never left the areas under the mythal throughout the war, the Major stayed apprised of every movement of all the forces and entered the battles only when enemies of the realm invaded the mythal.

The Arms-Captain Hachaam Selorn was the primary field commander for the military forces out among the many fronts of the war. Noted for his temper and his never-say-die attitude, Captain Selorn often led his men personally, and his mad charges were well known and often effective, as the elves and Akh'Velehr often won by sheer attitude and will rather than strength. Considered a military genius at times, the captain managed to pull victory from the jaws of most probable defeat time and again; whether by magic or stern training and discipline, his officers and troops seemed able to read his mind and his smaller-than-normal forces could change tactics and maneuvers often difficult to execute among groups one-third the size. Of all the leaders, the Arms-Captain was the first and often sole voice among them to suggest abandoning Myth Drannor, "for its *gate* - riddled grounds cannot be held with even the most ardent guardians! Better to fall back and lose a piece of ground than to lose things far more precious, such as our People!" Not until after the First Sieges did any even dare consider such proposals, though they grudgingly admitted to the truth of his proposals. Starting late in the Year of the Lost Lance, he was given the task of clearing the spider-infested ruins of Old Elven Court and managing the migration of Cormanthyr's best and brightest there. Some believe that, had this task fallen to another, the allies would have won the Weeping War, and Myth Drannor would never have fallen. By the time Elven Court became habitable again, the Yielding Wars campaign had begun, and all Captain Selorn could do was slow the Army of Darkness and delay the destruction of the City.

Other leaders of the war effort included, of course, the returned Spell-Major Josidiah Starym and Spell-Captains Paeris Haladar and Ithosra Morningdove. Their efforts are sung in tragic ballads about heroism and bravery beyond the pale. Strangely enough, few stories and legends account for the activities of the High Mages; while they acted in the open unlike their normal methods, only their works surrounding Elven Court seem remem-

bered, and none have any explanation for this omission. The Council, while some of its members tried to greedily hold onto power while their world crumbled about them, effectively dissolved soon after the First Sieges, and the military mobilized and led Cormanthyr until the rebirth of order under Elven Court late in the war.

Cormanthyr's Allied Rank & File

These are the ranks of officers among the two militaries of Cormanthyr, compared and ranked in comparison with one another since the Akh'Faer's titles differ from the Akh'Velehr. Also on the table are the groups under the command of noted ranks and their minimum troop sizes per group. Bear in mind that each higher group contains the full groups noted beneath them (troops + lesser officer).

Akh'Velehr

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u># Troops (w/o officer)</u>
Nilaa	Detachment	Three troops
Iolaa	Section	Two detachments
Nikym	Platoon	Three sections
Shaalth	Unit	Two platoons
Nikerym	Company	Three units
Kerym	Battalion	Two companies
Penaal	Brigade	Three battalions
Arykerym	Regiment	Two brigades
Arkerym	Legion	Three regiments
Arms-Captain	All troops (2)	Four legions
Arms-Major	All armies	All armies

Akh'Faer

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Min. Troops (no officer)</u>
Faerriir	Ring	Four troops
Faeruil		Two rings
Faerna	Circle	Four rings
Faernos		Two circles
Faerne	Sphere	Four circles
Faerna		Two spheres
Arfaern	Wing	Four spheres
Spell-Captain	Flight	Two wings
Spell-Major	Akh'Faer	Four flights

Equivalent Ranks (Low to High):

<u>Akh'Velehr</u>	<u>Akh'Faer</u>
Nilaa	—
Iolaa	—
Nikym	Faerriir
Shaalth	Faeruil
Nikerym	Faerna
Arshaalth	Faernos
Kerym	
Penaal	Faerne
Arykerym	Faerna
Arkerym	Arfaern
Arms-Captain	Spell-Captain
	Spell-Major
Arms-Major	

Organization

Another of the problems plaguing Cormanthyr's defenders was the difficulty in merging the various groups of defenders into one cohesive whole. After millennia of relative autonomy, many folk bridled under the unified military structure (at least, until they noted its effectiveness against their enemies). The Arms-Major oversaw the broad command of the four major divisions among the defenders: the main armed forces of the Akh'Velehr; the magical firepower and military backup of the Akh'Faer; the secret intelligence gatherers and counter-saboteurs in the N'Velehr. The numerous independent groups all conscripted into alliances for scouts and perimeter guards of the armies, from the Moonshadows defending Sembholme to the Eternal Srinnala, the Templestars, and untold numbers of elf and N'Tel'Quess adventuring companies.

After setting up agreements and alliances among all the disparate groups, the Arms-Major needed a way to communicate with his varied forces and troops that was uncompromising yet swift, and one could eavesdrop on magical communications (as the N'Velehr proved early on). He recruited Sevoll Streamshimmer, a sylvan half-elf from the Tangled Vale as his liaison; the Syolkiir, as his title was known, was many more times faster than a dragon in flight or a sprinting deer, and he loyally kept the Arms-Major in touch with his many agents and armies in the field simply by running between them (despite the rapid aging that his speed cost him). In fact, with no intended slight to the independent factions, Syolkiir was the primary contact and "commander" many groups had during the war, though some gained a contact within the command structures (often an Akh'Faern lieutenant, or faerna).

In all, the various ranks and command structures for each of the armies or allied groups worked as normal, orders simply flowing through their normal protocols and channels of command. However, when it came to coordinating a battle among Akh'Velehr and Akh'Faer or other forces, there were often some conflicts merely due to the usual rivalries among the armies and their preferences for their customary methods. After the confusion and turmoil of the first three campaigns, Major Kelvhan decreed that the senior officer or military member (years of active duty as an officer) among allied forces of different organizations be accountable for all concerned.

Equipment among Cormanthyr's armies and its allies varies according to the group and the missions before them. Use the standard weaponry attributed to the elves as noted in the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome, unless noted otherwise (e.g., the generic NPC statistics for soldiers). As for individual agents or groups, the DM is encouraged to supply them with equipment as needed. Given the heavy focus given to magic within the realm of Cormanthyr, it is unlikely anyone does not have at least one +1 magical weapon or piece of armor (shield, ring, etc.). By the end of the Year of the Firedrake, the High Mages and other practitioners have fortified the Akh'Velehr armories with +1 and +2 weapons for use against the yugoloths of the Army of Darkness (though a few might be available for individuals of note and achievement).

Timeline of The Fall of Myth Drannor

All of the following dates are in Dalereckoning, despite the noted lack of its use within Myth Drannor itself. The notes on the actual Weeping War (a.k.a. the Fall) are merely place notes; the next chapter expands the details on the war and provides a military timeline.

Year

(DR) Year Name & Events

- 652 *Year of the Viper*
Zaor Moonflower becomes one of the youngest officers of the Akh'Velehr in Cormanthyr.
- 654 *Year of the Coveted Briars*
Many druids' enclaves, both human and elf, are established this year throughout Cormanthyr and the Realms at large.
- 655 *Year of the Volanth*
- 656 *Year of Peaceful Seas*
The Circle of Flames completes the Scrolls Ardentym this year. Akh'Faer scholars and strategists receive six incomplete fragments of the Scrolls, but only the Circle and the Srinshree have complete copies of them.
- 658 *Year of the Dangerous Game*
Rathdaen, a Cormyrean mage and Realms-wide explorer of note, arrives in Myth Drannor after a decades-long absence. While never a native, he is close friends with many practitioners of the Art in the City of Song, and remains as a guest for years at a time.
A gate is secretly established between the Hall of the Naturalists and the Underhalls of Mount Melairbode.
- 659 *Year of the Hunting Ghosts*
Known as the Year of Mage's Dawning in Silverymoon, 30 wizards from Myth Drannor and 20 wizards from elsewhere in the Realms migrate to the Gem of the North, and begin establishing its role as a sister city to Myth Drannor and a center of magical and mundane learning.
Tulrun, born Tallrunner Tigris of the Red Tiger tribe and later known as Tulrun of the Tent, is sent to Myth Drannor by Ecamane Truesilver to study magic under the tutelage of the Seven Wizards.
- 660 *Year of the Morning Horn*
- 661 *Year of the Bloody Tusk*
Height of Myth Drannor's peace and prosperity.
Eltargrim's Passing: The Coronal Eltargrim, at dawn on the last day of Midsummer festivals, passes on to Arvandor, leaving only the Ar'Cor'Kerym, his Ruler's Elfblade, hovering in mid-air atop the Rule Tower. Aravae Irithyl, his niece and heir, proclaims a city-wide period of mourning for the next five years. Thus ends the Sixth Rysar of Cormanthyr after 866 years.
- 662 *Year of the Peoples' Mourning*
Rathdaen dies peacefully in his sleep, to the sorrow of many of Myth Drannor's wizardly inhabitants. He leaves the Tome of Rathdaen to his apprentice, a foolish braggart by the name of Narsel, who fears attacks by jealous rivals trying to steal his master's legacy and immediately leaves for parts west.
- 663 *Year of the Baleful Song*
Pyraan the Grim and Peridar Snowbrows secede from the faculty of the Incanistaeum, reducing the "Seven Wizards of Myth Drannor" to five.
- 664 *Year of the Falling Petals*
The Heir's Passing: Aravae Irithyl, the heir of the Coronal, and all of her personal guard are found dead under mysterious circumstances the morning after Cinnaelos'Cor. The Srinshree and the High Court Mages insist on maintaining the Mourning Days and add the funeral of Aravae to the solemn times while staving off a succession war among the noble Houses.
- 665 *Year of the Ashen Tears*
Due to political pressure amid his family, Taeral Olortynaal discontinues his long association with the Incanistaeum.
- 666 *Year of Stern Judgment*
The Claiming Chaos: The end of the Mourning Days demands an immediate decision on the succession of the Coronal. A Claiming Ceremony is convened to determine the next Coronal of Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr. After 40 elves and the Rule Tower itself are destroyed, the Srinshree steps in, easily swinging the elfblade free of its perch. As it is brandished before her, the golden light of the blade crystallizes around her in a massive diamond-shaped energy field that engulfs and restores the Rule Tower. Finally, with a whirl of magic, she, the magical field, and the weapon disappear.
- 667 *Year of Austere Ceremonies*
By early summer, the Council of Twelve now rules over Myth Drannor, crafting a new form of representative government. The city is without a Coronal for the first time in its existence.
- 668 *Year of the Telling Tome*
Wizards begin mysteriously disappearing this year from Myth Drannor and all of Cormanthyr; the only clue is that all the visible gates throughout the city crackle ominously and flash blue lightning within their boundaries. (In truth, Halaster Blackcloak of Undermountain is abducting wizards at random and banishing them to the Underhalls.)
- 669 *Year of the Brutal Beast*
Abarat the Alabaster, an elf archmage with a reputation for plane-walking, resigns as the head of the Six Tyryl Towers wizards' school and announces plans to build a tower north of the city and Cormanthor in the western reaches of the Beast Marches.
- 670 *Year of the Many Floods*
Entering the Vault of Ages for the first time in years due to an outbreak of drow within the northwestern forest, the Spell-Major Paeris Haladar finds it empty, the greatest and oldest treasures of Cormanthyr all gone!
Drow infest the northern forests, seeking to build a stronghold over the ruins of Moander's temple. The Akh'Velehr clears all drow out within 20 months.
- 671 *Year of the Shrouded Slayer*
Twenty months after building an ivory tower north of Cormanthor, the moon elf wizard Abarat contacts former associates for aid against a besieging army of monsters. Though some arrive within hours of receiving the magical message, they discover that both Abarat and the monsters are all missing, as are any external signs of anything amiss. Abarat was never found or heard from again, but his unfinished tower of pure ivory, thereafter known as Abarat's Folly, still stands as a monument of elf wizardry and as a beacon to adventurers seeking gates to the planes that many claim to have seen inside.
- 672 *Year of the Angry Caverns*
Many dwarf settlers of Myth Drannor, most of them refugee clans from the fallen Realm of Glittering Swords, leave the city and move north to the southern shore of the Dragon Sea (Moonsea). They reopen the westernmost mines of Sarphil, known as the Lost Ways, which honeycomb a lengthy escarpment (known as the Scarp) that looms over the eastern reaches of the Tailings Bay.
- 673 *Year of the Covenant*
The fledgling town of Hillsafar, named in honor of the dwarf clan of the same name, is founded by elves, half-elves, and humans on the western shore of Tailings Bay to trade with the dwarves of the Scarp. Some found this settlement to both keep drow out of the area and maintain some vigilance over Moander's Crypt. Within a few decades, the town's name is corrupted and shortened to Hillsfar. Many of Myth Drannor's less-established craftsmen migrate to this new city in search of new opportunities.
- 674 *Year of the Nomad*
Josidiah Starym returns to Myth Drannor to a hero's welcome as he brings not the expected Soldier's Blade but the Akh'Faer's Artblade, retrieved from a deep dragon's lair far beneath the Storm Horn Mountains. Unfortunately, his

reward is personal heartbreak as he realizes all he worked for is gone with the passings of both the Coronal and Aravae. Josidiah does not take up his rightful place as Lord-Speaker of House Starym, but he does (by right of the elf-blade he restores to Myth Drannor) take over the leadership of the Akh'Faer and thus rise to a seat on the Council of Twelve. Josidiah refuses to discuss it, but many notice that he no longer walks with his magnificent cat Guenhwyvar, and some whisper he had to trade the cat's figurine of power for the blade. Of his 12 original comrades, only one survived: Onas Ulondarr, an elf bladesinger of House Ulondarr. Returning to the city married to Maira Shieldark, a human wizardess from Arabel, they bring with them four adult half-elf children (three women, one man; all rangers): Alupiira, Vaeala, Shaeia, and Rahsil.

675 *Year of the Bloodfeud*

The scandalous House Ulondarr, by openly accepting half-elves among the direct succession, suffers censure and much grief (and not a few attacks by mercenaries and assassins) from the other Houses. The attacks and social intrigues last for the next 50 years.

676 *Year of Gruesome Grimoires*

Taeral Olortynaal returns to the Incanistaeum and to the "Seven Wizards," though they are still only five in number. Later that year, in a politically motivated spell battle among some noble elves and humans, gold elf students accidentally kill Taeral and two human students. These elves are never charged with the crimes, as they frame the only non-elf left, and the innocent Arlesn of Arabel is forever banished from Myth Drannor for a crime he didn't commit.

677 *Year of Resonant Silence*

Hym Kraaven, senior among the "Seven Wizards," uncovers the truth about Taeral's death, and is swiftly killed in "an out-of-control tavern brawl" by agents and friends of the now-roguish and obviously power-mad magelings of House Faerondarl.

678 *Year of the Poignant Poniard*

Lord Councilor Kharis Maerdrym and his hunting party, which included several humans of note, mysteriously disappear off the coast of Delthuntle during a Grand Hunt of a near-legendary greater quelzarn. Agents of Unther are suspected in the attack (as are some of Lord Maerdrym's usual political foes).

679 *Year of the Scarlet Sash*

Hillsafar is nearly destroyed by an army of deepspawn-bred monsters emerging from the tangled, treacherous Beast Marches to the west. The Akh'Velehr reinforcements of Cormanthyr succeed in dispersing the beasts by the first snowfall of winter. A small garrison of troops remains stationed in Hillsafar for the protection of the northern forests and villages until Myth Drannor's Fall.

End of second Untheric Empire as Unther is forced to recognize the independence of the North Coast cities on the southern fringes of the Yuirwood.

680 *Year of the Storm Skeleton*

Many human and dwarf stonemasons migrate from Myth Drannor to Hillsafar to aid that fledgling city in constructing its first encircling defensive wall.

After more than a decade, wizards of the Guild of Naturalists piece together the clues and realize that Halaster Blackcloak has been abducting wizards all throughout Cormanthyr in retaliation for their plundering of his monsters in Undermountain. The guild mounts a rescue expedition into the dungeon, which never returns, and they quietly end their sorties to Undermountain. Attempts to dispel or destroy the gate connecting their hall with Undermountain meet with failure.

681 *Year of the Zombie Lords*

During the festival of Greengrass, Archveult Tattercloak,

student of the Seven Wizards, and his consort, Tlanchass, depart from Sixstars intersection in a most spectacular fashion. The latter, who had long maintained the guise of a beautiful human female, revealed her true form by transforming into a gold dragon, and the pair then flew off to the south and west.

682 *Year of the Howling*

The Masked and Mentor Wintercloak effectively disband the "Seven Wizards" by leaving Myth Drannor with their last four students, all gnomes. Their departure, when one of Mentor's properties (an old stone tower) abruptly uprooted itself and flew up into the sky, heading north by northwest, was surprisingly open. The Incanistaeum now lies solely in the hands of Sakaala of the Seven Rings.

683 *Year of the Tainted Troll*

The young but already learned mage Nezas arrives in Myth Drannor where he joins the Six Tyryl Towers to learn more of magic. The grand-nephew of Neznam the World-Walker, Nezas seeks knowledge that will restore his uncle's Unique Mageries to his keeping.

684 *Year of the Sundered Crypt*

Dwarves of the clan Tarynstone are found digging deep tunnels under the city despite the long-held prohibitions against such actions. Furthermore, some elf Houses are outraged that the dwarves' tunneling in restricted areas collapsed some nigh-forgotten deep crypts of the elder or long-gone Houses. Clan Tarynstone and its 350 dwarves, despite a cry within the Ruling Council for death sentences and an equally loud cry for acquittal, are exiled from Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr. The clan emigrates west into the Thunder Peaks.

685 *Year of the Wraithwinds*

Two among the eight senior officers and one junior officer split off from the other armathors to join the resigning High Court Mage and Councilor Shyael Ildacer to pursue a new course as the "followers of the Srinsee's dream," the Eternal Srinnaala.

686 *Year of the Unshriven*

Nezas the Scholar weds the elf wizardess Raejiisa Sicafei after both graduate from their studies at the Six Tyryl Towers.

689 *Year of the Eager Executioner*

The displaced Archmage Paeris Haladar attempts to slay Josidiah Starym with spells, vowing vengeance for his loss of status. Josidiah survives four assassination attempts but is nearly slain in an Honor Duel called to settle the feud. When Paeris seizes the fallen Artblade, he is found unworthy of its power and responsibility; forever after, dead magic surrounds and permeates Paeris Haladar, making him a pariah to all within Cormanthyr. Josidiah reclaims the elfblade and returns to his post as Spell-Major with honor.

690 *Year of the Clashing Blades*

Sakaala of the Seven Rings disbands and dismantles the Incanistaeum, the school of wizardry run by the "Seven Wizards of Myth Drannor." She and her three remaining apprentice-students (two elves, one half-elf) leave for parts unknown after growing wings from their backs and taking flight. At last sighting, they headed to the northwest.

692 *Year of the Crawling Crags*

Tulrun of the Tent, a former apprentice of Mentor Wintercloak, journeys to Ysgard this year (and remains for over a century) after encountering a Shard of Selûne in the long-forgotten ruins of the Abbey of the Moon.

694 *Year of the Ominous Oracle*

The first divinations and portents of doom arrive via Darcassan, the diviner of Windsong Tower; he tells the Elders of Windsong Tower of the signs, but they keep the knowledge from the public to prevent a panic. Given the climate

of distrust and factionalism, this news is also kept secret from the Council, as it is uncertain where the threat to Myth Drannor's security lies.

The Circle of Flames and the wizards of Windsong Tower begin spiriting magical items and tomes (including the Scrolls Ardentym and the Keryfaertel) to safety. Many end up in Ascalhorn and Silverymoon in the trusted hands of colleagues there (in the cases of wizards not moving there themselves), though some wizards take off with their secrets for parts unknown over the next twelve years.

695 *Year of Fanciful Feasts*

700 *Year of the Slain Raven*

The forests of Moondale, founded shortly after the raising of the Standing Stone, are completely cleared by this date even though no living tree was ever felled by its people.

704 *Year of the Emerald Citadel*

The Ildacer clan, due to the internal machinations of the Ruling Council and other factions (specifically Lord Venali Starym and the Guild of Wizards, Conjurers, and Enchanters), loses much of its holdings, monies, and social status. While the Ildacers lose all their estates, they move into and maintain four inns and taverns within Myth Drannor. With the loss of Riiose, the Eternal Srinjala moves their base of operations into some old abandoned mages' towers north of the city, which are owned by another member.

705 *Year of Watchful Eyes*

708 *Year of Bound Evils*

High Mages and three battalions of Akh'Faer mages battle a resurgence of evil beasts and cultists of the fallen god Moander near the site of his fallen temple. While the cult is dispersed, numerous "lost spells" of Moander's clergy are recovered from the ruins by the elder priests and restored to use.

Three nycaloths escape their dimensional pocket prison that floated invisibly high above Cormanthyr. Their freedom depended on "a red dragon that never held malice or greed in its heart [flying] over the Coronal's throne." As Saeval Ammath and his adopted dragon-mount Garnet flew above Myth Drannor, they weakened the dimensional prison enough for the nycaloths to escape.

709 *Year of the Earnest Oaths*

The three nycaloths and their summoned yugoloth allies spend 29 months drawing together their forces amid the mountains and hills north of the Dragon Sea. In all, their army consists of orcs, ogres, bugbears, hobgoblins, gnolls, flinds, trolls, and an ever-growing assortment of lesser yugoloths.

710 *Year of the Toppled Throne*

Drow attacks in Cormyr claim the lives of three noble families of the realm; while believed dead, most of the nobles survive as slaves in the Underdark.

711 *Year of Despairing Elves*

Late in the autumn of this year, the Army of Darkness overruns the mining and trading encampments on the western Moonsea (the site that will become Zhentil Keep). By early winter, the first incursions into Cormanthor have begun.

The Weeping War begins on the Feast of the Moon with the Northern Massacres campaign as the Army of Darkness engages many elf patrols and destroys many elf villages and clan enclaves.

712 *Year of the Lost Lance*

The Weeping War continues through the year, resulting in the deaths of many heroes and the collective Harpers at Twilight. There are four major campaigns this year, and Myth Drannor nearly falls prey to the Army of Darkness.

Battle of Garnet's Pyre: The red dragon Garnet rashly attacks the Army of Darkness, and he manages to at least split the main army, slow its advance, destroy its supply

lines, and trap it amidst some forest fires. Garnet disappears in the midst of battle, not to be seen again for centuries.

713 *Year of the Firedrake*

The war rages on, though the allies manage to eliminate Malimshaer and Gaulguth, two of the three nycaloths leading the Army of Darkness. While three major campaigns rocked the forest for much of the year, there is a tense peace from Greengrass to Midsummer's Night; during this time, many Myth Drannor natives emigrate either to sister cities outside of Cormanthor or to Semberholme and Tangled Vale settlements.

After more than 200 years, the Twisted Tower falls once again to the dark elves, marking the refounding of the Lands Under Shadow in western Cormanthor.

714 *Year of Doom*

The final campaigns of the elves and allies against the Army of Darkness see the reestablishment of Elven Court as the seat of elf power in Cormanthyr while Myth Drannor falls under siege by the Army of Darkness. With the slaughter of the army and cavalry, little can be done against the Siege of Shadow, which descends on Myth Drannor on the 21st day of Kythorn.

The Banes' Duel: The climax of the war was the duel between the two final opposing army leaders. The Banes' Duel between the forces of Aulmpiter the nycaloth and Captain Fflar lasts for two whole days, and ends with the pair facing off in mortal combat on the 15th day of Flamerule; while neither body is ever identified, the magical blast that engulfed them robs both armies of their commanders.

The Siege lasts until the Final Flight in Flamerule, as the now-directionless hordes of the Army of Darkness simply swarm over Myth Drannor's last defenders by savagery and sheer weight of numbers. Only 200 elves and allies out of the 3,000 who remained to defend the City of Song escaped to tell of the city's passing.

715 *Year of Hungry Jaws*

720 *Year of the Dawn Rose*

The Gathering of the Gods at the Dancing Place signals the refounding of the Harpers at the request of some elves from Elven Court. In attendance are all 15 of the Harpers at Twilight who survived the previous decade, including Lady Alais Dree, Elminster Aumar, Khelben Arunsun (once the Nameless Chosen), and Meil "Darkhunter" Araeln.

The sylvan community of Elventree is founded as a site for the elves of Elven Court to continue interaction with their allied races (since Elven Court now is prohibited to the presence of non-elves) and as a trading site.



THE CRUCIAL CAMPAIGNS



It is astounding to hear that folk of some brains honestly believe Myth Drannor fell in one or two titanic battles amid the crumbling capital. Were wars truly fought that way, Tymora's favor wouldst be all that were needed to save one's people or protect one's home. Nay, I have fought on many fronts against many an enemy, but the savagery of the Army of Darkness even took aback my mount, haklashara, whose draconic eyes have seen far more blood and death than even mine. Striplings, listen ye closely: Cormanthyr's finest failed not in spirit or in skill, but in numbers and strategy. The malefic beings which stood and flew and shambled against us knew no fear, no exhaustion, and no quarter. Never stand firm against a foe with naught to lose, for all you will lose is ground, heart, and finally, the battle.

– Lady Ahskahala Durothil

Briefings on the Campaigns

Each of the campaigns are detailed to certain extents, though few are fully discussed, due to the lack of space. In all, there were more than 80 total battles wrapped up amid 12 discernible campaigns in the fight for Cormanthyr and Myth Drannor. The “Weeping War Years” timeline breaks down the military history of the Fall of Myth Drannor first and foremost.

The campaign breakdowns all follow a standard debrief format for both the campaign as a whole and particular battles of note. Major campaign details and major battles or those of specific importance are detailed further, with many more particulars sketching out the basics of the particular combat. Data such as casualty figures are avoided both to allow the DM much freedom in staging these adventures/battles, but also the numbers are hard to pin down. The elves and many of their allies never recorded actual figures of standing army or numbers slain. The actual size of the Army of Darkness kept waxing and waning throughout the war, with more yugoloths summoned by the leaders and the lesser officers after nearly every battle.

From the DM's standpoint, it's enough to report the battle, if not quite stage it. If the battle is to be staged, figures are needed only if the PCs are among the high command and controlling troops. Unless contradicted by other notes, assembled forces for the elves could be 1d20 x 100, while the Army of Darkness might front 2d20 x 100 orcs, 1d10 x 100 gnolls, 5d10 mezzoloths, and/or various other creatures and combinations.

The Official Campaign Name

A.K.A. “Derivative Names” and titles about such from bards' tales and songs.

Location: General locale within Cormanthyr of all battles of each particular campaign.

Time: Span noted by months of start/end (& total days); only among total campaign time is the year noted.

Campaign Victor: Which army (Darkness against Cormanthyr/Allies) gained and kept more territory/cost more enemy lives (not necessarily the most battles won); the perceived “winning army” of each campaign.

Random notes and particulars about the campaign at large are always placed last beneath the debrief. These are oftentimes secrets that may allow the PCs to get involved within this campaign.



The Official Battle Name

A.K.A.: Other nicknames of the battle (from elf bards or from the Army of Darkness). Note that whatever the title of the battle is, many add the “Battle of” to the title if its primary name was a place name, whereas elves need no mnemonic to remember exactly what happened there during the War.

Dates: Battle date(s); some battles can be considered mini-campaigns that last more than one encounter and stretch out over multiple days, either battling among the same battle groups or for the same site.

Victor: Which army (Army of Darkness against Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies) wins the designated battle.

Major Deaths: Fall of Major NPCs on either side; destruction of major landmarks.

All other notes on the battle land here, from details of the battle to the secrets behind the battles, whether they are about the participants, weaponry, tactics or battle sites.

The Weeping War Years

Many of the notes within this timeline are further detailed in the “Last Days of Myth Drannor” chapter or later in this chapter under the campaign breakdowns. This timeline merely serves as a wide-focus overview of the war and its major campaign events before we look at the campaigns and battles broken down in detail.

Year

(DR) Events

- 708 *Year of Bound Evils*
Escape of the Khov’Aniessa from their elven-magic prison.
- 709 *Year of the Earnest Oaths*
The Trio Nefarious migrates north of the Dragon Sea and begins consolidating the leadership of numerous orc, gnoll, and hobgoblin tribes into one massive and militarily organized horde.
- 710 *Year of the Toppled Throne*
Full summoning of the Army of Darkness begins north of Dragon Sea, and they march by year’s end.
- 711 *Year of Despairing Elves*
The Army of Darkness overwhelms and annihilates everything in its path north of the Dragon Sea, and they descend upon the forest from the western side of the sea.

—THE WEEPING WAR BEGINS—

- 711 *Year of Despairing Elves*
Feast of the Moon
The Northern Massacres: Start
- 712 *Year of the Lost Lance*
Hammer
The Northern Massacres: End
Jhyrennstar’s Scourging: Start
Midwinter
Jhyrennstar’s Scourging: End
Alturiak
The Mythal’s Mettle Campaign: Start
Ches
The Mythal’s Mettle Campaign: End
The Woodsheart Wars: Start
Eleint
The Dawn Fronts Campaign: Start
Marpenoth
The Woodsheart Wars: End
- 713 *Year of the Firedrake*
Hammer
The Great Friends Crusade: Start
Alturiak
The Dawn Fronts Campaign: End
Tarsakh
The Great Friends Crusade: End
Eleasias
The Mezzoloth Marches: Start
Marpenoth
The Mezzoloth Marches: End
Feast of the Moon
The Darkwoods Conflict: Start
Nightal
The Darkwoods Conflict: End
- 714 *Year of Doom*
Hammer
The Court Crusade: Start
Alturiak
The Court Crusade: End
The Tanglewars: Start
Tarsakh
The Tanglewars: End
Kythorn
The Yielding War: Start & End
The Light’s Last Stand: Start
Flamerule
The Light’s Last Stand: End

—THE WEEPING WAR ENDS—

Campaign #1: The Northern Massacres

A.K.A. The Darkness Rising; The Ambushes; “The First Strikes”
Location: Northern fringes of Cormanthor (forest)
Time: Nightal 711-Hammer 712 (35 days)
Campaign Victor: Army of Darkness

The Army of Darkness descended south of the Dragon Sea and enters the forest in three separate formations, which later split and spread out to form a front across much of the northern woods. Within the space of one tenday during the first heavy snows of winter, these forces destroyed three villages and more than two dozen outposts of both military and trade importance.

Surprisingly, very few elves survived these initial and unexpected onslaughts, and the few that escaped to the south told stories of such unimaginable horror that the local Akh’Velahr commanders did not believe them. These delays led directly to the victory for the Army of Darkness and the continued unreadiness of Cormanthyr.

Pkyal’s Snare

A.K.A.: The Feast of Blood; First Battle of Blooded Moon
Dates: Feast of the Moon-Nightal 2
Victor: Army of Darkness

This utter ambush occurred during the elves’ wintertide celebrations on the Feast of the Moon. Given the amassed forces of the Army, they easily surrounded the four outer watchposts and the entire tree settlement, putting it to the torch. As the town burned slowly from the outer edges inward, the creatures of Darkness played cat-and-mouse with the demoralized and panicked elves for four days until the 600 elves of Pkyal all lay dead.

Kerymiir’s Hiding

A.K.A.: The Cavern Carnage
Dates: Nightal 9-12
Victor: Army of Darkness
Major Deaths: Kerymiir

Warned by the smoke rising in the east, the folk of the tiny realm of Kerymiir had some inkling of the coming of the Army of Darkness. After some frightened reconnaissance, the 900 elves of two villages and seven minor settlements and outposts hid within local caves. They were easily found and slaughtered within the caves, then many of their hidden treasures were claimed (though not all were taken).

Yshaalnoth’s Pyre

Dates: Hammer 1-4
Victor: Army of Darkness

Yshaalnoth, a large moon and green elf clan holding for hunters and traders and scouts, is besieged and set aflame on the third day of the siege. This is the first visible signal to the southern woods of the invaders.

Campaign #2: The Satyrs' Scourging

A.K.A.: The Westfires, The Northwoods Wars, "Jhyrennstar's Scourging"

Location: Northeastern outskirts of long-fallen realm of Jhyrennstar west and north of Myth Drannor; long held lands of satyr tribes

Time: Hammer 712 (24 days)

Campaign Victor: Army of Darkness

Sometimes known as Jhyrennstar's Scourging (among those who aren't aware of that realm's true boundaries), the second campaign against Cormanthyr devastated the northern frontiers. More than 60% of the Akh'Velehr scouts posted in the north woods died in this rapid advance and entrenchment of the Army of Darkness.

Aulmpiter established one of his primary command posts during this campaign. After the destruction of all its people, Aulmpiter made his base of operations out of the massive tree village at the heart of the former sylvan elf domain of Oloriil to the north and east of Myth Drannor. Oloriil was a collective of seven smaller outposts and villages that had little traffic with Myth Drannor beyond the frequent aiding and hosting of Akh'Velehr scout patrols. Arrogantly, Aulmpiter's primary chamber, now desecrated by his mere presence, was once a temple holy to Rillifane. This base lay a rough 60 miles from Myth Drannor itself, though the path to it is far longer and certainly not as direct due to intervening thorn barriers and other countermeasures.

Perhaps one of the most surprising tactics of the Army of Darkness was their near-constant movement and activity. Despite their severe dislike of cold (especially the three nycaloth leaders and their mezzoloth officers), the Army stayed active. Many believe the mitigation of the harshest weather by the elf magic throughout the forest helped the fiends, while most bards paint the fact as "their burning hatred and ire kept them from feeling all but the cruelest cold." In any event, some of the force and urgency behind these attacks and the ferocity of all involved might be traced back to their dislike of the battle conditions.

Dancing Hooves

A.K.A.: Fall of the Fauns, (Battle for) Sulla's Glade

Dates: Hammer 7-8

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Sulla, leader of the largest surviving satyr tribe in Cormanthyr and ally of Myth Drannor (as were his three predecessors)

The Army again surrounded the entire battle area and then advanced inward, leaving their foes nowhere to retreat. Over 200 satyrs died here—over a third of the whole tribe!

Garnet's Pyre

A.K.A.: Dive of the Dragons, The Peace Dragon's Rage, Flight of Anger/Flight of Death

Dates: Hammer 12

Victor: Inconclusive. While the Army of Darkness did manage to rid themselves of their pair of foes in this battle, its advance was temporarily disrupted and halted by Garnet and Sylvallitham, and their troop losses were very high.

Major Deaths: The good dragons Garnet and Sylvallitham are both presumed dead, though neither dragon's body was ever recovered after the battle (and some clung to the hope that they had merely been teleported to another part of the Realms where they were unavoidably detained); 4 regiments and 1 march total in 2nd and 3rd Legions

The noble red dragon Garnet, upon discovering that he was one of the primary causes of the nycaloths' escape and subsequent conflict, rashly took to the air, and headed north into the approaching war. Given the speed at which Garnet fled Myth Drannor, no forces could be assembled quickly enough to allow them to back up the dragon's wrathful attack. Still, an ally took flight after him, an elder silver dragon named Sylvallitham who had, in the past, acted as Garnet's mentor in draconic lessons such as flight, use of breath weapons, and innate abilities. The elder dragon attempted to talk his star pupil out of this rash action, to no avail. Without a thought toward his own personal safety, Garnet furiously dove into the heart of the main Army of Darkness, with Sylvallitham reluctantly aiding his attack and joining the imprudent strike.

Flying directly out of the highsun to strike with total surprise, the two dragons took an awesome toll on the Army, Garnet breathing his arcing bolts of electrical fire and Sylvallitham his other magical attacks. The dragons managed to split the main Army group into two and slow the whole's advances. They also broke the army's supply lines and trapped whole regiments amidst surrounding forest fires, which created large breaks within the ranks as well and served to minimize troop coordination and communication on the ground. Despite these victories, the dragons were unable to focus attacks on the nycaloths due to various magic and heavy protective missile fire.

Had these two dragons coordinated this assault with large ground forces of elf troops, the war might have ended here, just north of the village of Oloriil. Their rashness kept many from moving swiftly to back up their angry flight, but there are inconclusive reports of small bands of scouts, adventurers, or isolated mages whose towers lay nearby that took advantage of the dragons' surprise attack. In addition to the four regiments destroyed by the dragons, these isolated and uncoordinated ground attacks by adventurers and others claimed another seven parties and two squadrons of orcs, gnolls, and hobgoblins.

Elf scouts watching the battle reported that it was victorious due merely to the passions and anger of two good dragons. However, just as they had scattered enough ground troops to finally close on the nycaloth leaders of the Army, six tightly-focused beams of light struck and engulfed the two dragons in their dive formation. Both Garnet and Sylvallitham disappeared without a trace, nor were they heard from throughout the rest of the Weeping War. While Garnet's fate has never been uncovered, Sylvallitham's remains were discovered 219 years later in the Galena Mountains east of Ironfang Keep, his death apparently caused by the claws of a great wyrm.

Twilight's Falling

A.K.A.: "The Harp Falls Still," Lady Steel's Last Clash, The Last Scepter War (by scholars of Hlondath and Netheril), The Two Marches' Terror, "Six Survived under Each Star of Seven"

Dates: Hammer 25-29

Victor: Inconclusive; though many credit this battle to the Army of Darkness, they incurred more losses in troops and both sides effectively retreated.

Major Deaths: The Harpers at Twilight (70% of them die in this collective battle, including Lady Steel, Ruehar Oakstaff, and others); Laummas the "Lich-King of Hlondath," Major Tlaak (flind chieftain)

Little conclusive information is available on this battle outside of hidden lore kept secret among the modern Harpers. Like many of the activities of the Harpers at Twilight, their victories went unlauded, their losses unmourned. This was the first of two public battles that recorded the Harpers and their good deeds for posterity, though both are tinged with great tragedy. It is believed that the impetus of this battle sprang from the lich Laummas' search for elf magic (a quest that was embraced by Malimshaer and his mezzoloths later).

While the forces of darkness collected two marches of gnolls and flinds from the Army under their new ally the lich (and newly-made Major) Laummas, the Harpers at Twilight and some remnants of the sylvan tribes decimated by the Army's advance numbered only a total of a few hundred. For four days, the vastly outnumbered forces held their ground against the Army using their magic and woodcraft, keeping pitched battles limited to skirmishes among small groups (though the Harpers were almost always outnumbered by five or more to one). While they almost always won, the Army's victories were not decisive and the Harpers well hidden.

Much of the Harpers' strategies fell to small groups of spies infiltrating the Army's camp to sabotage supplies and cause disarray among temperamental gnolls and flinds. When Laummas or his traitor-associate Nezas were on the field, the Harpers' magic proved the lesser, and often their own dead would be animated against them. At dusk of the fourth day of battle, Laummas fell before the furious swordplay and spellcraft of Lady Dathlue Mistwinter, the Lady Steel and the Harpers' leader. Emboldened by the death of Laummas, Lady Steel pressed on despite her fatigue and reduced spells and meeting her death soon after from Nezas' spells and her drawing-and-quartering by the animated remains of her own Harper troops. At least in death, her pre-set spells claimed the lives of more than three parties of gnolls. Enraged by Lady Steel's death, the last 90 Harpers forged a charge that cost the enemy over 500 more troops. Unfortunately, rage is a motivator, not a strategic plan. The charge left the final Harpers trapped in the midst of three full squadrons of bloodthirsty gnolls.

The Harpers battled on, accepting their deaths heroically and united in a strong battle song that sustained them while half of their number fell. Only the chance appearance of a woman spellcaster, upon the low hillock known as Jalmyra's Mound, saved even a few of the overwhelmed Harpers toward the dawn of the fifth day. While she apparently spoke only once when not casting spells of awe-inspiring destruction and power, the wild-haired woman bid the 42 survivors "Flee, lest the Harp be stilled before its tune is done. Seek out those Chosen of Seven Stars, and they shall guide you. I shall hold guard, now and always." The Harpers and many bards have since taken to calling her "Darkeyes," "Jalmyra's Mage," "the Harper-Mage," "Lady Star," or "The Savior of the Harp." Some priests of Mystra insist this was a manifestation or avatar of Mystra, perhaps even her mysterious alias as Myrjala Darkeyes, though no being alive today can confirm this theory. In fact, of the few accounts heard, elves saw an elf save them, while the humans saw a human female, thus adding to the confusion about her identity. Regardless of her true identity, her spells (some said to be on par with those of the High Mages) destroyed more than half the remaining forces of darkness and sent them into panicked retreat.

Oloriil

A.K.A.: The Entrenchment, Gaulguth's Glance

Dates: Hammer 28-30

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: The seven tree-towns of Oloriil

What little is known of this battle is that the main Army wrapped around the remaining settlements of Oloriil while the Harpers fought the western flank of this army at the Battle of Twilight's Falling. The small villages could do nothing but flee on the first day before the Army of Darkness fully closed about it or die fighting within one's own home-trees. This area remained claimed by the Army of Darkness as an entrenched base throughout the war and beyond, used as an orc and ogre enclave until Highharvestide of the Year of the Painful Price (718 DR).

Within the Army of Darkness, this battle was known as Gaulguth's Glance, simply because the nycaloth powerhouse slew

everything that fell under his notice, including his own troops! Lost to a berserker rage for much of the final day of battle, Gaulguth alone slew nearly half of the casualties among the elves and one-fifth of the casualties among his own forces. After this slaughter, General Khitax made sure that he planned troop placements carefully to avoid losing his own forces to the thirsty edge of *Heartcleaver*.

Campaign #3: The First Sieges

A.K.A.: The Cat-and-Mouse Conflicts, the Mythal's Mettle Campaign

Location: North-central forest; Myth Drannor; Mythal

Time: Alturiak-Ches 712 (25 days)

Campaign Victor: Inconclusive. The Army of Darkness all but obliterated many of Myth Drannor's strategic defenses and destroyed small parts of the city; Cormanthyr's defenders rallied for the first time in the war and drove the invaders back at great costs. So, while the Army of Darkness lost ground and troops after great gains throughout the campaign, the elves unified themselves and defended the City of Song via the sacrifices by their leaders.

Despite the speed of this campaign and the great destruction it visited upon the elves of Cormanthyr, the Army of Darkness hardly took this campaign seriously. With their overwhelming, monstrous hordes, the nycaloths played with their prey, almost visibly toying with the elves throughout the early battles. While seeming to allow them some small victories, Aulmpiter and his comrades merely spent their time placing their forces in their usual tactical plans: Surround the battle zone to prevent any escape, and slowly crush all within it. Always in mind was Aulmpiter's (and thus, the Army's) ultimate target: the mythal and Myth Drannor!

With the Army of Darkness on the move, the elves continued to fail in stopping them. The nycaloths and their generals ably place their troops where they would, due to a general lack of order from the leadership at Myth Drannor. Instead of working together, the generals of the Akh'Faer and Akh'Velehr squabbled over commands and troop movements. To add fuel to the fire, many elves went rogue and became individual strike units and adventuring bands due to their lack of faith in their leaders. Thus, the Allies of Cormanthyr were in utter disarray, acting individually without any strong central leadership, until the end of this campaign.

Secret: One of the greatest victories of the War occurred more than two miles beyond the city, along the outskirts of the mythal during this campaign. Unfortunately, most people have hardly ever heard of the feat, even among the elf high commands; for more, see the Crystal Coup in the next chapter on "Clandestine Campaigns."

Towers' Falling

A.K.A.: The Out-Mages' Stand

Dates: Alturiak 11-21

Victor: Army of Darkness

Attacks on the lone towers and outlying schools beyond the mythal signaled the 12-day ongoing series of skirmishes now called the Towers Falling Battle. Significant as the first true meeting between the Akh'Velehr and Akh'Faer and the Army of Darkness, this battle's primary defenders and forces were the besieged mages and adventurers who lived outside the mythal. In all, the First Legion destroyed numerous mages and schools and towers, and pressed onward toward Myth Drannor almost undeterred.

Still, while the armies of Cormanthyr were pushed back, they gained a pyrrhic victory in the cost the Army of Darkness paid in lives: The dying mages often took hundreds of orcs and gnolls and even mezzoloths with them in death, as they or their towers exploded in arcane fury upon their deaths.

The Northdark Skirmishes

A.K.A.: The Icewars

Dates: Alturiak 17-24

Victor: Army of Darkness

The Army of Darkness leisurely sent its troops on harassment maneuvers that allowed them to slowly wrap lines west and south along the mythal's perimeter. The eight days of battle occurred during great ice storms magically enhanced by the elves. Despite this advantage against the mezzoloth-led giants, ogres, and orcs of the Third Legion, the elves failed to consolidate their forces to their best advantages and lost the final battle (though most of the minor skirmishes among smaller units and allied adventurers fell to the elves).

The Onslaught on the Weave

A.K.A.: The Maligning of the Mythal

Dates: Alturiak 22 (-Eleint 19)

While not specifically a battle, this event is significant in the history of the war as the first major incursion of infernal forces into the mythal surrounding the capital. Whether Aulmpiter planned the assault as such or not, the First and Third Legions collectively advanced along an arcing front that saw them all contact the mythal almost simultaneously. With that major invasion of forces bringing the mythal's defenses surging into play along a miles-long arc, a massive surge of wild magic arced along and through the entire mythal. Numerous magical buildings within the mythal fell or exploded due to the wild surge, while other long-standing spell effects either died or went out of control. With the advancing forces of yugoloths and the hordes piercing the mythal on a number of fronts, the wild magic surged and corruptions of the mythal powers continued through until autumn. At that time, the Woodsheart Wars forced the bulk of the Army of Darkness east and outside of the mythal, granting it a reprieve from the corrupting touch of the yugoloths and other creatures anathema to it.

While the long-term effects on the mythal were unguessed for much of the Weeping War, there were a few immediate changes to the nature of the mythal with the incursion of the Army of Darkness. The most obvious was the fall of the prohibitions against certain races entering the area, and the orcs and ogres long kept out of the forest's heart saw their first chance to plunder the capital in five centuries. A far more spectacular effect was the initial wild surges' effects on the gold and silver dragon allies of the elves: Sixteen gold and silver dragons had arrived at the summons of the High Mages and other allies of Myth Drannor, and as the wild magic arced around and through them, half the dragons dissolved into the energies and arced into the nearest dragon, the golds and silvers instantly forming eight unique electrum dragons! While all survived the shock of transformation, they were nearly comatose due to the radical changes within them, falling collectively in the Dragons' Glade north of Warriors' Gate and northwest of the city. Unconscious for nearly a month, these electrum dragons were watched over by the dragonrider cavalry of Wing and Horn, whose dragon members were not within the mythal at the time of the surges, and were thus spared this strange fate.

Note: These creatures are not the electrum dragons noted in #1084 *Ruins of Myth Drannor*, which have their own forms and abilities and statistics. These are dragons of "wild-card" abilities

to be determined by the DM. Each of the eight now has its new personality amalgamated from the two dragons that formed it, and its powers correspond to either silver or gold dragon standards, depending on the base form (rather than the dragon reduced to energy for merging). The DM decides if these dragons are the progenitors of the modern electrum dragons or if these are eight unique creatures with similar notation due to their odd origins and coloring.

War's Awakening

A.K.A.: The Mist Melees, the Fog War, the "Deads' Vengeance"

Dates: Alturiak 26-Ches 1

Victor: Army of Darkness

The forays by Malimshaer and his Second Legion carried this third of the Army of Darkness around the eastern side of the mythal territories. With the heaviest concentration of yugoloths in this legion, the mythal's corruption began strongest here. As the legion spread itself south and west to surmount Myth Drannor, it and the surrounding areas became cloaked in arcane fog that proved impossible to dispel. There were large numbers of orcs and ogres among this (and the Third) Legion, yet the mythal eventually allowed them passage on the third day of battle. Previous to this, the only forces in play were mezzoloths and gnolls. This alone was a strong sign that told the nycaloths and the elves both that the mythal was weakening under the onslaught.

As the elves and allies began to fully realize the dangers posed by the Army of Darkness, they started pulling together their forces and conscripting the able into allied service. Those unable to be of service among the armies were given leave either to defend their homes or to evacuate the outer mythal lands and even Myth Drannor itself. The deep tunnels beneath the city dug 30 years ago by Clan Tarynstone now came into use close to the end of Alturiak as the three Legions closed on the city and laid siege to it. While the battle of War's Awakening was more an internal process for the elves to pull together rather than remain unstable and ineffective, the many skirmishes and smaller battles led to the first siege of Myth Drannor, as the campaign name says. Still, the elves and allies came together and slowed the Army's advance enough to allow over half of Myth Drannor's noncombatant population to escape to relative safety south of the city. Later, after the furor of the war died down, a number of volunteer adventurers and wizards were honored as heroes for their actions as guardians and defenders of the refugees during the First Sieges, Woodsheart Wars, and Dawn Fronts Crusade.

The Templestars' Rise

A.K.A.: The Three Fronts of Myth Drannor, the Mauling, Advance of the Three Battalions, Gaulguth's Bath, the River's Reprisal, the Elemental Strikes, the Drowning

Dates: Ches 2-3

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Kovimal Honedaxe (Councilor and clan chief), Aesar "Moonwing" (Court Mage); General Ollyq of the Merciless, General Vroyxax of the Chaoslayers; many older and outlying buildings of western Myth Drannor, including more than seven temples

Considered one battle, this seven-pronged attack by the Army of Darkness on the city of Myth Drannor marked its first invasion by external enemy troops in over 600 years! The Army of Darkness, while holding more than two-thirds of its forces back either at their nerve center in Oloriil or in encampments surrounding the mythal, sent three battalions—the Agonists (First Legion), the Chaoslayers (First Legion), and the Merciless (Third Legion)—and Gaulguth the Reaver into Myth Drannor.

The three battalions spread out into their respective regiments, though they remained under the commands of Generals Khitax, Vroyxax, and Ollyq. The First Regiment of Agonists, under the direct command of Gaulguth and Colonel Szelmsevv, spearheaded the charge on Castle Cormanthor, while others concentrated attacks on all areas of Cormanthor, Kerradunath, and Sheshyrinnam. For reasons unknown, none of the initial attackers approached the city from the east or disturbed the city east of the stream (leaving elves to later mutter and suspect that some N'Tel'Quess in Dlabraddath was responsible for the whole Fall of Myth Drannor). Even though the elves were nearly outnumbered two-to-one, they held on and destroyed over nine regiments (three of General Ollyq's Merciless, two of General Khitax's Agonists, and nearly the entire Chaoslayer battalion) in 19 solid hours of combat and spellbattles!

This battle's title comes from its most prominent military (and spiritual) victory at the height of the fray. Under the moon's light and the constant press of enemies, the elves and other defenders of the realm suffered miserable losses for much of the early hours of the battle. By highmoon, more than half the western city was dominated and controlled by the Army of Darkness. Of the three Merciless regiments invading the peaceful temple ward of Sheshyrinnam, two were focused on military tactics and control of conquered territory, while the third took to desecrating and destroying the temples they overwhelmed.

The aging priest Artox Frayhammer, with his lusty war cries and the compelling battle songs of his clergy of Moradin, turned the tide of battle for all Myth Drannor as he saw another, smaller

temple fall. Leading the charge and rallying other temples' faithful behind him and his dwarves, Artox met and slew five mezzloth officers—four majors and General Ollyq himself—within mere minutes, as the Merciless expected resistance as feeble as they had encountered before. Soon, the army of the Templestars took rough shape as the temple defenders of Moradin, Garl Gittergold, Labelas Enoreth, Selûne, and Mielikki united and destroyed all invaders within Sheshyrinnam. These victories in turn fired the hopes of the other allies, and the tide turned in favor of Myth Drannor!

The final note of the battle that ended this conflict (and quickly ignited the next) was a major summoning by Symrustar, four baelnorn, and the fledgling Elementarists' Guild (until recently a minor part of the Guild of Wizards, Conjurers, and Enchanters). As the Army battalions were forced back to the stream by victorious elf troops in the western city, the stream Oacenth and Glyrryl's Pool erupted with gargantuan water elementals which literally leapt over the banks to wash away the surviving enemy regiments of the Merciless and Chaoslayer battalions. Even Gaulguth was forced to *teleport* to safety as three elementals tried to drown him in the depths of the pool!

By dawn of the third day of Ches, the Army of Darkness was forced east of the stream and Glyrryl's Pool, where many of their number drowned before the elementals were dispersed. In all, the invading Army of Darkness suffered the loss of 12 regiments—over 35,000 gnolls, hobgoblins, ogres, and orcs—before their retreat forced the three generals to accede that this was a foe to respect and fight, rather than one over which victory is assured.



The Siege of Dlabraddath

A.K.A.: The Siege of Dlabraddath, the Clash Under Four Moons (when considered in conjunction with Templestars' Rise), Battle of Selûne's Tears/The Darkness Undone

Dates: Ches 3-5

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Spell-Captain Paeris Haladar, High Court Mage Khyssoun Ammath; the Chiming Tree and many sites in Dlabraddath

A more balanced battle than the preceding one, Dlabraddath's Siege is notable only in its length and the amount of destruction. In the morning after being forced east of Oacenth's Stream, the Army of Darkness fought defensively and was slowly being surrounded on their southern flank in one of their own tactics. With the properties of the mythal disrupted due to their mezzoloth commanders, the fleeing regiments were all able to set fire to the northeastern quadrant of Myth Drannor to cover their retreat. For that day and much of the next, the elves either shored up the city's defenses and put out the fires or patrolled the perimeter of the city, slaying any stray enemy parties.

Many foolishly thought the war was won, and the hot-headed Spell-Captain Paeris Haladar heedlessly led four companies of Akh'Velehr and Akh'Faer (all acting against orders from their superiors) into the forest north of Myth Drannor to "end the threat of the Army of Darkness forever." He and his soldiers walked into a trap, since the Second Legion's Icepikes and Five Blades battalions arrived from the east to reinforce the ragged forces remaining from the Templestars' Rise. The Captain's Dark Charge, a now-ignominious footnote in the Weeping War, showed the elves they had no room for stupid, arrogant, reckless moves such as this, as all but four young camp runners died in their less-than-strategic attack on the Army, believing their foe to be fewer and far more demoralized than they proved. Though all within the Charge were later given honors as war heroes, few raise Haladar's name any longer as a good commander, and nearly all have forgotten his once-lauded tactical spellcasting.

Despite this poor strategy and the unexpected reinforcements of the Army of Darkness, the allies still won the day tactically, as they broke the grip the invaders had on Myth Drannor and drove them out of the city by battle's end. Strategically and emotionally, the Army of Darkness won this battle simply by setting fire to the elves' trees and homes and unsettling their normally unshakable resolve.

Campaign #4: The Woodsheart Wars

A.K.A.: "Cormanthyr's Carnage"

Location: All over the forest; focal points around Myth Drannor and within the mythal's interior

Time: Ches-Marpenoth 712 (219 days)

Campaign Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

The longest of the campaigns, this operation also has the most objective information to report, despite the wide fronts and constant activity. The bulk of the campaign occurred as skirmishes between small groups of scouts and perimeter patrollers. With the Army of Darkness digging in within the mythal, it took outside allies much of the year to uproot them and drive them from the mythal.

The brief incursion of the Dalesmen early in this campaign is the only outside support Cormanthyr received during the war, and this lasted merely until the Army was removed from the mythal. Whether the Dalesmen allies left of their own accord or were dismissed by elves believing their aid to be unnecessary is unknown. After Higharvestide 712 Dalereckoning, the Dalesmen only guarded the fringes of the forest and their own home Dales,

with two exceptions: the Dalesmen forces (and those few AWOL War Wizards of Cormyr) sent to the Battle of Snowsblood Trail and Standing Stone's Blood were crucial in gaining a victory after the fall of the limited elf defenders.

Once the Army of Darkness' choke-hold on Myth Drannor was broken early on, much of the campaign concerned forcing the Army of Darkness out of the mythal and east, since south would expose Semberholme. A secondary action during this campaign involved the drive eastward to re-establish the older seat at the ruins of Old Elven Court. Arms-Captain Hachaam Selorn led the Fourth Legion, the Eagle Wing cavalry of the Akh'Velehr, and the Dragonwing and Wyvernwing of the Akh'Faer as the primary army in charge of reclaiming the area from the drow corruption.

Dawn at Erolith's Knoll

A.K.A.: The Fight atop Erolith's Mound, Rise of the Dales

Dates: Ches 4-5

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

This battle centered on and around Erolith's Mound, the burial place of a noted sylvan elf scout and warrior. The battle at Erolith's Knoll saw the counter-invasion of the Elven Woods by a ragtag army of volunteers led by Mindal the warrior, and they stood to help the elves against their monstrous foes. The battle, coordinated by Lady Alais Dree, saw the First Legion of the Army of Darkness pinched between elves on the north and northeast, and Dalesmen on the west. While initially surprised, the Army's superior numbers still allowed them to hold the ground, and the allies faltered in their attacks. The Army destroyed the elf troops, ignoring the Dalesmen as nearly ineffectual gnats until the timely arrival of the former armathor Elminster Aumar and the Nameless One (both Chosen of Mystra) turned the battle back to the allies' favor. By battle's end, despite losses of more than half the Dalesmen and 20% of the elf cavalry, the Allies of Cormanthyr destroyed the First Regiment of the Battalion Grievous and the Third Regiments of both the Agonists and the Painful. As was their intention, they put the Army on the move east and south, skirting them around the city and hopefully out of the mythal.

Battle of the Three Chosen

Dates: Ches 16-17

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: The Icepikes and Ardorstaves Battalions

This battle, as a combined number of skirmishes among the Silverglades south of Myth Drannor, merely kept the First and Second Legions from entrenching themselves and kept moving them along to the east (though some were driven north either to reconnoiter with the Imperious at Oloriil or wander the northern woods). It is notable only as the first known meeting of three of Mystra's Chosen (Elminster Aumar, the Nameless One, and the Lady Symrutar Auglamyr) and their destruction of four regiments among the two legions!

Flightfury

A.K.A.: Battle over Dragons' Grove, Electrum Rising

Dates: Ches 27

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Lady Fieryat Omberdawn and Evenaelorathos the Blackspine (commanders of the Pegasi Wing cavalry). Also, two of the eight electrum dragons created by the mythal's surges died during the sneak attack on the grove where they slept, while a third dragon died attacking the three battalions of the Army, all dead before their names could ever be discovered.

Still suffering the shocking effects of the mythal's initial wild-magic surge, the electrum dragons within Dragons' Grove were attacked by the combined remnants of the Grievous (third battalion, First Legion), the Battalion Arcane (second battalion, Second Legion), and the Colossus (fourth battalion, Third Legion). In total, nearly two full regiments were lost among the three battalions, though their organization seemed stronger with the absence of their nycaloth commanders at this battle. Despite their strong resistance, these Army groups are also forced north and east around the northern edges of the mythal.

Silversgate

A.K.A.: The Second Siege of Myth Drannor, the Nameless Sacrifice, the Chosen's Choice

Dates: Tarsakh 11-13

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies (tactical); Army of Darkness (emotional). Cormanthyr's victory is in driving the Army of Darkness out of the city, while they claim the victory of forcing the elves to close many gates and the loss of powerful allies and leaders.

Major Deaths: The Nameless Chosen, Wollys Silvershield (high priest of Selûne); Colonel Cvor "the Whipmaster"

The battle at Silversgate is one of the most storied and heroic tales of the entire Weeping War, as one who was denied his name by Myth Drannor apparently gave his life in its cause. In short, the Army of Darkness was driven east, and its northern and southern factions merged and punched through the elf defenders on the western front as they passed, allowing them a second charge on Myth Drannor. The bulk of this battle occurred among the streets of the old city Cormanthor, and its climax centered on the Silversgate, the magical gate to Silverymoon Pass and a link to the sister cities of Ascalhorn and Silverymoon.

While the military fought bravely on all fronts, this battle was primarily one of magic and thus spearheaded by Spell-Major Josidiah Starym, Elminster, Symrustar Auglamyr, and the Nameless Chosen. With many elf forces exhausted from the previous battles, only the cavalry and two-thirds of the available Akh'Faer forces were in the city for its defense until the arrival after battle's start of the Wing cavalry, some gold, silver, and electrum dragon allies, and the Three Chosen.

The spellcasters and military worked together to isolate and destroy the reduced and tired battalions (the Cruelty, the Colossus, the Grievous, Battalion Arcane) of the Army of Darkness. In all, the Army of Darkness suffered the loss of a battalion's worth of troops, losing 11 marches and 4 regiments in the melee. Among them, four entire tribes of gnolls were totally destroyed as was the most powerful march in the Army, Cvor's all mezzoloth March of the Second Cruelty Regiment.

Cvor's March, or "the Whipmaster's March" as more commonly known among the troops, laid siege to the Silversgate in upper Cormanthor at highsun on the second day of battle, following his orders to guard the gate against any allied incursions while the Fourth Cruelty Regiment sought magical items and plunder in the surrounding buildings and ruins. The Nameless Chosen became enraged by the destruction of his native city and the abrupt slaying of a trio of young bronze dragons that had emerged through the *gate* to lend aid requested a tenday ago. As their overall plans were capable of moving the Army out of the city, the other mages were sadly resigned to the losses, since the Army's battalions had learned to tighten their ranks and attack and raid as an army rather than random hordes. Still bereft of Gaulguth's commanding presence, the troops and attacks were tightly organized to prevent any major losses unless their formations were broken. The Nameless One lost his temper over the "insufferable waiting for the Army to trip hidden spelltraps with no guarantees for success—We are supposed to be the pride and glory of Faerûn, but we cower like rabbits waiting for a fox to stop stalking their warren!"

With a roar of anger and vengeance, the Nameless exploded through the roof of one of the Six Tyrul Towers, his body glowing and his hair and robes ablaze in silver flames! Similar to the dragon Garnet's rash charge, he dove headlong into the amassed, "impenetrable" forces of the besieging Army, scattering many gnolls, ogres, and orcs like chaff before a hurricane wind. Driving a wedge through the forces, he converged on the Silversgate, where Colonel Cvor and his mezzoloths stood. Spreading his arms wide, the Nameless One scrawled one line in the shattered marble of the street before him with a beam of silver fire, and no mezzoloth crossed that line that day. On his arms, he formed massive wings of silver fire, raising them high and knocking many creatures down from high towers or parapets. As he walked slowly and steadily forward, the blazing line advanced with him, forcing all back before him. Fully aflame now, the Nameless reached out with his silver wings and flung the nycaloths into the *gate*, which opened at his merest word. Spelltraps lying in wait activated at his will, causing explosions that claimed more evil lives as he walked unharmed within them. Over 600 mezzoloths, goblins, and other creatures fell before the fury of the Nameless, and Myth Drannor's defenders rallied once more. With a large wedge driven into the Army's forces, the Akh'Faer and the cavalry had openings they could exploit and drive the Army before them again.

Fate of the Nameless One

The Nameless Chosen stood before the Silversgate, driving the Whipmaster Cvor before him, and he laughed at the mezzoloth's challenge. As Nameless turned to bid his comrades-at-arms good will and luck in battle, the razor-studded whip of Cvor wrapped about his throat, and the two fell into the *gate*, struggling. Flying to his aid, Elminster the Crafty entered the Silversgate and shut the *gate* behind him to isolate Cvor's March. The Nameless Chosen's full intent in his mad attack was to open up the Army's lines and isolate sectors of it to destroy more easily. Alone but undaunted, the fire-engorged form of the Nameless One towered over the battle. Back to back with the elder Chosen Elminster, he fought hundreds of mezzoloths within the rocky Silverymoon Pass, and the glow of his silvery form drew attention from Silverymoon. Still, while his successes led to victory for the Allies of Cormanthyr, the hubris of the Nameless One led to his undoing.

Trusting that his flaming form would be proof against any attacks, he was caught unawares by Colonel Cvor when it used a captured elf artifact (the *Harness of the Giant-Slayer Alayris*) to grow to a giant's size and seize the flaming mage by hand and foot. More swiftly than the reactions of either Chosen, Cvor brutally pulled the Nameless Chosen nearly in half by sheer strength! The explosion of magical power and fire utterly consumed Cvor and over 200 nearby mezzoloths, but not the one who wielded it. As the fireball subsided, the Nameless One lay dying, the silver fire desperately draining away out of his laid-open torso. While Elminster later reported that Mystra herself preserved his life as he lay wounded, at least three sources (two half-elf histories and one elf song) suggest that another power such as Sehanine saved him in return for his aiding her People. Still, the High Mage of Silverymoon Ecamane Truesilver and his supporting wizard forces protected the body of the fallen Chosen from the remaining mezzoloths. Together, while the Nameless One was sent magically to Silverymoon for healing, Elminster and the elderly and frail Ecamane destroyed the *gate* to Myth Drannor, detonating it from within and at its exit. The explosions slew the remnants of the Fourth Regiment surrounding it at Myth Drannor as well as clearing Silverymoon Pass of its remaining brethren.

As a result of this battle, Myth Drannor's forces won the day, but unknowingly paid a high price. Elminster was lost among the planes for a time, due to his task of destroying the *gate* from within, while Ecamane Truesilver died due to the strain of breaking the *gate* from its exit point at Silverymoon Pass. The Nameless Chosen lay like one dead for more than the next year, though

Mystra spoke to those who tended him, calling him “he whom magic, duty, and honor defines.” His elf nurse, who heard this in her own tongue, gave him the name Akhelbhen; upon his awakening, the Nameless Chosen, once called Arun’s Son is introduced him to the new High Mage Aglanthol as Khelben Arunsun. His body healed but forever scarred across his chest and back where he was nearly torn in twain, he banishes his vanity and keeps the wedge of silver-white hair and beard to remind him of the silver flames dancing within it and how it does not make him invincible. It also signifies his debts, as it reminds him of Silverymoon and what he owes its people as well.

The Briarsbattles

A.K.A.: The Blunting of the Five Blades

Dates: Tarsakh 20-22

Victor: Cormanthyr’s Allies

Major Deaths: General Naerg, Colonels Rkan, Zmzr, Pultas, Aurg, and Aygn; Great Druid Rhaac’var

To the north of the city, fighting continued as straggling units of the Army of Darkness harassed Cormanthran military and civilians alike before, during, and after their forced removal from Myth Drannor a second time. Disturbing a sacred druids’ grove south and east of the city, the Five Blades battalion met its death with the sacrifice of two treants and the taxing magic of the Great Druid Rhaac’var.

Sar-Andathal’s Siege

A.K.A.: The Tragic March

Dates: Mirtul 9-11

Victor: Army of Darkness against Cormanthyr’s Elves/Allies

The Army of Darkness, raiding and pillaging as it is driven farther and farther east overwhelms the sylvan elf settlement of Sar-Andathal. Even though the Arms-Major’s plan is to do just this and drive them out of the forest, this was considered a victory of Darkness merely by its destruction of this community. By the end of this battle, the Army’s migration south while being forced east ended with only a few exceptions.

The Exiles’ War

A.K.A.: The Bone and Briar Battles

Dates: Kythorn 6-10

Victor: Cormanthyr’s Elves/Allies

Farther east of the mythal lay the towers and tree-homes of a number of exiled elf wizards and necromancers not welcome in Myth Drannor. Still, with the Army of Darkness forced through their lands and plundering as they went, these disparate exiles still banded together (with themselves and various N’Vaelahr agents) for the war effort. Notes about this battle include the necromancers’ animation of those they slew among the Army, not to mention at least one enslaved green dracolich. The Exiles achieved victory by their swift strike of fireballs that destroyed the charge of a leading ogrish party, which they then animated against their comrades. Most Exiles were merely concerned with defending their own lands and towers, caring little about the elves who denied them welcome in Myth Drannor. However, the humility of some elves (especially Spell-Major Josidiah Sarym) and the obvious challenge drew a few out of exile and into the Akh’Faer.

Slaughter at Autumn Song’s End

A.K.A.: The Satyr Slaughter, the Unicorns’ Charge

Dates: Kythorn 8-9

Victor: Army of Darkness

The only major event of interest in these battles is the return from afar of Gaulguth the nycaloth field commander. His hasty teleport out of defeat during the Templestars’ Rise sent him not where he wished to go, but randomly across Faerûn and far into (and under) the heart of the desert of Anauroch.

Secret: Gaulguth, upon teleporting beneath Anauroch, attracted the attentions of the phaerimm trapped there. His delay in returning to his armies concerned either alliance with or combat against these creatures. In any case, within the next few months, Gaulguth’s return would also herald his pursuit by a band of phaerimm, who somehow escaped the magical traps that kept them within the desert. While these mysterious and deadly creatures never officially entered the Weeping War, their harassment of Gaulguth and the other two nycaloths indirectly aided the elves’ efforts over the next few years. These occurrences were never seen by any of Cormanthyr’s Allies, so they were not recorded as lore, though the aftermath of some battles is still seen today in blasted patches of bare rock amidst the forest. Despite much investigation, neither the Army of Darkness nor Cormanthyr’s Allies ever discovered the new phaerimm lairs, which made them difficult to eradicate. Known even to fewer scholars, a small band of sharn pursued the escaped phaerimm a decade later, establishing holds within some deep subterranean vaults, tombs, and lost libraries of Uvaeren.

The Forest’s Fangs

A.K.A.: The Slingwar, Pipeweed’s Mettle

Dates: Midsummer—Eleasias 2

Victor: Cormanthyr’s Allies

This battle, while hardly considered a major conflict by the elves or the war in general, is of interest as the sole conflict where no allies were lost but the Army of Darkness suffered setbacks. The allies were four groups of halfling scouts, armed merely with slings, spears, and trip wires. Attacking from under cover, they managed to harass and slay over four entire squadrons of ogres and orcs and another march of mezzoloths and flinds! Even more amazing than their lack of casualties was the fact that the Army of Darkness never once uncovered their enemy, which excelled at fighting from among the branches and from underbrush!

Duathamper

A.K.A.: The Halt; the Treants’ Trial

Dates: Eleasias 12-19

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: The Swordsmen Scarlet, the Moonlit Maids, the Verdant Banner, and ten other groups of adventurers

This merely marked the halt and stand the Army of Darkness took at the former sylvan elf village of Duathamper. With multiple regiments, battalions, and legions coming together here, they rally and resist the harassing elves (especially their dragons and other flying cavalry). Over a dozen adventuring groups under the Akh’Vaelahr command die heroically in this battle, and more than a battalion of the enemy died due to their efforts.

The Elven Court Crusade

A.K.A.: Lighting the Darkwoods, Ogres’ Rampage

Dates: Kythorn 1-14

Victor: None; Cormanthyr’s forces retreat from the spider-riddled ruins and entrench themselves in the southwestern region of the Darkwoods.

This was not a battle against the Army of Darkness, though it’s considered part of the Weeping War, as its importance would be

clear within the next two campaigns. After the entrenchment of Army of Darkness at Oloriil and Duathamper, Arms-Captain Hachaam Selorn and a number of forces were sent to the Darkwoods to this crusade. These were the first concerted attempts by the elves to reclaim the old capital and holy city of Elven Court in the midst of the Darkwoods. Given the large number of refugees and folk displaced in Cormanthyr due to the war, they needed to restore Elven Court as the realm's capital in case they did not protect Myth Drannor. The elves themselves abandoned hope after a tenday of occupying the city and later did not enter the city ruins. Instead, they patrolled the Darkwoods while their leaders planned how to cleanse the city of its millennia-long corruption by fell drow magic.

The Shadowtop Skirmishes

A.K.A.: The Holding War, the Twixt-Court Conflicts, Detente Darkness

Dates: Eleint 3-Marpenoth 9

Victor: Inconclusive; this series of skirmishes among border troops and patrols was won equally by both the forces of the Army of Darkness and Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies, even though little territory was conquered and merely acted as an attrition on both sides' troops.

Campaign #5: The Dawn Fronts Campaign

A.K.A.: "The Eastern Front"; The Spiders' Truce Wars, The Battles Above and Below

Location: Eastern forest, including the Darkwoods and Old Elven Court

Time: Eleint 712-Alturiak 713 (133 days)

Campaign Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Despite the great advances made against the Army of Darkness, the Allies of Cormanthyr lost their momentum in this campaign, allowing the Army to re-establish some entrenchments closer to the capital. This was not an organized campaign, since it broke up into many skirmishes and a few isolated sub-campaigns, the two largest and most noted of which are below.

The Second Elven Court Crusade: The Clash at the Duelists' Arena, the Spiders' Assault, the Battle of Temples' Blight, the Four-Front War, and the Starsdark Clashes are the quintet of battles that all took place exclusively within the ruins of Old Elven Court. These battles comprised the so-called Second Elven Court Crusade, and they all operated under the Spiders' Truce (detailed under the next chapter on the "Clandestine Campaigns"), which saw the first major alliance of drow and elves against a greater foe (a feat never seen since). Despite this title, they were really unrelated battles and one front of the Dawn Fronts Campaign whose only common ground was their setting among the Elven Court ruins. The primary tactic of the elf armies was to drive the Army of Darkness into the ruins and hold them there. This tactic either would see them destroyed by the spiders and other monsters therein or they would inadvertently aid the elves in clearing out the spiders and destroying the *gates* that had spawned these monsters and corrupted the Darkwoods for millennia.

The Three Greenwing Wars: These three battles were so named for their primary ally, a spelljamming elf man-o-war ship! Responding to a magical plea for help from a grounded ally among Cormanthyr's wizards, the Elven Imperial Fleet of Realm-space sent Captain Oncith Ilbenalu (NPC) to aid the elves with his green crystalline-winged man-o-war battlecraft, the *Monarch Mordent*, and his trusted crew of bards, wizards, and crack archers. Dominating the three battles in which it participated, the

Monarch provided air cover and heavy weaponry with its ballistae and catapult that aided the ground troops immeasurably. In fact, its arrival changed the tide of the war in the northern forest and gave outmatched and outnumbered elves some significant victories. With the Third Greenwing War, Captain Oncith's pride overcame his sense as he maneuvered too close to the treetops and the Army of Darkness forces that his helmsman could not maneuver effectively. When Gaulguth the nycaloth flew skyward, there was little beyond ineffectual missile fire to stop him from using his great axe *Heartcleaver* to shatter one of the ship's wings at its base! With the magical shock slaying the helmsman immediately, the *Monarch Mordent* crashed into the trees and atop nearly 200 members of the Army of Darkness. Since that lost battle, the photosynthetic wings continued to grow, and large crystalline webworks wrapped around the clearings and the trees in this northern glade now called Monarch's Fall Glade. While most animals shun the amber-and-emerald crystal webs and walls, many elves used this as a redoubt and shelter both during and long after the war.

The Sunhigh Screams

A.K.A.: The Victory of Lord Selvax the Seven-Clawed

Dates: Eleint 22

Victor: Army of Darkness

Clash at the Duelists' Arena

A.K.A.: The Missing Missiles War

Dates: Marpenoth 17

Victor: Inconclusive; the Army of Darkness kept allied forces on the run and managed to encamp within the city, but the alliance cemented by this battle increased the size of the allied forces at Elven Court by more than double, even after the battle's losses!

This battle marked the official start of the Spiders' Truce among the drow forces of House Dhuurniv and the mixed forces of elves and adventurers at Elven Court. Much to the distaste of the elf commanders, the senior officer of the elf forces, the Arfaern Aolis Ildacer (and also the secret commander of the N'Vaelahr) supported this alliance and held his offended officers in check by force of will after the loss of an entire sphere of Akh'Faer to the Battalion Infernal due to conflicting commands that fought the drow as well. After a strategic retreat through a crumbling arena, the Infernals were set upon by drow-placed monsters unleashed upon them from the labyrinths beneath the arena, including a young deep dragon controlled magically by Lady Laele Dhuurniv. While this did not defeat the forces of the mezzoloth General Mraochad, it did delay them long enough for the allies to entrench and hold the Battalion Infernal within the Duelists' Arena.

The First Greenwing War

A.K.A.: Eclipse of the Monarch

Dates: Uktar 6-9

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: The First Copse of Khaalindaan; the Shadowshowl flind tribe, the Snowblooding orc tribe

The Spiders' Assault

A.K.A.: Crusaders' Charge

Dates: Uktar 15-17

Victor: Army of Darkness

The Second Greenwing War

A.K.A.: Battle of Year's Revenge
Dates: The Feast of the Moon
Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

A bloodthirsty conflict, all the spellcasters among the allies unleashed their most devastating magic about the northern forest in this battle, both in anger at the anniversary of the war's start and in frustration and fear at the overwhelming numbers arrayed against them, even with the support of the elven man-o-war overhead. While numbers were never measured, many guessed that each elf who stood against the Army of Darkness that day slew 15 foes (or many more, if you asked boastful veterans years later)! As they adapted their tactics versus their many magically resistant foes, they learned to use fire spells to selectively burn the forest or topple huge trees into their advancing lines.

Battle of Temples' Blight

A.K.A.: Crusaders' Cry
Dates: Nightal 12-14
Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

From the elves' point of view, this was the most successful of the battles of the Elven Court Crusade, as it drove the enemy right where they wanted—into the Creator's House! Once there, the mezzoloths, orcs, and hobgoblins had to destroy the drow-crafted web-gate at great cost for their own survival, a task the elves had never been able to accomplish across the years. While the Lady Dhuurniv suspected Arfaern Ildacer of treachery with this shift in the tide of battle, she could not prove that he had planned this, as the nighttime battle shifted this far east in the city and around the temples due to the late mobilization of her own right flank. Despite a desire to preserve the gate on the drows' part and an equal desire by the elves to preserve the temple, they managed through spellcraft and siege weaponry to destroy the Creator's House, collapsing it in upon the trapped marches of the Infernal!

Battle for the Naga's Rock

A.K.A.: Battle of Burrowsdeath, Bladesingers' Fall
Dates: Nightal 14-15
Victor: Army of Darkness
Major Deaths: Major Khyor of the Knife-Nagas

A minor clash between both other battles during this campaign, a few bands of elf refugees were forced to take a stand at a rising clearing in the south-central woods, at a place known as Harpers' Rock. The Knife-Nagas March, led by the gargantuan ogre Major Khyor, slaughtered many elves and others after swiftly engulfing and killing the seven bladesingers and twelve Akh'Velehr guardians. Of the 200 travelers caught by the wandering ogre and orc patrol, only 14 elves escaped to safety to the south amid the Tangled Vale.

The Four-Front War

A.K.A.: Crusaders' Triumph
Dates: Nightal 23-24
Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies
Major Deaths: Ilmra R'diin, Tasima Maelloer (two major drow commanders who helped hold the Truce together with Lady Dhuurniv); Shaalth Aeson Haergent, Arfaern Khiiral M'Haaren, Nikerym Volar "Ironfist" Honedaxe; Captain Kroen, Major Cvrqx, Colonel Pulyk, Colonel R'Fvull, Colonel Ilghimm (all mezzoloth commanders)

The Third Greenwing War

A.K.A.: Monarch's Descent
Dates: Hammer 25
Victor: Army of Darkness
Major Deaths: The Monarch Mordent with nearly all hands; Major Arl Q'Naep and three parties of the Spearsharp March of the First Regiment Imperious.

The Starsdark Clashes

A.K.A.: "The Light in Darkness," Xundusargh ("Victory by Strength-at-arms" in drow), Dhuurniv's Passing
Dates: Midwinter's Night-Alturiak 1
Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies; however, the death toll is still high for the allies, as the Spiders' Truce dissolves into mayhem and treachery.
Major Deaths: Arfaern Aolis Ildacer, Lady Laele Dhuurniv; the Battalion Infernal; the Spiders' Truce

Starsdark marks the final battle against the Army of Darkness with the city limits of Elven Court. The remainder of the Battalion Infernal was pinned down in isolated areas across the ruins, unable to communicate between squadrons, and actually outnumbered for the first time since the war began. As the slaughter began and the Infernals began to rout, the allies saw imminent victory and a dying need for the alliance between them. Despite the truce, old hatreds flared as their fear of the Army dimmed, and a number of troops both elf and drow took to battling each other, pitching the allies into utter chaos. The Last Marches (Crossbones March and Flaming Gehenna's March) survived and fled north to Oloriil, though they might not have survived at all if the Spiders' Truce had not been treacherously broken. As the truce fell to tatters, Lady Dhuurniv drew a poisoned blade and slew Aolis Ildacer where he stood, and he raised no hand against her as he believed in honoring his vow and truce. As Aolis slipped away slowly in agonizing pain, his wife Amara drew her ancient scimitar Midnight's Moon and executed the drow matron and her two honor guards (with one sweeping stroke through all their middles if one song is to be believed!).

Campaign #6: The Great Friends Crusade

A.K.A.: Ar'Sha'Quessir Karyth (elven title), Usal-Keryth ("The Chasing War"); the Defenders' Crusade
Location: Northeastern, central, and eastern forest; Myth Drannor's outposts and mythal
Time: Hammer-Greengrass 713 (102 days)
Campaign Victor: Cormanthyr/Allies (Sha'Quessir)

While this campaign in no way saw a withdrawal of elf forces from the Allies of Cormanthyr, the actions and heroism of the non-elves of the forest dominated the battles. Even the most biased and isolationist elves saw their disdain become respect for their allies in the Usal-Keryth. In fact, the majority of the victories for the Allies came from the N'Tel'Quess, since their proactive approach to combat forced the enemy back whereas the elf holding actions merely delayed the inevitable.

Rallies among all the armies saw this campaign as a teetering balance of power, as either side could be construed as the winners at any given time. However, with the final decisive battles at Shadusk Glade, the Great Friends Crusade finally showed the nycaloths (and the elves themselves) that Cormanthyr's non-elf allies were formidable foes when they were crossed and when they had a cause for which to fight. Unorthodox and decidedly non-elven tactics that once had elf commanders pulling their hair out now helped keep the Army of Darkness off balance.

The Carnage at Satyr's Clearing

A.K.A.: Chaos at the Clearing of Haunting Pipes

Dates: Hammer 21

Victor: Cormanthyr's Allies

This battle prevented the reforming of the full Army north of Myth Drannor, pushing them east and a bit farther north.

Snowsblood Trail

A.K.A.: Rylsshah's Bleeding

Dates: Hammer 25

Victor: Cormanthyr's Allies

Major Deaths: Rylsshah the Centaur tribal chief

Due to horrific reports from some refugees passing through their lands, earnest forces from the surrounding Dales and a minor force of wizards from Cormyr collected near the Standing Stone and forged north toward Myth Drannor. This running battle along their move north helped keep the Army of Darkness east and north of the city by denying its commanders the intelligence and reports of ambushed Army parties.

Icingblades

A.K.A.: Skylmshar's Shattering, Contest at Skylmshar Pool

Dates: Midwinter's Day

Victor: Inconclusive; Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies split the encamped forces of the Army of Darkness, forcing them east and south once more, but incurred heavy losses in the infantry and the Wing and Claw cavalry.

The Winterclaws War

A.K.A.: Battle of Miasmatic Corpses, Crimsonsnow Steaming, the Crushed Circle Cope

Dates: Alturiak 5-6

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: The 3rd Circle of the Hawkwing

Despite some lost skirmishes and routing of smaller groups, the Army of Darkness reunited many of its scattered groups at this cope south of Myth Drannor. The few forces that refused to give ground to the nycaloths soon became trapped between assembling forces and only five Akh'Faern survived.

Standing Stone's Blood

A.K.A.: Vow Stone's Defense

Dates: Alturiak 30

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Colonel Arak "Blazebeard," the green dragons Praelorisstan and Agoshyrvor the Verdant

This battle, the last to involve non-Cormanthans in the Weeping War, was the only conflict ever to take place at the clearing around the Standing Stone. Despite their best efforts, many scouts and N'Vaelahr agents died before they could report the movements of a number of Darkness factions. They managed to unite south and east of the Standing Stone, though at least six of their "slain" N'vaelahr managed to get word to Arms-Captain Selorn in Myth Drannor, so resistance forces could be assembled before they reached the city again. The two groups met at the Standing Stone, to find that the commanding fire giant colonel had conscripted two young green dragons to their side to counter the silver and electrum dragon allies of the elves. United with the Dalesmen and Cormyreans of the Snowsblood Trail, Cormanthyr's forces held the day thanks to the masterful strategies of Captain Selorn.

Dysrisa's Fall

A.K.A.: The Shadowtop Storming, (Battle of) Five Fells

Dates: Ches 15-18

Victor: Army of Darkness

The Bestial Dawn

A.K.A.: Halaster's Payback (as known to the Beast-Tamers)

Dates: Ches 28

Victor: Inconclusive; the Cormanthan Allies fled, while the Army of Darkness remained to fight numerous monsters and claim the ground.

Major Deaths: Khaasxarax the Slayer Ebon

The Bestial Dawn saw a relatively minor skirmish of the war become a major encounter against monsters. Hundreds of monsters suddenly appeared between the ranks of two closing squadrons at the Grove of Seven Shadowtops, not to mention an awakened dragon of local infamy. The elves and their allies, once vastly outnumbered, used the monsters as distractions and fled with minimal casualties as the barely organized orcs and hobgoblins fell to two young black dragons, a tribe of ettins, and other creatures. The battle considered a victory for the allies (only by the winnowing of the Army of Darkness), it still introduced more dangers and problems into Cormanthyr. Over 150 monsters (not including the Army of Darkness) still roamed the central forests of Cormanthyr for years after that.

One of the few major kills claimed by the Cormanthan Allies was the death of Khaasxarax, an ancient black dragon whose slumber was disturbed while the early part of the battle raged. As the hulking black dragon emerged from its once-bramble-covered cave, he began feeding on both armies voraciously. Desperately, as Khaasxarax spewed his acid breath upon a party of hobgoblins, the married human wizards Agym the Crimson and Thena R'Tamaal summoned water elementals from a nearby stream and forced them into the dragon's nose and mouth to flood its lungs and drown it! With the huge dragon's corpse as a temporary redoubt, the allies managed to flee the battle with fewer losses than without such protection.

Hunt of the Tribes

A.K.A.: Hunt of the Hoovesharp, the Centaur-Slaughter

Dates: Tarsakh 16

Victor: Army of Darkness

Shadusk Glade

A.K.A.: Detente at Shadusk, Gaulguth's Cost, Symrustar's Mirthless Laugh

Dates: Greengrass

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Symrustar Auglamyr; Malimshaer the Nycaloth

This was the battle that formed the near-legendary Line of Light against the Army of Darkness: the first front of elves and N'Tel'Quess truly unified among soldiers, commanders, and all allies. This line held against seven times their own number to hold the Army of Darkness away from Semberholme. In fact, they even pushed the front a bit farther east of Myth Drannor and held this position of strength until the Waning Wars!

The Battle at Shadusk Glade has many songs and accounts that help explain their successes, especially in terms of the magical support. With two mythaleashes flanking the main battle site, Captain Selorn's tactics forced many ogres and mezzoloths through the extended mythal, and the elves' strength therein caused them to panic and *teleport* randomly away from battle. Most significantly, both Malimshaer and Gaulguth the nycaloths

were on hand for this battle, and both suffered grievously at the hands of the enraged and powerful elf Chosen of Mystra, Symrustar Auglamyr and a battery of wizard-allies whose names are still mysteriously hidden. Using her silver fire and their mastery of spells, they managed to wound Gaulguth and cost him both his left arm and left eye!

Seeing the battle falter, Malimshaer put the legions in retreat, but he managed to capture Symrustar as the retreat began. Disdainfully treating her as a toy to one his size, he held her tight in his hands, intending her as a hostage and believing her powerless without the chance to move her hands. Symrustar merely looked into his eyes, smiled, chuckled hollowly, and erupted into flames, stabbing beams of fire from her eyes into Malimshaer's and incinerating his claws with silver fire as well. Malimshaer's attempts to drop her and flee only took the battle high above the forest, where they soon vanished from sight, only the silver flames visible as they exploded for hundreds of yards. Malimshaer's seared skull and ribcage fell at Captain Selorn's feet, and other remains dropped onto the battlefield, though no remains of Symrustar were ever reported (though the Captain found in his hand at the end of the battle Symrustar's Choker, which she vowed would leave her only at her death).

Campaign #7: The Mezzoloth Marches

A.K.A.: "The Magic Wars"; Scavenger Wars; "Sixth Crown War"

Location: Northern and northwestern Cormanthor

Time: Eleasias–Marpenoth (2nd tenday) 713 (73 days)

Campaign Victor: Army of Darkness

This is the worst campaign for Cormanthyr up until the last campaigns with the Fall, as they lost many scout troops and much ground, but worse was the claiming of ancient artifacts and tombs by the Army of Darkness. Despite a few victories at great cost, Cormanthyr's Allies lost this campaign due both to poor command decisions and their enemies' use of their own storehouses of magical items.

This campaign is called the "Sixth Crown War" by some moon elf and green elf historians, after the untimely death of Arkérym Eldar Echorn (LN gold em F12/W12; Int 19, Wis 18), the commander of the Fourth Legion, at Vuatilmaar. After their superior's death and that of the Second and Third Regiments, the three lesser elf commanders spent more time at each others' throats over command and social protocols than on the battles. The three arykérym and their predominantly elf Akh'Velehr regiments were respectively gold, moon, and green elves. Despite the nobility of Arykérym Kyrtaar Ammath (LG moon em F21; Str 17, Con 17, the sole warrior-son of Matriarch Puorlaas Ammath) or the 36 years of seniority of Arykérym Pollae "Swiftsprint" (LN green ef R22; Str/Dex/Con 18) among the officers, the haughty and spoiled Arykérym Iolas Eyriendor (CG gold em F17) believed he had the right to promote himself to Arkérym rank, having claimed Eldar Echorn's sword (and his being a gold elf and thus above the others).

Their commanders' internal squabbles and jockeying for power saw many field officers suddenly having to make command decisions that cost them more troops than were necessary, had there been command coordination among the brigades and regiments in battle. More troops were lost in perimeter skirmishes and patrol ambushes (even some by friendly fire), since no central coordination of scouts and patrols left gaps in the encamped legion's defenses. While outright warfare never existed among these troops, neither did cooperation and unity, which were needed against their enemies: the Vindakkar battalion under the direct command of General Vulnoss, the sole yagnoloth officer among the entire Army of Darkness and former brow-beaten second under Commander Malimshaer.

32 • Crucial Campaigns

The Pillaging of Vuatilmaar

Dates: Eleasias 1

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Arkérym Eldar Echorn and the 2nd and 3rd regiments of the Fourth Legion Akh'Velehr

The Battle of Three Arrows

A.K.A.: Jvoll's Folly, Four Penaals' Loss

Dates: Eleasias 8

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Penaal Jhiilsraa, Penaal Ainésilver, Penaal Eloen "Blackbow," Penaal Akkar Tarsis; Fourth Regiment of the Vindakkar and its Colonel Jvoll

Penaal Akkar Tarsis, a green elf ranger of the Rystallimar Brigade, might have led the troops to victory by sheer will and fervor, as every move he and his brigade made mowed down near-whole squadrons of the enemy! However, the battle's name comes from the three arrows that pierced Akkar's throat and ended his life, just as he was standing atop a downed hill giant and rallying the Alliance troops with a wild war-whoop. Despite the Rystallimar Brigade's advances, conflicted and conservative commanders began to fall back and accede defeat. This was a dispiriting trend that continued for the next month.

The Star Staves Defense

A.K.A.: Iolrath's Plundering, Faern'keryth'Iolramhaor ("the Magical war at Iolrath's Tomb")

Dates: Eleint 9

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Trasaal the Gold Mage (Court Mage and Councilor), Arykérym Kyrtaar Ammath; Major Uikh, General Vulnoss and the 5th Regiment Vindakkar

Acting on diviners' foreknowledge, Trasaal the Gold Mage and a number of Akh'Faer arrived among the Fourth Legion's encampments to battle the Army of Darkness at a former High Mage's tomb before they could plunder it. Ignoring much of the squabbling among the lesser officers, the human Trasaal made it quite clear to all concerned that he would censure all of them upon the end of the battle, much to their disgust over being commanded by a human, Councilor or not. Trasaal took Kyrtaar Ammath and his Ruehaaliir Regiment into battle with the Akh'Faer forces at the far northwestern site that once belonged to the realm of Rystall Wood. While this was considered a victory in that they defeated the ogre Major Uikh and his Hideousaber March and kept Iolrath's tomb sacrosanct, their two senior officers were likewise destroyed. The true heroines of this battle were the Akh'Faer of Faeruil Ara's Line: Eight brave wizardesses armed with various magical staves (including two staves of the magi) held the Hideousaber March at bay while the central spellcasters of their brigade reinforced the magical barriers about the tomb.

The Sudden Storm

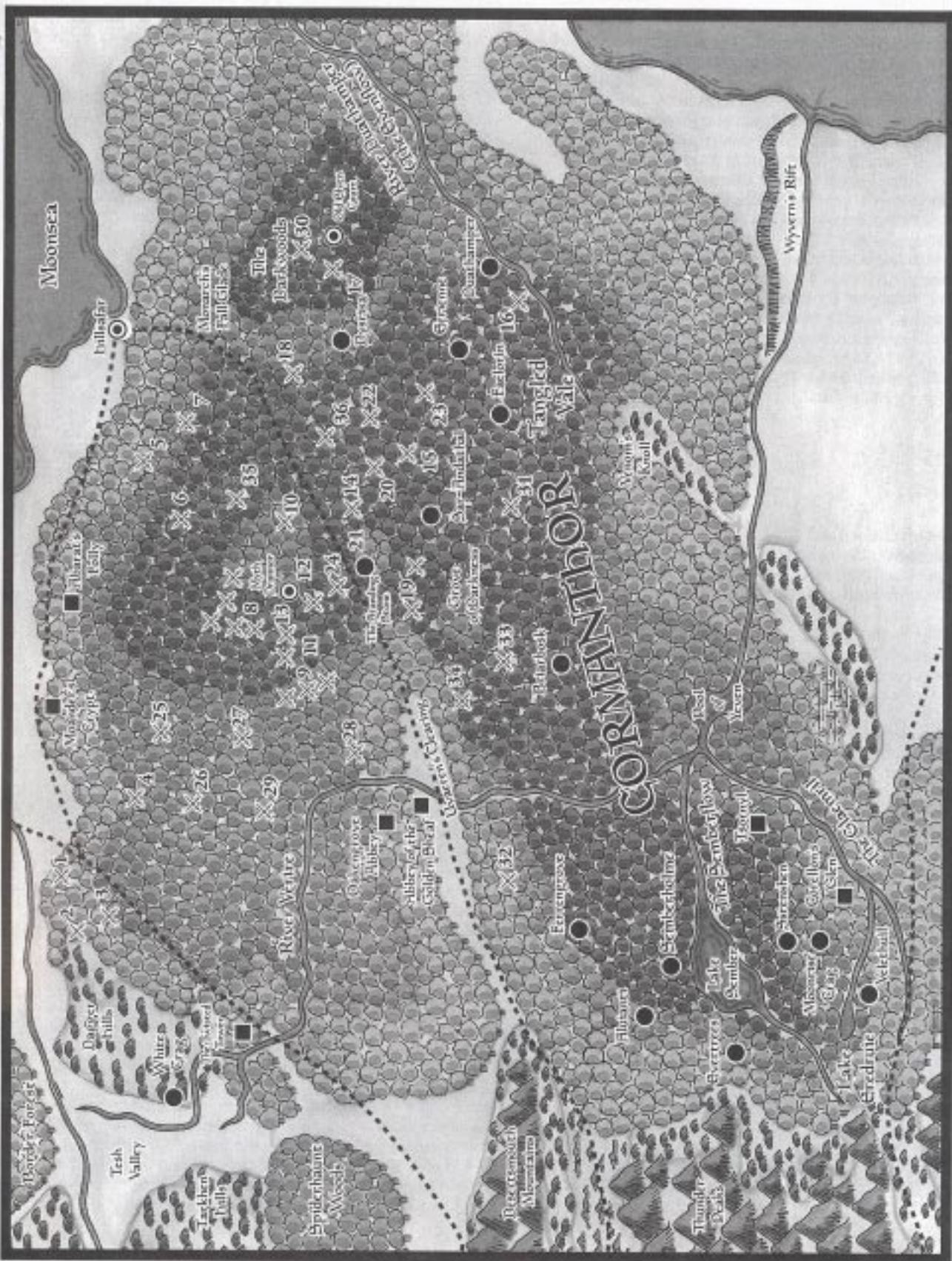
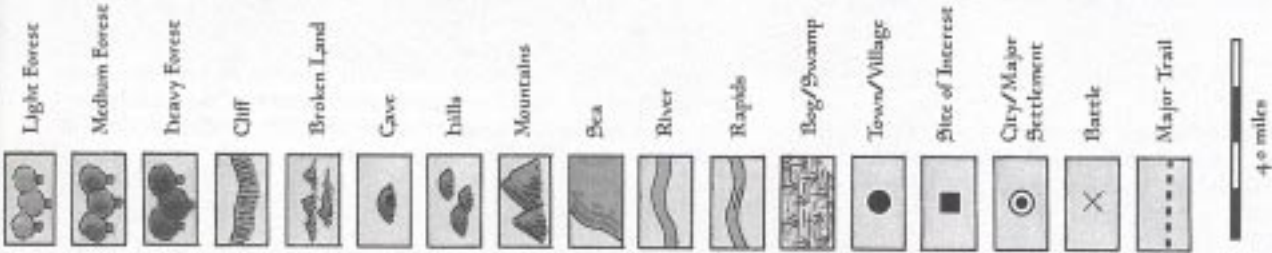
A.K.A.: The Vaults' Valiants, Uvaeren's Star

Dates: Eleint 19

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Ualair the Silent; Captain Olqyvk (N'Vaelahrn Rhymallos)

While this battle is now considered a major one of this campaign and a win by the Allies, none of the Fourth Legion's troops ever set foot in it; for the full story, see the next chapter on the "Clandestine Campaign."



Battles of the Weeping War: The battles keyed on the map of Cormanthor above are numbered in relative chronological order. Not all the battles of the war are recorded on the map; these are either placed too closely to other battle sites or they take place within the cities of Old Elven Court or Myth Drannor.

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Pylae's Snare | 7. Oloril | 13. Dragon's Grove | 19. Snowshlood Trail | 25. Vvautilnaar | 31. Wyvern's Crest |
| 2. Kerymit's Holding | 8. Towers Falling | 14. Briarsbarble | 20. Wintereclaws War | 26. Battle of 3 Arrows | 32. Thorn Gulch |
| 3. Yethaeneb's Pyre | 9. Norredark Skirmishes | 15. Bar-Fredaebal's Siege | 21. Stranding Stone's Blood | 27. Iobraith's Tomb | 33. Hanging Tree Grove |
| 4. Sullia's Glade | 10. Miel Melars | 16. Duathhammer | 22. Dyrstai's Fall | 28. Vaultes of Uvaarren | 34. Car's Eye Glade |
| 5. Garnet's Pyre | 11. Crystal Coup | 17. 2nd Elven Court Crusade | 23. Bestial Dawn | 29. Trohillaarn | 35. Clochair's Ridge |
| 6. Twilight's Falling | 12. Battle of Three Chosen | 18. Greenwing Wars | 24. Shadusk Glade | 30. The Lost Trench | 36. Ordali's Glade |

The Tomb Wars of Trohiilaern

A.K.A.: The Battle of Running Rocks, the Rout of the Griffonwing, the Trenches at Trohiilaern, “Dying among the Dead,” the War of Artifacts-Lost, the Seven Rings Raid, the Sundering of the Ruby Rod

Dates: Marpenoth 9-12

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Faerna Airtail Tromostar (Akh’Faern illusionist officer and gnome Councilor), Faernil Wyqhael Maerdrym (3rd son of the House, lesser Akh’Faern officer)

The Fourth Legion finally received reinforcements of both cavalry and Akh’Faer magic, and Artair Tromostar overruled the petty arykéym and took command of the remnants of the Fourth Legion. In fact, rather than face court-martial proceedings after the war, the craven Iolas Eyriendor fled Cormanthor with the arrival of the reinforcements, never to return to the forest or the War (and his fate remains unknown even today). Still, despite some masterful strategies and a final coalescing of the allied forces, the Army of Darkness had taken the measure of the troops and knew just where to hit them. Of course, they’d also found the time to unearth the Tombs of Trohiilaern, plunder the magical treasures, and learn how best to use them in the month before this final battle. While casualties were far lower than they might have been, the gnomish Councilor and a number of other, far more competent officers fell during the four-day assault among the opened and desecrated tombs.

Campaign #8: The Darkwoods Conflict

A.K.A.: “Reclamation of the East”

Location: Eastern forest; Darkwoods

Time: Feast of the Moon 713-Midwinter 714 (62 days)

Campaign Victor: Cormanthyr’s Elves/Allies

Another of the long campaigns that produced more skirmishes and smaller frays than major battles, the Darkwoods Conflict was important for the destruction visited upon the Army of Darkness. In all, among the many skirmishes and the three primary battles, the Army of Darkness lost more than two battalions (a total of more than 30,000 soldiers) in the two months of this campaign, including their nycaloth field commander Gaulguth!

Faoraar’s Grove

A.K.A.: (Battle of) Leaves Falling

Dates: Feast of the Moon-Nightal 1

Victor: Cormanthyr’s Elves

Major Deaths: Ievos Ulondarr (commander of the Eagle Wing cavalry, including the Griffonwing platoon)

The Keening Woods Conflict

A.K.A.: Banshee’s Wail, the Lost Ladies’ Revenge

Dates: Nightal 30-Hammer 1

Victor: Cormanthyr’s Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Major Tholbinn “Bloodstone” and the Bloodstone’s March

Strangely enough, the allies won this battle even without their participation. Many scouts heard the telltale wails of banshees south of their positions and logically avoided the area, even as they tracked the Army of Darkness to that position. After dawn on the first day of the new year, some scouts came upon the Bloodstone’s March and their famous half-giant ogre commander,

all dead of fright or from fearsome claw marks all over their bodies. None of this march escaped a lonely grove of long-dead phandar trees, as the elf scouts counted over 600 confirmed dead at the hands of untold numbers of banshees.

The Lost Trench

A.K.A.: Gaulguth’s Bane, Fall of the Fearsome Front, Eight Hammers’ Strike, Dumathoin’s Hammer, (Battle of) Fletching Green, the Darkness Charge

Dates: Hammer 29-Midwinter’s Dawn

Victor: Cormanthyr’s Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Anthan Narlgold, son of Jhax; Gaulguth the Nycaloth, the Agonists, Tormentaer, and Painful battalions of the First Legion

One of the greatest battles of the entire Weeping War, the strategies and tactics for this battle had been planned since the Four Fronts War of the previous year with the discovery of old diplomatic-access tunnels from Sarphil under the Old Elven Court ruins. As the Army of Darkness had driven many of the drow from the tunnels, they were empty and ready to be rigged for traps to use against the yugoloths and their allied hordes. In fact, most encounters of the Darkwoods Conflict aimed at driving a large force of the Army of Darkness to this area just north of the ruins, close to the Garrison of Fletching Green.

After much harrying and taunting, Gaulguth the Berserker and much of his main army were drawn within the Darkwoods by rumors of more magic, an encamped elf army weakened by drow attacks, and an alleged ancient red wyrm awakened by the fray and wishing to join them. As the nine regiments marched toward the Elven Court, they were met by a long succession of preset spells, traps, and elf archers. For most of the first day and night of battle, harassment tactics and delays of this sort were used by the Allies against the three battalions of Darkness as they closed toward the temple city. By the first light of dawn on the last day of the Year of the Firedrake, Gaulguth and his forces had lost all patience and strategy—exactly as planned by the Allies—and merely charged forward the remaining miles.

With the Army of Darkness bearing down in a charge, a long line of 40 humans, dwarves, centaurs, and half-elves (the strongest members of the Allied army assembled there, further size- and strength-enhanced by magic) stood, hidden by the fleeting darkness and a blind of leaves and brambles. Each stood at a 7’-long mithral spike that glimmered in their torchlight, and they waited. When the enemy’s charge was in hearing range, the dwarf drummers behind the line began pounding a rhythm, and the spikers stood their ground. When the Army of Darkness broke through the trees 200 yards north of them, the drums still pounded and the spikers waited, each with a massive mallet ready. As the horde closed the gap swiftly, the Allies stood ready without fear.

When they reached a certain point, a flaming arrow arced high over the battlefield. The dwarves’ drums sounded once, twice, thrice, and then a thunderous boom accompanied their final beat as the spikers all slammed their mithral spikes into the ground in unison. This collapsed the old tunnels to Sarphil along a mile-long front before them, creating a 150’-deep and 90’-wide pit! Unable to break their charge, most of the Army’s battalions were slain within moments, whether buried beneath the rock and soil collapsing beneath and behind them, impaled upon their comrades’ spears, or merely crushed beneath the weight of the charging troops that fell atop them!

Gaulguth, at the head of that charge, erupted from beneath the hundreds of his slain troops, roaring in outrage and fury as he strove to free himself and fly across the gap to battle. Without a second’s thought, the half-human, half-dwarf son of Clan Chief Jhax Narlgold ripped the driven-home mithral spike from the wall of the pit. Using his own strength and weight, Anthan Narlgold,

heir of Clan Narlgold, threw himself directly down at the still-partially trapped Gaulguth, roared a challenge at the fearsome nycaloth to gain his attention, and impaled the field commander fully through the heart and vitals with the 7'-long solid mithral spike! The roar of victory from the Allied ranks was soon drowned out by horror, as the first fingers of dawn reflected off the ichor- and gore-covered metal of the great axe *Heartcleaver*. With a blood-bubbling roar of fury, the dying nycaloth swung it high and sank the axe through the dwarf, splitting his slayer in twain as he died.

Still, Anthan's heroism and the plans and strategies of Captain Selorn, Battlemaster Vuth Steelire, and Clan Chief Jhax Narlgold broke the back of that army. Only two marches of the last regiment of the Darkness charge escaped this battle alive, as archers' fire and magic picked off most as they attempted to flee. The other enemies, if they survived the pit and clambered up their fallen comrades and the pit walls, met their deaths at the hands of a wall of axes, swords, and strafing magic. In all, it took nearly two full days before all enemies before Captain Selorn's army were gone or dead. With only a few heroic sacrifices, the Allies had slain more than 20,000 enemies with almost one collective swing of 40 hammers!

Campaign #9: The Third Court Crusade

A.K.A.: "Restoration of Elven Court"; the Seldarine Soldiers' Marches

Location: Darkwoods and Old Elven Court ruins

Time: Hammer-Alturiak 714 (29 days)

Campaign Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

With more than one-half of the Army of Darkness slain in the Lost Trench battle, Aulmpiter pulled back most of his forces to regroup and plan, allowing the allies a brief cease-fire. Not one to waste precious time, Captain Selorn and the victorious Lost Trench Legion (as his eastern army now titled itself) took to clearing out the last monsters from Old Elven Court. With most of the drow's corruptive influence smashed, it was a simple matter to drive many of the monsters out of the city. With only three battles of any note among this campaign's activities, it was the sole window of peace in two years.

As the monster populations of the Darkwoods dwindled, some brilliant rangers and wizards used the Trench's fallen foes to deplete the monsters. As they were attracted to the smell of the carrion (magically brought closer than ten miles from the city), it was only a matter of either keeping the monsters in the Trench as they feasted on the dead or slaying the bloated beasts after they had eaten. Many were later destroyed along with the carrion by the greatest funeral pyre ever seen on Faerûn since the Dark Disaster! Oil and fallen trees were strategically placed within the morass to burn the rotting remains, and after it was lit, wizards and illusionists monitored the pyre for nine days and kept the smell, the smoke, and much of the light of the pyre low so it would not attract dragons or other scavengers.

The Cleansing and the Night of the *Highfire Crown*

With the removal of the monsters, Elven Court was deemed safe once more. As an essential step in removing all taints of the drow and other fell creatures from the site, the 13 surviving High Mages of Cormanthyr returned from their support work at Sembholme, where they protected the young and old of Cormanthyr during the height of the War. All of them performed the Cleansing rituals that eroded all the elder remnants of Elven Court and restored the natural balance of the site. Indeed, their ritual had

far greater scope than many realized was possible, as it extended throughout the Darkwoods, clearing away the taint in nearly all areas and brought the land back in harmony with the Weave and the rest of Cormanthor. And their magic did not stop there; the High Mages immediately (within the same tenday) began to weave a mythal about Elven Court.

Just as it was when Mythanthor wove a mythal around Myth Drannor, the 13 principals were wreathed in arcane fires, though they smiled broadly as the flames engulfed them and turned them all into living torches. Instead of exploding, the central caster rose high into the sky and became first a gargantuan bird of fire whose wings spread out over the cleared area of the city. Where the bird's wings touched the rising pillars of flame that were his fellow casters, magic pulsed in all directions, causing the very trees and rocks to twist and merge and become homes for the elves. Soon, the bird of flame began expanding into the mythal itself, enveloping the growing buildings and magical temples rising from the soil. As the sun set over Elven Court aborning, the image of the central caster appeared as a fiery apparition high above the city. The thirteen High Mages-turned-fiery pillars unexpectedly erupted, lancing in flaming bolts toward the Grand Caster and creating a massive ball of fire that splashed at the peak and edges of the mythal.

When the firestorm subsided, nothing remained of any of the High Mages save a beautiful sight: a brand-new mythal of extraordinary strength and power, its boundaries set as a pyramid defining the city site and reflecting and enhancing the star- and moonlight. At the peak of the mythal, for those with great eyes (since this mythal did not grant the power of flight) were 13 *selu'kiira*, the lore gems of the 13 High Mages that gave their lives for this new elven capital. Surrounding each of these gems were silver and amber flames as they moved in graceful, controlled orbits that sketched out the design of a crown of seven points in trailing licks of arcane flame. Called immediately the *Highfire Crown*, the soon-to-be-legendary magic hovered high above Elven Court untouched by all for the entire night. When the dawn came, it dissolved into bright sunshine, much like the Passing of Eltargrim. Hereafter, there are no High Mages left in Cormanthyr save those that came after the Fall, and these numbered fewer than a dozen.

The Closing March

With the Army of Darkness beaten resoundingly in the east and Elven Court well on its way to restoration, Captain Hachaam Selorn left more than half the Legion of the Lost Trench here as guardians of the new elfhome and capital. In fact, due more to pressure by the elf nobles and others that had swiftly arrived to resettle the city, he left two-thirds of his forces at Elven Court, and all of these troops were either natives of the Darkwoods (like centaurs) or his elf troops. Despite their offers of help and wishes to stay, most non-elves were politely rebuked by the surviving elf Councilors and nobles who wished to limit non-elf involvement in their new capital (proving that even lessons hard-won do not always teach those unwilling to learn).

While Elven Court would not be anathema to non-elves, it was not to be a place for them to live or leave their influences, if these nobles and other gold elf refugees had their say. Unfortunately, Captain Selorn's and others' objections could not overrule the nobles until the war was over, when the proper government could be convened to debate such decisions. Thus, the Closing Marches brought the Arms-Captain and many non-elf troops back to the fray, though he fumed that "far too many elves noble by blade and battle are kept behind to assuage the fears and foibles of our so-called 'nobles.' Bah, I'd as soon feed them to Aulmpiter myself as protect them, if all they shall do is tear the realm asunder once more."

The Flaming Towers

A.K.A.: Iearbytr's Revenge, "Smoke over Sorrow"

Dates: Hammer 5

Victor: Army of Darkness

This vengeful squadron of mezzoloths sought to avenge their fallen commander, Gaulguth, and they did manage to surprise and overtake a few scout groups. Once their presence was discovered closer to the Elven Court ruins, they were surrounded, though not disarmed. Calling an Honor Battle, the mezzoloths faced the angry axes of Clan Narlgold alone, and they all fell by dusk, despite their superior magical weaponry and tactics. This battle started phrase among Cormanthans: "There is no more fearsome a sight than the eyes of a dwarf that you've robbed of his heir. Death alone stares back at ye."

The Spiders' Redoubt

A.K.A.: Stand at Temple Steps

Dates: Hammer 11-13

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

This battle against gibberlings, gargoyles, and fomorian giants only lasted this long as the Legion of the Lost Trench was spread across the entire city, trying less to slaughter monsters where they stood but drive them north and west of the city toward the Trench. On the final day, the last giant spider spun its final web in Elven Court and for the first time in millennia, the ruins were free of all drow, spiders, and other dark influences!

Falconcourt

A.K.A.: Elven Court's Clearing, the Cleansing Conflict, the Darkwoods Purge, the Spearshattering

Dates: Alturiak 1-2; A1-Ches 27 (The clearing of routed forces from the surrounding Darkwoods and the High Magic cleansing rituals occupy the rest of the month and well into the following month.)

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: General Epyv, Colonel Agos "Charnelblade," Major Rus "the Chain-Bearer"

Yet again, another two marches of the Army of Darkness (having fallen back from the main group to arc around the southern end of Elven Court) surged into the Darkwoods and Elven Court. After nearly faltering due to their unpreparedness for battle (with more than half the allied forces involved with rebuilding and resettling the city), the elves surged back with more anger than ever witnessed in battle since the Crown Wars and slew most of the mezzoloths within the first few hours of battle. This turned the orcs' and ogres' fearsome charge into a panicked rout out of Elven Court and into the eastern woods. The now-broken troops of the Army of Darkness in this part of the forest either pulled together much farther north or simply slipped away to become raiders along the Moonsea and the Dragon Reach. Still, many elves spent the next months ensuring that no other forces lay within the area.

Campaign #10: The Tanglewars

A.K.A.: "The Vale Wars"; the Southwoods War

Location: Southeastern and south-central woods

Time: Alturiak-Tarsakh 714 (56 days)

Campaign Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Most of the battles and skirmishes in this campaign involved a return to old tactics with the constant harassment of orc, mezzoloth, and ogre Army patrols (the exact tactic applied to the Allies by the Army of Darkness). The main drive behind these tactics was to keep the main enemy troops away from the restored Elven Court and the other refugee encampments and the bivouacs of the Allies of Cormanthyr.

The massive losses of the previous campaign finally forced Aulmpiter personally into battle and out of his relatively safe bunker at Oloriil. Rallying himself and the Imperious (his personal guard battalion), the nycaloth Grand Commander hit a forced march out of the northeastern forest. By the end of this campaign, the Imperious and their leader merged with the tattered (yet still numerous) remnants of the Army of Darkness at the Second Stand at Dysrisa and began the overwhelming charge that led to the Waning Wars and the Light's Last Stand at Myth Drannor.

Wyern's Crest

A.K.A.: The Sevenspears, The Barbed Spears of Wolmuc's March, the Routing of Wolmuc's March

Dates: Alturiak 22

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Major Wolmuc (flind chieftain)

Thorn Gulch

Dates: Alturiak 29-30

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

The Moonshadows made their first major appearance in the war, as they established a defensive demarcation miles north of Sembholme. They and the many sylvan elf scouts among the Tanglewoods played cat-and-mouse with some remnants of demoralized and harried Army forces, leading to the desperate battle at Thorn Gulch by the two orc tribal squadrons, which they lost due to little room for charges and a noted lack of magical firepower.

Hanging Tree Grove

A.K.A.: Strike of the Strangleweed, the Druids' Due

Dates: Ches 25

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Hanging Tree Grove was (and still remains) an area tended by sylvan elf druids and rangers, who all knew of its strangleweed and hangman's trees. They kept them relatively docile and camouflaged at all times, though when a gnoll and mezzoloth patrol wandered into its confines, the elves in hiding unleashed missile weapons on the patrol. In their panic and search for cover, the gnolls and mezzoloths agitated the carnivorous plants, which made swift work of the isolated scout parties.

The Silent Slayings

Dates: Ches 28

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies; the Army of Darkness squadrons involved in this battle all died mysteriously after invading the Vale of Lost Voices, though no forces from Myth Drannor ever engaged them!

Similar to the earlier, equally mysterious Keening Woods conflict, the allies won this battle without any active participation on their part. However, many rumors swiftly spread that this was a master stroke of the N'Vaelahr or an active conclave of Tree Spirits defending the Vale or even the spirits of the Vale itself rising to protect their holy lands from the desecrating presence of the Army of Darkness.

Venom's Knoll

A.K.A.: The Dragon's Dell, the Skirmish at Sy'Tel'Quessrhal

Dates: Tarsakh 5

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Second Stand at Dysrisa

A.K.A.: Tenyajn's Requiem, Qemba's Sorrow, the War of Ten-score Swords

Dates: Tarsakh 10

Victor: Army of Darkness against Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Kerym Tenyajn and his Moonbow Battalion; two recruited black dragon allies and four Army squadrons

As the Army of Darkness spread into the rest of Cormanthyr, Tenyajn and 200 elf warriors confronted the largest fragment of the Army just north of Dysrisa. There many elves lost their lives, but in the end routed the enemy north and west away from Elven Court. In this battle, Tenyajn and most of his soldiers were slain, but not after sending many hundreds more to their deaths as well. The high druidess of Rillifane, Qemba Willowfane (N, grn ef, Dr13), who was said to be his beloved, personally placed Tenyajn's body in the Vale of Lost Voices, where his grave is said to be beneath the largest oak tree in the forest. Afterwards, Qemba disappeared, never to be seen again.

The Battle of Vengeful Hooves

A.K.A.: Cat's Eye Glade

Dates: Tarsakh 17

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

For the first time since the War began, the satyrs of Cormanthyr gained victory against the Army of Darkness, with support and aid by the Moonshadows of Semberholme. With magic and tangled terrain to their advantage, the elves and satyrs among the Tanglewoods played the Relentless Fang's March and the Hatred's Flame March, using cat-and-mouse tactics.

Campaign #11: The Waning Wars

A.K.A.: "The Yielding Wars"; the Howling Crusade

Location: Eastern forest; Mythral

Time: Kythorn 714 (7 days)

Campaign Victor: Army of Darkness

With only two battles that can rightfully be given such a title, the long-dreaded fury of the Army of Darkness fully came into play with this campaign. Having reunified most of his army, Grand Commander Aulmpiter broke it into two primary forces whose only goal was to break suddenly from their northern path forced by the elves and charge west toward Myth Drannor. Aulmpiter knew he had strength of numbers, and he would see Myth Drannor fall beneath the thundering hordes he had assembled for that very purpose!

Despite some holding attempts from the rear by Captain Selorn and other attempts at slowing the horde, the Army of Darkness became a juggernaut in this campaign as it rumbled slowly but surely toward the City of Song. Many now see, as they could not then, that the Line of Light (ensconced since the Battle of Shadusk Glade) would have held if Captain Selorn had a more reasonable number of forces to exploit his counter-charge. Rather than pinning the two halves of the Army of Darkness between them and crushing them with finality, the Line faltered and broke, and Captain Selorn and the remnants of his Lost

Trench Legion desperately chased the Army of Darkness toward the doomed Myth Drannor.

Clochir's Ridge

A.K.A.: The Last Charge of the Wing and Horn, Last Run of the Moonherds, Final Fall at Clochir

Dates: Kythorn 11-13

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Three cavalry officers and two dragons; General Nyzhink

As the cavalry reunited for its first time in months with the return of the Wing cavalry, it might have won this ground battle had it not lost its greatest aerial conflict high above. Aulmpiter had enslaved Naxorlytaalsxar the Terror Tenebrous, a mature adult black dragon, as a "pet." This, and other wyverns and other creatures were controlled by the magical Staff of the Windrider, in the hands of the mezzloth General Nyzhink of the Imperious. The Jhyrennstar-made staff and its carrier wove a flying web of death about the surviving flights of cavalry when they didn't harass the ground forces, pulling wyverns, Naxor the black dragon, and two wandering green dragons against the pegasi and griffons and dragons.

Until the Lady Ahskahala Durothil and her gold dragon companion Garlokantha snatched the staff from Nyzhink's hold, the Wing and Claw lost more than two-thirds of their members. Once the charm of the *Windrider's Staff* was broken on Naxor and the other flying attackers, many of them scattered, their natures not suited to open warfare or risky situations. The black wyrm, however, was far more offended and vengeful, and turned on the creatures that dared enslave her. The mezzloth general was swallowed in two bites, as Naxor severed its head to ensure its death. Still, her attacks on Aulmpiter only ended a battle that had long since become a rout of the Allies. To this day, the strangely honorable black wyrm awaits a chance to repay the favor she owes to Garlokantha the gold dragon, though she isn't going out of her way to do so "for that would be wasteful of our energies."

The aftermath of battle revealed the worst. All the airborne cavalry and their riders were either sorely wounded or dead; of the dragonrider leaders, but three remained alive with five dragons among them. Despite grave misgivings, Captain Selorn allowed Lady Ahskahala Durothil to withdraw the cavalry from the war and retreat into their mountain lairs closer to Semberholme. Both strategists knew the end was near, and they knew that keeping the cavalry active would mean their deaths and leave Elven Court (or other realms) unprotected in the future. With heavy hearts, the dragons and riders of the Wing and Horn flew weakly to the west, never to see the wonders of living Myth Drannor again.

Crimson Glade

A.K.A.: The Ordall's Glade Massacre

Dates: Kythorn 16-17

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Chief Jhax Narlgold

Campaign #12: The Final Fall of Myth Drannor

A.K.A.: "The Light's Last Stand"

Location: Myth Drannor

Time: Kythorn-Flamerule 714 (31 days)

Campaign Victor: Army of Darkness

*“The time for play is long since done.
I’ll seek all dead or the battle won!”*

a bard’s song of Aulmpiter’s vow
on entering Myth Drannor

Despite the fact that Aulmpiter had always been a slow, methodical, almost elflike commander and strategist, the Final Fall was a cacophonous rampage fueled more by anger and hatred than any plan, unless that scheme limited itself to destruction of all in its path. In all, there were more than 20 battles that shook the city of Myth Drannor to its very roots, though many have never been reported; the details on subterranean battles of baelnorns and the like in their crypts against the Army of Darkness are not for us to glean. In little over a month, the proud City of Love (for such it was, even in its war-torn state) became a rubble-strewn, lifeless ruin.

Despite his anger and the mindless zeal of his troops, Grand Commander Aulmpiter spent much of his march on Myth Drannor summoning as much help as possible to reinforce his Army. No longer worrying over political difficulties, he summoned a full complement of yugoloths over the days between the Crimson Glade battle and conscripted all of them into his service with promises that they would be given their own reigns after the city’s fall. By the time of Aulmpiter’s entrance to the city during the Battle of Lightnings’ Kin, his army’s newest officers included 135 more mezzoloths due to his summonings and their own upon entry into the Prime Material Plane.

As expected, the re-entry of the yugoloths into the mythal corrupted and disrupted some of its integrity, and these degradations led to a number of crushing defeats for the elves. Aside from those commanders who chose to remain at Aulmpiter’s side (including Generals Khitax, Nyzhink, and Qyndrv), the Army of Darkness’ discipline dissolved into horde tactics soon after the initial penetration of the mythal, a day before entering the city. Left to their own devices and ways of leading troops, individual commanders spread out from the two spearhead formations Aulmpiter had established to wrap around the city and hit it from all sides (as the nycaloth anticipated). Seeking only loot or revenge, the attacks were disorganized and random, and had the Allies been in less haggard condition or in greater numbers, even this final campaign might have worked in their favor. Still, with well over 10,000 gnolls, orcs, and hobgoblins swarming about like flies, Aulmpiter’s central forces of the Colossus, War Hunger, Imperious, and Vindakkar battalions still acted as one and struck only at key installations where he sought strategic placement or magical plunder. Had he and his mezzoloths stuck to this plan, they might yet rule the ruins of Myth Drannor.

Similar to the insults Aulmpiter endured when he was trapped and bound millennia ago, Captain Fflar injured his pride with threats and taunts that drew him and his generals elite out to battle in the Bane Duels. Of course, this battle ended in his unexpected death, and the primary threat against the Realms was removed, leaving only rubble and rabble behind after the Fall.

The Flights

Each of the key battles labeled “Flights” are both battles against the Army of Darkness and strategic retreats. With each flight, over 100 elves and other citizens of Myth Drannor escaped, protected by the military or whoever could be found to protect them. All but the Final Flight were organized by Arms-Captain Hachaam Selorn and later by Captain Fflar, and these bands of refugees spent the next few tendays living in terror. While everyone might be armed or capable of magic, only 25 to 40 were actual adventurers or military personnel capable of fighting any wandering monsters or Army troops. These brave souls often protected from 100 to nearly 1,000 near-helpless merchants and nobles and others who simply wanted to reach safety at Semberholme or the new Elven Court.

Note: This evacuation was one of the primary activities of many adventurers toward the end, as the military admitted that the capital couldn’t be held and wanted to evacuate citizens as safely as possible. Thus, the most adaptable troops—the adventurers used to thinking quickly—were all conscripted into Flight duty as guardians and escorts. Of course, the difficulties lay in keeping order among those protected, and many of them were nobles wishing to assert their authority (or magic or coin) for preferential treatment, rather than focusing on the survival of all.

The Tavern Wars

As many tales were spun in the long years after the Fall, the last days of Kythorn saw more skirmishes and local heroes among the many taverns and inns of Myth Drannor. While none of the skirmishes and raids escalated into major battles (or, if part of a major battle, did not overshadow the main events), they collectively became famous by the bard Oslarelar’s “Tales of the Tavern Wars” ballad, a long-winded ballad that celebrates many individual feats among all the races of the allied city.

As the ballad is still among bards’ repertoires today, many still hear of the Tankardswar at the Blue Lute (where four bards atop the bar held off three parties of orcs using only their feet, magic, and thrown tankards), the Seven Candles of Shamblin’s Towers (where a septet of hobgoblin lesser officers was destroyed by a lone half-elf who doused them with casks of wine and set them afire), and the Silvershield’s Tablesturning (where a dozen trapped halflings and other patrons held off a squadron of mezzoloths and destroyed nearly two parties of orcs by manipulating the floating cookfires and cutlery that normally drifted placidly about the taprooms).

First Flight

A.K.A.: The City’s Sorrowmarch

Dates: Kythorn 20-22

Victor: Army of Darkness

Templestars’ Fall

A.K.A.: Battle at Two Temples, Sheshyrinnam’s Dusk

Dates: Kythorn 21

Victor: Inconclusive; Army of Darkness forced the destruction of much property in Sheshyrinnam, though what ground they took was swiftly avenged by the Templestars’ destruction of two temples upon 430 orcs, hobgoblins, and mezzoloths.

Major Deaths: High Hammer Vuth Hykoshold (dwarf high priest of Moradin), Oalm Glamourgold (gnome high priest of Garl Glittergold); Major Qkaarlesal and Qkaarlesal’s March

The Battle of Templestars’ Fall was a disastrous loss of both troops and territory, as nearly all of Sheshyrinnam lay in ruins after the battle. Still, a few hundred elves and other residents were able to flee the city safely thanks to the sacrifice of the dwarf Vuth Hykoshold and the gnome Oalm Glamourgold, who collapsed their temples to Moradin and Garl Glittergold rather than see the holy sites desecrated by the Army of Darkness. The Army’s disorganized charge was broken by the temples’ falling upon the heart of the invading orc swarm, and the trapped elf defenders of Sheshyrinnam suddenly had a break in the attack. Using the wall of rubble and dead orcs as cover, they scrambled to safety and managed to rejoin the Allies or fled the city entirely.

The Honorsgate War

A.K.A.: Eraelathil’s Triumph, Charge of the Halfling’s Blade Brigade, Broken Spears at Wolves’ Bane Meadow

Dates: Kythorn 21-22

Victor: Cormanthyr’s Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Scout Commander Ellidor Snowtoes; the Guard's March of the Fourth Regiment Imperious; the gate leading to the Forest of Mir near the ruins of Myth Unnohyr

This is the famous Last Stand of the Eternal Srinнала, as the elite spellcasting corps finally realized their patron was not to arrive. Uniting with a brave platoon of halfling snipers and human warriors, the Srinнала battled heroically to allow as many good folk as possible to escape via the Honorsgate before destroying it to keep others from harm. Major Guir, a hulking mezzoloth nearly twice Lady Ildacer's size, felled her; she disappeared in a golden diamond-shaped field of magic as she lay dying. Despite the futility of the battle, many legends were made this day as a mere 100 defenders saved the lives of three times their number and destroyed more than twice that in gnolls and orcs!

The Mythalashing

A.K.A.: Battle of Lightnings' Kin, Fall of the Flind King

Dates: Kythorn 23

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Euchoé Songolden (last elder elf mage of the city); Captain Cyrukki ("the Flind King")

Fallen Flight

A.K.A.: Overmantle's Bane, Final Fate of Nezras

Dates: Kythorn 23

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Spell-Captain Phyrri Iliathorr, Nezras the Traitor; the mythal's Overmantle power.

This disheartening battle is notable for the corruption and loss of the primary power of the mythal: the elven overmantle that allowed them basic defenses and flight! While the early parts of the battle showed tactical advantages for the elves in troop placement and battle magics, the unexpected loss of mobility and flight by the elves led to a rout, especially after the initial loss saw many elves plummet from the sky directly onto mezzoloth-held spears. The only heartening note of the battle was the death of Nezras the Traitor at the hands of the Akh'Faern mage Juppar, a young moon elf whose unrequited passion for Captain Iliathorr lent him the rage and fervor to destroy a whole party of orcs to reach Nezras and engulf him in no fewer than three fireballs, leaving nothing but smoking bones as testament of his passing.

Secret: Nezras used some lost magic to exchange places with another traitor human mage before dying from Juppar's spellstrikes, and his fate is unknown; no word ever reached Cormanthyr that he survived, since he has slain every elf he has met since this time. However, three centuries after the Fall, some Harpers discover that he survives as a lich and has various lairs about Faerûn, including one in the mountains north of the Vilhon Reach. The strangest, unconfirmed rumor about Nezras was that the wild magic of the Time of Troubles restored his youth and life, and he is now an ancient mage in a youth's body.)

Yuirgate

A.K.A.: The Dragons' Last Dive, "Nine Wings Waning"

Dates: Kythorn 24

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies (though the remaining dragon allies of Cormanthyr were so sorely wounded that they were forced to withdraw from the War to fly to safety in the western mountains).

Major Deaths: Uinessivar "Moondragon" (silver wyrm), Mikkaalgenis "the Harper Dragon" (silver adult), Qiminsteir "the Swordwing" (steel wyrm); the gate to the Yuirwood (destroyed to prevent its invasion by mezzoloth troops)

The Battle of Stars Shining

Dates: Kythorn 25

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Spell-Major Josidiah Starym

This is the final battle of both the bladesinger Spell-Major Josidiah Starym and the last of the Akh'Faer. Rather than allow Aulmpiter (or any other marauder) to claim the prize of the Speculum (the guild hall of the Wizards, Conjurers, and Enchanters), Josidiah and 17 mages stood atop the ramparts or at the front colonnade and slung spells of devastating effect against the invaders, while others worked frantically inside either to remove or destroy the guild's great magical-items cache.

As the afternoon fracas lengthened into a night battle, two bold moves by the elves turned the tide of battle such that, while the ground is lost, the moral victory became Cormanthyr's. One Prannith Springheels, a halfling scribe of the guild (whose dream of wielding magic was never quite realized), saw his master die just feet of him, and he seized a *fallen staff of the magi* before it could be claimed by the murderous yugoloth. Drawing a number of mezzoloths about him with taunts and shouts, Prannith leapt off the highest surviving tower of the Speculum and wielded great magic for once in his life. He broke the *staff* as he fell into the horde of mezzoloths about the guildhall, unleashing a *retributive strike* that broke their ranks and killed more than a quarter of their number. While this respite delayed the battle's end, its outcome was hardly in doubt to its defenders.

Spell-Major Josidiah Starym was soon the last Ally standing in defense of the Speculum, atop its crumbling and mezzoloth-choked central tower. As the fell creatures strained to break his magical barriers and overwhelm his position, the clouded night sky suddenly broke, and an almost-liquid beam of light from the stars and moon above wrapped around him. The *Artblade* hung high aloft, its normal red light now glowed a blazingly bright white, obscuring all but the blade and its magic. Now barely a silhouette amidst the magic surrounding him, Josidiah stood on the wall's edge and sketched a magical salute in the air to his patron goddesses Sehanine and Mystra. Then, he took the power the ladies of mystery granted him via his blade, swung it high and low across the front of the Speculum—upon which the blazing white energy lanced through the walls and collapsed the entire front wall upon the hordes of yugoloths below! Leaping into the air, a smiling Josidiah rode a white thunderbolt down into the heart of the enemy, where the blast scattered them like frightened children. With one last two-handed swing of the blade, he stabbed the blade deep into the flagstones of the courtyard beneath his feet. White fires crackled about him, and a swath of white magic crept like a firestorm toward the exposed Speculum's interior. Where the white fires touched magic, they burned bright and hot, destroying all (or so it seemed to those yugoloths that burned this way). The fires claimed Josidiah and the *Artblade* as well, as no trace of him or the great sword remained when the blaze died down enough to approach where he stood!

Flight of the Blooded Moon

A.K.A.: Sheshyrinnam's Falling

Dates: Kythorn 26

Victor: Army of Darkness

The Crownfrost Capture

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Arms-Major Kelvhan Olortynnal, Arms-Captain Hachaam Selorn; General Qyndrv, General Bk'kr, the Colossus battalion, the Fiest War Hunger Regiment, the Third Regiment Imperious

The Crownfrost Capture was Aulmpiter's establishment of his base within the city at the wizards' school of Crownfrost Tower. One of the swiftest and bloodiest battles of the Final Fall, Aulmpiter's organized battalions swarmed over the tower and managed to hold off all attempts at aiding the wizards until Aulmpiter had arrived and gained entrance to the tower. Within the captured and overrun building, the nycaloth also captured three dozen mages of various levels of expertise including eight teachers and senior apprentices of low- to mid-level experience, including the senior founder and wizard Klaern Kadelaryn. Aulmpiter gave most of them immediate deaths, though some of the more powerful he kept around to allow him access to the school's secrets (after slaying Klaern). Judging some of these wizards correctly, they would not be as self-sacrificing as those of the Speculum since most wizards are loathe to destroy what they took decades to create.

Outside, the battle raged on, and the primary Allied army laid into the mezzoloths and others of Aulmpiter's forces. Had Arms-Major Olortynnal and Arms-Captain Selorn been more familiar with the fighting techniques of the Blood War, they might have been able to defend against the tactic that killed them. All they knew was the mezzoloths, gnolls, and all the forces kept rushing their position on all sides fell easily to their attacks. They realized too late that the dozens that fell about them soon hampered their movements so much that they could not avoid the later attacks by more powerful foes. Soon, the hundreds of dead among the Army of Darkness began to be matched among the allies, as their lack of maneuverability among their own slain enemies cut them off from retreat or even regrouping among their own forces.

The battle, which began before dawn with the overrunning of the tower, continued past highsun and into late dusk. By that time, the exhausted elves began falling from sheer fatigue as well as their wounds. The only elves to actually penetrate the hordes to reach the tower itself—the Captain, Major, and a small group of a dozen bladesingers—found themselves trapped there with no hope of penetrating the magical or martial defenses Aulmpiter established. They tried to break through the closed ranks of the army and escape to no avail; with no other options, the 14 elves settled into grim resolve. Their last, heroic charge cost the Army of Darkness at least two of its generals and more than 1,000 orcs and yugoloths.

The "Fall of the Arms-Leaders" ballad describes Hachaam Selorn's and Kelvhan Olortynnal's deaths as fates suffered gladly by two comrades fighting back to back and singing the battle hymns to Corellon Larethian that would speed their way to heroic afterlives as Reverend Ones of their god's celestial armies. Whether the ballad speaks true, even the mezzoloths and ogres were impressed by the battle-prowess of these two elves whose spirits never faltered as they were overpowered by more than 20 times their number.

As other officers battled on in isolated pockets among the hordes encircling the Crownfrost Tower, many saw the Arms-Major and his Arms-Captain fall atop the steps of the tower. One enraged officer broke through the ranks to retrieve both their corpses and weapons; his taking up of the Arms-Major's blade *Faervian* with no difficulty showed the elf troops that not all was lost. The Arms-Major lived on in that soldier, the brave Captain Fflar! Their spirits renewed, the new commander Fflar led a retreat from the tower that saved the last 400 soldiers out of the allied forces of 1,200 troops.

The Reprieve of Silver

A.K.A.: The Crownfrost Crusade

Dates: Kythorn 30

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: The Seven of Silver (unexpected allies from Silvermoon), Klaern Kadelaryn (senior mage-instructor of Crownfrost Tower); General Khitax (reassigned to the Vindakkar)

The Reprieve of Silver involved the happenstance arrival of the Seven of Silver via gateway from Silvermoon. They and some others of Cormanthyr sacrificed their lives to allow a dozen wizards (three elf teachers and nine apprentices, including the noble elf Elénaril, two elves, two half-elves, and four humans) to escape from Crownfrost Tower with their lives intact. With the gateway safely closed behind them, the Seven of Silver and their allies managed to seal the Crownfrost Tower in a massive prismatic sphere-like spell that kept Aulmpiter isolated from his primary troops for more than five days (during which time he slaughtered each and every one of his captors personally).

Final Stand on Evening Star

A.K.A.: The Seven Soldiers' Victory

Dates: Flamerule 1-3

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies (though many consider it inconclusive); while the Army of Darkness was held off (mostly by seven enlarged and well-armed human and half-elf soldiers holding the line), Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies suffered grievous losses among the remaining city forces.

Two Gates' Fall

A.K.A.: Clash at Warriors' Gate, Khorridan's Wake

Dates: Flamerule 1-5

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Penaal Khorridan (dwarf holy warrior of Dumathoin); Warriors' Gate (aka the public gate to the southern Delimbiyr and a more-secretive gate to a site just outside of Evereska)

Lydaalis

A.K.A.: The Battle of Nighthorns, Fall of the Westkeeps

Dates: Flamerule 6-7

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Major Deaths: Kérym Lashul Stormwing

Edansyr's Fray

A.K.A.: The Northride War

Dates: Flamerule 8

Victor: Army of Darkness

The Sixstar Stand

A.K.A.: The Dark Circle's Defeat, "Allies' Mettle Forged"

Dates: Flamerule 9-10

Victor: Cormanthyr's Elves/Allies

Oacenth's Second Bleeding

A.K.A.: Drowning Drive of Dabrax, the Wizards Waning

Dates: Flamerule 11-12

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Irhaal Argentaamn (High Court Mage and Councilor), "High Lady of Art" Alea Dahast; Major Dabrax

The Bane Duels

A.K.A.: Foebane's Last Strike, the Commanders' Clash

Dates: Flamerule 14-15

Victor: Inconclusive; both the Army of Darkness and the Allies of Cormanthyr lose their major leaders and many hundreds of troops.

Major Deaths: Captain Fflar; Grand Commander Aulmpiter

This 32-hour-long battle started at the ruins of Castle Cormanthor and spread across the wards of Cormanthor and Dlabrad-dath, involving over 5,000 elves and 20,000 orcs, gnolls, ogres, and mezzoloths. The last of the major officers of the city, Captain Fflar, led the fray for much of the first day until sorely wounded by a barbed spear at sunset. However, despite his injuries and a noted drain on healing resources, Fflar rested only briefly and again took the field when word came that Aulmpiter raged about the city with newly summoned nycaloths, the elf troops falling back before them.

Captain Fflar brought himself back to the front, now set along Oacenth's Stream. Magic enhancing his voice, Fflar issued a challenge of personal combat to Aulmpiter and his nycaloths, stoking their temper with taunts and jibes at their true status as lower planar bullies and errand-runners for the truer evils. As expected, tempers flared (as did the hopes of Fflar's troops), and Fflar came under attack. After watching the captain and Keryvian engage a dozen nycaloths and emerge victorious, Aulmpiter allowed himself the indulgence of personal combat. The two battled alone, encircled by an audience of seven nycaloths and 13 mezzoloths. The epic battle of claw versus *Keryvian* lasted nearly three hours, neither commander giving any quarter and both suffering numerous wounds that might have killed lesser beings. The battle culminated in a desperate gamble by Fflar, who had watched the movements of the *Mantle Stone of Vhyrriadaan* orbiting Aulmpiter's head; he swung his great sword and intercepted the stone, destroying it with one clean blow!

As the two elf bards who witnessed it were struck blind by its brilliance, only limited details can be unearthed about the Commanders' Fall. The power of both the sword and stone burst forth in a ring of white, blue, and purple fire, engulfing Fflar and Aulmpiter but fully immolating the ring of Yugoloths around them. As these fires imploded swiftly, a second blast more focused than the first arced out from the center

as a crackling ring of energy that lanced across the battlefield at the city's center and robbed yugoloths of their health as much as it granted strength to the elves. At the blast's center, naught was ever found of Fflar, Aulmpiter, or *Foebane*, aside from the blasted silhouettes of their shadows etched in white in the pavement where they stood. With the fall of Aulmpiter, the Army of Darkness temporarily retreated back to Crownfrost Tower as it assessed the battle. They would soon return, with no thought or tactics beyond annihilation.

The Rule Tower Rampage

A.K.A.: Cormanthor's Crumbling, Rampage in the Old City

Dates: Flamerule 15-18

Victor: Army of Darkness

Major Deaths: Castle Cormanthor, central bridge across Oacenth's stream

The Final Flight

A.K.A.: Darkness Descends, Capture of the Crown, Corellon's Blight, the Black Day's Dawn, Oacenth's Requiem

Dates: Flamerule 20

Victor: Army of Darkness

By this battle, the only elder or major officers left at dusk to face the Fall of the city were Lord Grathgor Hawkson, a penant of the Akh'Velehr, and Lady Leilatha Aunglor, the last of the Court Mages and armathor commanders. They rallied the last rag-tag brigades left to them, their mission simply to hold the Army of Darkness and allow the Final Flight a chance to escape to safety.

Their noble sacrifice has been recorded in more mournful ballads than almost any other deaths in the Weeping War.



THE CLANDESTINE CAMPAIGNS



While the 12 campaigns raged on around Cormanthyr for three long years, a number of other, secret activities occurred which few have heard about beyond whispers. Even six centuries after the Fall, the elves are reluctant to reveal much about certain clandestine actions during Myth Drannor's darkest days. The forces defending Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr were many, though not all folk saw the same threats.

Origins of the N'Vaelahr

Aolis Ildacer and his wife Amara (formerly of Clan Audark), both senior Akh'Faer officers, secretly met with a few members of the Rulers' Council late in the Year of Despairing Elves (711 DR) after the first reports came from the north about the Army of Darkness. Grand Mage Ualair, Arms-Major Kelvhan Olortynnal, and Councilor Phraan Audark all gave Aolis and Amara leave to create and operate a covert group hidden even from the other Councilors of Myth Drannor. Their duties were to act as intelligence gatherers and agents with two purposes: Halt or delay the Army of Darkness wherever possible, and discover who among the people of Myth Drannor might be considered an enemy of the Coronal's Peace and Unity.

This group, named in whispers as the Shadow Soldiers or N'Vaelahr, canvassed all aspects of the war and secretly helped re-establish Elven Court as an elf refuge. Their achievements are many and truly astonishing, considering there were never more than 24 active agents at any given time. The recruits were almost entirely chosen from active adventurers at the time, since the armathors and other military guardians of Myth Drannor were tied to other power and political structures (i.e., biased in favor of the nobility and their Houses). If any agents were captured, they often chose death over revealing any secrets regarding the identities of other agents or the information stored away within their *kiira*.

Note: Obviously, these missions are perfect for PC intervention into the events of the Fall. Their adventuring status provides PCs with the freedom to pursue these missions without undue conflicts. As covert agents, their names will never figure prominently in the histories, a perfect way for time-travelers to aid the cause without disrupting the timestream. Provided with information and *shadow lore gems*, the PCs must do their best to both uncover secrets among the Army of Darkness and the

allies and keep such secrets among the N'Vaelahr until ordered to do otherwise.

Organization and Operations

Only Aolis and Amara know the identities of the trio of Councilors involved with the Shadow Soldiers, though some agents have met individually with Arms-Major Kelvhan Olortynnal at his request and were surprised to find he knew of their existence. In short, any of the Councilors chooses who to contact and how, and they are always the ones in control of the situation with each agent.

A loosely based organization with each agent given an ample amount of autonomy concerning a mission, the Shadow Soldiers roughly resembled the Harpers at Twilight, of which Amara was a member. Aolis and Amara did not exclusively recruit with one standard, but members were chosen by the four founders, each choosing six agents with a different view of the members needed for the job. Aolis sought out beings of upstanding and irreproachable morals, and hired four elves and two half-elves. Amara recruited the slightly shadier but still trustworthy souls, and hired an elf adventuring group. Phraan Audark looked toward maintaining the balance of races, and recruited one each of Myth Drannor's races: gold/moon/green elf, human, gnome, and halfling. Finally, Ualair the Silent recruited a N'Tel'Quess adventuring group, for reasons of his own and brought in the sole dwarf N'Vaelahrn, a priest of Dumathoin.

For the most part, the members were rangers, wizards, wizard/fighters, and wizard/rogues. Despite their skills, Amara further trained each recruit. All became far more conversant in stealth and subtlety, with training beginning upon induction. They also learned of additional magic and methods that allowed them to better obtain information. When deemed ready, the agent would be presented with a *kiira N'Vaelahr*, a *shadow lore gem* that embedded itself in the bearer's skin and became both her badge and greatest tool. (For more details on the gems, see the "Fallen Items and Curios" Chapter.)



Safehouses and Cooperation

With their very existence secret from most of the power structures in Myth Drannor, who are the N'Vaelahr's allies? Where can they go and trust folk? Well, their founders' previous alliances and similar goals allow them two great groups of confederates: the Harpers at Twilight and the High Mages of Cormanthyr. There are a number of safetrees (secreted hideaways to use when on patrol) in all corners of Cormanthor shared by Harpers and N'Vaelahr, and any individual members' homes are used as safehouses, while larger homes or well-hidden and secured sites often doubled as armories as well.

With the membership totalling no more than 28 including leaders, magical aid was expected, depending on one's missions. Each member had a *lore gem* and personal items, though many minor items were created and loaned for specific duties. Any magical items from the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide* (DMG) are potentials for use.

N'Vaelahr Exploits and Feats

While their official existence lasted but a mere eyeblink to the elves, the N'Vaelahr performed a number of great feats for the war effort. Their three greatest individual missions involved saving the mythal, sabotaging Malimshaer's efforts at artifact collection, and building an alliance that saved the elves with the aid of their greatest enemies.

The Crystal Coup

One of the greatest victories of the War occurred beyond the city, along the outskirts of the mythal: the theft of the Gatekeeper's Crystal. Through various sources (including the malevolent Hlon-dathan lich Laummas the Liegelord), Aulmpiter and his crafty second Malimshaer learned of and gained this powerful artifact, then planned to use it on Myth Drannor's mythal. While the Clash Under Four Moons raged in the City of Song, the remaining battalions of the Second Legion—the Vindakkar, the Ardorstaves, and the Battalion Arcane—and Malimshaer prepared to use the legendary Gatekeeper's Crystal to implode the mythal surrounding the capital city and destroy all within. The forces of Darkness within were acceptable losses by Aulmpiter's reckoning, as the attack on Myth Drannor so early was intended as a distraction from the real danger: the three battalions' generals holding the three pieces of the Gatekeeper's Crystal at strategic points surrounding the mythal.

Infiltration and sacrifice by more than eight N'Vaelahr discovered the plan and provided the mezzoloth General Eszkhil with a suitable counterfeit crystal, while one-third of the real *Crystal* was spirited away, into Ualair's hands. This neutralized its primary threat to the mythal and the elves within it, though some N'Vaelahr tried to reclaim the other pieces throughout the war. By Ches 2, Malimshaer noticed the failure of the Ardorstaves' mezzoloth commander and sent him and his remaining battalion to continue the fight within the city—Malimshaer's orders were an effective execution, as they fell before the powerful wrath of three Chosen of Mystra.

The Rhymallos Gambit

In one of the noblest sacrifices never celebrated but among his comrades, a N'Tel'Quess N'Vaelahrn voluntarily underwent an Akh'Faen'Tel'Quess ritual and was transformed into a mezzoloth. Hereafter, the agent operated under the codename Rhymallos, "Hidden Eye." Rhymallos infiltrated the ranks among the Army of Darkness easily during the Scourging of Jhyrennstar, and through his carefully selected knowledge about the forest, managed a number of small victories during the early campaigns, allowing him to rise to a command position among the enemy ranks. Stripped of his *shadow lore gem* and fully in mezzoloth form,

Rhymallos still managed to secretly notify his comrades of major plans and keep his troops away from major elf enclaves. This razor's-edge dance provided the elves with much of their early knowledge about who and what they faced, their immediate plans, and how the Army was organized. This knowledge allowed them their victories later on in the War.

Rhymallos maintained his cover and performed crucial deep-cover intelligence for the N'Vaelahr while also seeming to do well for the Army of Darkness. His group's discovery rate of small magical-item caches brought him to the notice of Malimshaer, whose small scout units were fruitlessly scouring the western forest for the Vaults of Uvaeren, which allegedly revealed the hidden locations of all the hidden elf magic of that realm and early Arcorar (and others). The nycaloths wanted the most ancient magic of the elves to use against them, but these remained hidden. Rhymallos and his squad of gnolls and lesser mezzoloths were brought to the area.

Despite Rhymallos' best efforts, it appeared as if some of his troops had learned some of his secrets and immediately began turning up more and more clues to reaching the Vaults as well as more powerful magic and lore caches. Rhymallos' next panicked report struck fear into the commanders of the Shadow Soldiers and the entire army, though only a few could truly comprehend the dangers. The Army of Darkness (under the direct supervision, for a time, of Aulmpiter) found four of six signs that would help them uncover the Vaults of Uvaeren; if this lost elf knowledge were brought to bear against them, Cormanthyr's reign would be measured in hours.

Though details are sketchy at best (even among the N'Vaelahr), Ualair the Silent secretly went to the aid of his bravest Shadow Soldier and to safeguard Uvaeren's treasures. His and the agent's exact actions are unknown, though some reports uncovered by other N'Vaelahr note that a mezzoloth lieutenant and an elf stood back to back, madly wielding recently uncovered artifacts against Great Commander Aulmpiter. They apparently summoned magic great enough to scatter the squadrons and force Aulmpiter to retreat and either obscure the Vaults anew or destroy them.

Both Rhymallos and Ualair the Silent seem to have died in their defense of the Vaults, though their bodies were never found, nor could their spirits be contacted via divine agencies. While the final fates of Ualair and Rhymallos are unknown, two facts suggest they may yet live in some manner. The Grand Mage's *selu'kiira*, or *high lore gem*, did not appear back among his fellows in Myth Drannor, as it should do upon his death; and it is highly unlikely they would have willingly abandoned Myth Drannor in her time of need. All that most elves know of this operation was that a magical fury whipped through the western forests, destroying much in its path, including many patrol squads of the Army of Darkness.

So, with the great sacrifice of the Grand Mage and the N'Vaelahr's deep-cover agent, the Army of Darkness was driven out of the western forests and away from the greatest storehouses of elf lore on Faerûn. While later campaigns were lost due to elf magic uncovered by Rhymallos' mezzoloths, the destruction was a mere fraction of what have happened. Uvaeren's secrets lay hidden still.

The Spiders' Truce

This was ultimately the most important of missions ever attempted by the Shadow Soldiers: The cleansing of Elven Court by the skillful manipulation of both the drow and the Army of Darkness! Upon the creation of the group, a number of agents were sent into the eastern and western woods and down below to harass both the drow of the Twisted Tower and other, more secretive enclaves. By finding and exposing the entrances to the drow tunnels, the agents began leading the Army of Darkness to them and allowing them to discover the riches below. While providing the Army with an additional layer of targets, the N'Vaelahr slowed some of the horde's advance somewhat.

By early in the Year of the Lost Lance, a number of drow factions were ready for the second stage of Aolis Ildacer's plan. He had deduced that they would be trying to use the instability of the time to re-establish their holds over Old Elven Court and the Twisted Tower and thus have strongholds in Cormanthor. As he and his agents continued their actions (or those of the Army of Darkness), Aolis began attempting to communicate with apparent leaders among the drow factions they met. By mid-year, he and House Dhuurniv had negotiated a truce between elf and drow in the interests of defeating a more pressing foe: the Army of Darkness. Approved (though with much distaste) by Arms-Major Olortynnal and Ualair, Aolis conceded the Twisted Tower to the drow in exchange for their aid in harnessing the spiders and magic of the ruined Elven Court against the nycaloth-led armies.

With the advent of the Third Elven Court Crusade, Aolis took command of the troops and revealed their dark-elf allies to much outrage and fear. Forever after, he, his wife, and a few associates were seen as traitors for even thinking to establish this truce. To associate with drow is to become as corrupt as one, and the Spiders' Truce made the N'Vaelahr many enemies among all the races, though they were not outcast alone. House Dhuurniv, its three senior priestesses, and its forces were likewise shunned by their subterranean fellows for their activities in this war, even though their negotiations practically handed the Twisted Tower back to the drow after many long decades. Their associations and compromises were seen as far more damning than their gains. Indeed, most drow of the major cities beneath the forest did not believe the Army of Darkness posed any threat to them, despite three outpost attacks for weaponry and magic.

The Spiders' Truce lasted from mid-Uktar of 712 DR through Midwinter and into Alturiak of the following year. During its time, more than 80% of the encountered enemy troops fell before their organized front; equally good for Cormanthyr's Allies was the destruction of the corruptive drow *gates* that riddled the ruins (a benefit dreamed of by Aolis but not quite masterminded—Tymora smiled on Cormanthor that day.). As soon as the Stars-dark Clashes turned into a rout against the Army of Darkness, old hatreds turned the Spiders' Truce into a memory as drow turned on elf (or human or dwarf, etc.). Aolis Ildacer was cruelly struck down, but his wife swiftly avenged his treacherous murder.

Amara Ildacer and her N'Vaelahr agents active at the Elven Court Crusade were forever shunned politically and socially, and not allowed openly within Myth Drannor again due to their parts as collaborators. Despite the victory and the canny elimination of large numbers of both enemies, most elves refused to even discuss the methods by which Elven Court became theirs again. While he rarely acted on it, the Arms-Captain Hachaam Selorn gained a great deal of respect for the Ildacers and the N'Vaelahr (who rescued him during early maneuvers before the Truce was set). He alone among the powerful of Myth Drannor spoke of them with respect, for he realized just how much they sacrificed for Cormanthyr.

N'Vaelahr Missions

These missions are standards that PC and NPC N'Vaelahr can expect to perform during the War. Mission basics are followed by adventure hooks for the DM. The two major mission types are intelligence and field work.

Intelligence Work

Knowledge is power, and much of the military intelligence that kept Cormanthyr from immediately succumbing to the Army of Darkness was provided to the Arms-Major via the N'Vaelahr. Thus, while less enticing than field work, data collection was a major step in helping defeat Aulmpiter.

Surveillance of Suspected Folk of Intrigue

When necessary or when First Shadow Aolis Ildacer felt there was sufficient suspicion, N'Vaelahr agents would be placed either within a household or as a guard contingent among a group of refugees leaving Myth Drannor. Standard orders were merely to observe and report any illicit activities of the target people that might undermine the Allies' strength and chances of winning the war.

News Relays

News relays are the most common activity performed by the N'Vaelahr, since any mission required returning information to Myth Drannor and Second Shadow Amara. In most every mission, at least one other agent needed to share or receive the information collected by the agent via their kiira; then both agents would take separate methods by which to reach Myth Drannor. Most often, agents worked in pairs and shared information with other duos, providing all agents with backup at all times.

If a secure position was found for intelligence gathering, relays were established among a squad of agents spread out across the miles. The monitoring agent telepathically transmitted coded and secured gememories to a comrade two miles away, who traveled a great distance to a predetermined link site. Once there, the agent then transmitted the same sealed information to the next agent up to three miles away, and this process continued until the coded information reached Amara in Myth Drannor. A agent used for gememory transmission did not always need to be voluntary or part of the pre-planned relay, though this emergency conscripting of fellow agents often disrupted other plans or missions.

Orders were sometimes (but rarely) transmitted this way to agents out among Cormanthor. Most often, an official summons was sent via relay for the agent(s) to return for new orders.

Tracking of the Army

Given special orders for working with scouting officers, the N'Vaelahr agents and the Akh'Velehr scouts shared tracking information on the movements of the Army and its many patrols. N'Vaelahr could get close to enemy patrols, tracking them both physically and magically, and discover their plans via clairaudience and other methods.

Example Intelligence Missions

- The PCs must track individual members of a particular group and determine the following: Who's in charge of whom and group structure; identify tribal, clan, and all other symbols; get a sense of where friction lies among the troops and find ways to exploit it (tactics that force two clashing groups against each other).
- The PCs are set in a safetree overlooking a meadow where hides a number of long-hidden caches of powerful magical items. Their job: Watch and see who comes looking for them and stop them only if they get close to discovering the items.
- Secure the spell books and knowledge of Laummas the Liegelord, the Hlondathan lich or his toady Nezas the Traitor. Even if they are destroyed, this knowledge must not fall into nycaloth hands.

Field Work

Rather than the passive watch-and-wait missions noted above that formed the backbone of the N'Vaelahr's activities, there were often active missions where agents were needed to perform dangerous volunteer activities out among the war-torn areas. Only rarely did these reach beyond the forest, though some small amounts of aid came from those missions. Below are generic missions that a N'Vaelahr might be asked to perform.

Assassinations

While rare, hunt-and-kill missions were possible assignments for N'Vaelahr; often, these were either political kills to prevent some

known treachery from occurring within elf ranks or military executions, where particularly adept commanders (including traitors who defected to the Army of Darkness) were targets simply to keep the Army from operating at top efficiency.

Rescue Missions

A common mission was to rush to the aid of beleaguered refugees and travelers within the forest whose guards either were failing or had failed. Later, in the last year of the campaign, half of the agents were constantly kept on rescue duty, though this was proactive protection, as they acted as supplemental guards for important personages forced to flee Myth Drannor to safety.

Sabotage and Traps

And, of course, one of the few missions described as “fun” were those where the agents set up traps either to sabotage and harry encamped Army troops or waylay them while on the march. Most of the wizard agents were saved for these missions, as contingency magic and other spells allowed for sabotage both subtle and spectacular. This group of missions also covered counter-sabotage and destruction, such as orcs and giants setting fire to the woods.

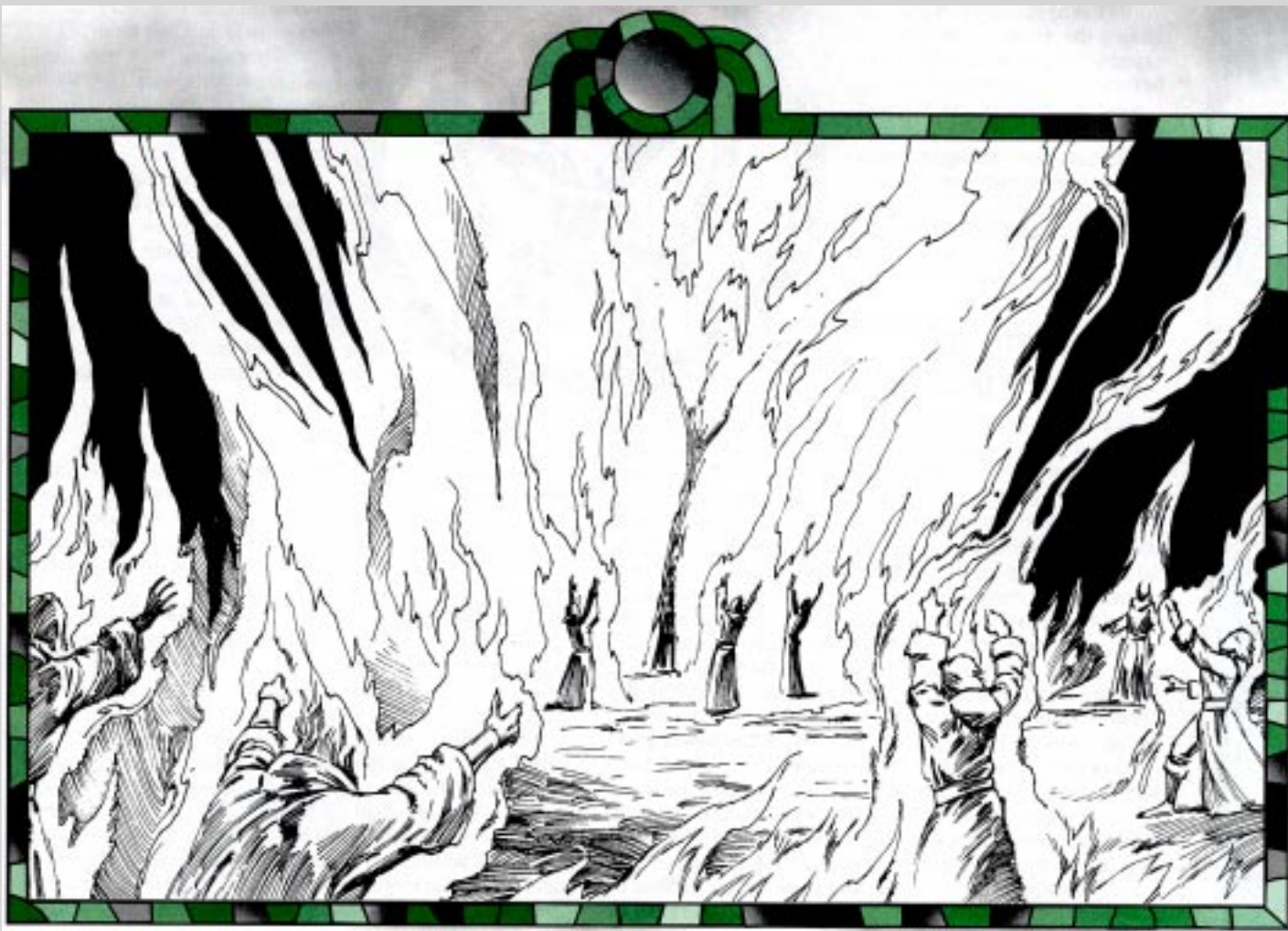
Reclamation of Elven Properties

The most common mission after rescues were reclamation missions, where the Army of Darkness (or some other group) stole elf property of interest to the military commanders or the Councilors of Myth Drannor. Most N'Vaelahr spent the Mezzoloth Marches infiltrating enemy camps to reclaim recently uncovered magical items. Their success rate was close to 65% for standard items or weaponry, while their recovery of artifacts was closer to

90%, a fact that escapes many as the few artifacts the nycaloths kept did horrendous amounts of damage.

Example Field Missions

- The PCs are called to slow or halt the advance of the ogre and mezzoloth Wardogs' March. The mezzoloth major is setting fire to the brush behind them, leaving much destruction, and forest fires are raging out of control. Destroy Major Reoj and find a way either to put out the fires or turn them to an advantage.
- From an intelligence report in the northern woods above Oloriil, an orc now carries the long-lost *Diamond-Stuff of Chomylla*; find out how it came into the beast's possession, and make sure that item does not reach the yugoloths.
- The PCs find a noble elf (one with a severe hatred of ah non-elves) lying wounded in the woods, his hunting party all dead from an unexpected Army attack. The elf must return to Myth Drannor to help coordinate the defenses against an expected attack, but his leg and arm are broken and he believes the PC agents to be creatures out to slay him.
- After Garnet's Pyre, the High Mages realize that Aulmpiter has the *Orb of Pyxaanthal* and knows how to use it. The PCs must either find the cirlet that controls it or steal the artifact itself.
- Ualair's final magical creations were trap-items that held much danger for their expected mezzoloth wielders. After a certain number of uses, the item would explode with cold fires and lightnings. The PCs' mission is to plant these items among a cache of lesser items so the items will be found during the Mezzoloth Marches (previous attempts failed since they would not take obviously planted items, expecting such traps).



FALLEN ITEMS AND CURIOS



umerous items, both legendary and new, turned the tides of battles countless times during the Fall. As a realm of magic, the elves had no lack of firepower, though their enemies either came well prepared or they plundered the magical treasures of the realms fallen long before. While few items were so powerful that they turned the course of the war, all (whether used in heroic or diabolic hands) gained much in notoriety and legend. Elves yet today believe

there is a certain curse that each item from fallen Myth Drannor carries with it: the wielder is compelled never to give up, continuing to battle against all odds. Few have found this so much a curse as a wish among elves to requite the loss of the great city and its treasures.

The Arsenal of Darkness

While the nycaloths and other forces among the Army of Darkness were capable of having magical items before the assembly of the troops, the bulk of the magical weaponry used by the Army of Darkness was pillaged from their enemies' corpses or long-fallen storehouses. Below are simply the major items of strategic value to the hordes that felled great Myth Drannor.

Gauntlets of Weaponry Arcane

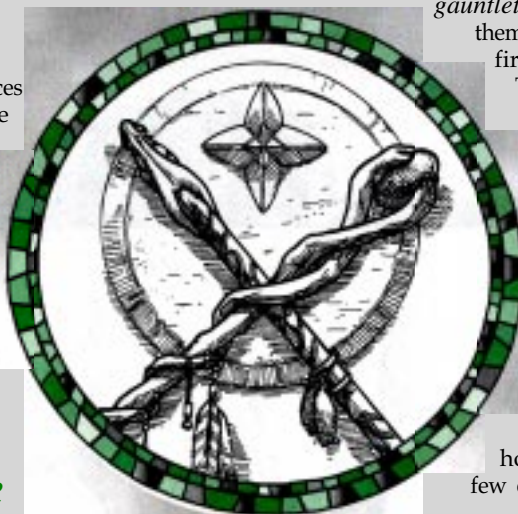
These heavy leather-and-silver gauntlets simply allow the wearer to wield any weapon (in which she is proficient) as if it were a magical silver weapon. If a weapon in hand is already magical, it increases their effective magical potential by +1. Their magic conferred by contact with the weapon and the wearer, the gauntlets' magic affords no combat bonuses beyond the ability to affect creatures vulnerable to magic or silver (and magical +1 weapons, while considered +2 due to the gauntlets, add only the standard bonuses of +1 or whatever to their attacks). Still, these highly prized magical items turned the tides of battle for many an elf and gnoll in the Fall, especially against the magically powerful yugoloth commanders.

The leather *gauntlets* cover the hands and lower forearms of their wearers, and are immediately impressive with their ornate chain-metal-reinforced palms and hands. Silver stitching forms ornate patterns in the arm guards and the exposed leather fingers of the *gauntlets*, and this silver is what glows if viewed under *detect magic* spells or the like.

The archmage and former leather-worker Agis Ipyllasc of the old realm of Jhyrennstar created the first gauntlets of

weaponry arcane long ago. Since then, his apprentices and others learned the gauntlets' secrets and created sets of them for their best soldiers. Since these elven *gauntlets* resize to fit any hands, many of them fell into those of the enemy after the first campaign in the northern woods.

The Army unearthed more than a dozen pairs from a lost tomb of long-dead Jhyrennstar, and used these with great efficiency against the elves throughout the rest of the battles. After the Fall, most were recovered by the survivors, though at least eight pairs of *gauntlets of weaponry arcane* left Cormanthyr on the arms of unworthy deserters of the Army of Darkness. Thus, one more elf secret falls to all, as word of these items grows. Luckily, the secrets on how to make them still lie with only a few elves in Cormanthyr and Eaelrann.



Heartcleaver

This monstrous executioner's axe is balanced and sized for Large-sized creatures of at least 18 Strength; in basic form and function, it appears closer to a bardiche, though the axe-blade is as massive as a medium shield with sharpened edges. This weapon is not native to the Realms, but was forged on Gehenna.

This gigantic single-headed but massive weapon is, for all game terms, a +2 *vorpal axe*. In its nycaloth-master's hands, *Heartcleaver* deals 1d12 + 10 points of damage per blow (+8 Strength and +2 magic) to small and medium creatures and 2d8+10 to large foes.

Aside from the basic magic of the *vorpal* weapon, the axe blade also constantly drips with a translucent green poisonous ichor. The ichor cancels out healing magics, and therefore, the damage dealt by *Heartcleaver* must be recovered naturally by rest and sleep, not potions or spells. That same poison, if administered through more than five successful hits, forces the target to make a saving throw vs. poison; if the character fails her save, she is *slowed* for 1d8 rounds.

Heartcleaver is wielded one-handed by the monstrous nycaloth Gaulguth, the warrior of the trio behind the Army of Darkness. After Gaulguth's death at the Battle of the Lost Trench, a tall human adventurer was allowed to claim the axe (since no dwarf could ever hope to wield it). This human, whose name is lost to history (or who could be a PC), used the axe in the allied cause for the last year of the Weeping War, though he reportedly died a hero among heroes at the Final Stand on the Evening Star. After the Fall of Myth Drannor, *Heartcleaver* remains among the rubble of the fallen city, waiting for a new wielder.

The Mantle Stone of Vhyridaan

For all intents and purposes, this item acts as an ioun stone with all the standard actions and limitations, but also with some unique properties as well. While it orbits the wielder's head as all ioun stones do, it actively zips around in a sentient manner and avoids all contact (making it harder to be grabbed or attacked, with an effective AC of -6).

The *mantle stone* generates a *spell mantle* around the wearer. This invisible field of magic reflects all spells of less than 4th level cast at the wearer as if he were wearing a *ring of spell turning*. This *mantle* is constant, though its magic can only reflect up to five spells per day, and then fading for 24 hours or until it rests for 8 hours.

The wearer also can utilize the *mantle stone* for a unique purpose once per day. If the gem is grasped and held tightly in the palm or pressed to the forehead, the wearer can place three memorized spells or spell-like powers (including beholder eyebeam powers) into the gem. This, of course, can cancel out the wearer's use of these powers if they are limited by memorization or set number of uses per day. However, this power grants the *mantle stone* the ability to cast these stored powers when it deems fit. The spells or powers must be ranged effects, or they are totally useless for the *stone's* abilities.

The *mantle stone* is sentient with the intelligence and soul of Vhyridaan the Mad, a half-elf, exile wizard whose attempts to teach himself High Magic saw him lose his mind into his creation. The *mantle stone* was to be a *kiira* to store his knowledge, but it bodily absorbed him and his only other magical item, a *ring of spell turning*. If the wearer of the *mantle stone* is a spellcaster, Vhyridaan can memorize three spells accessible to a 14th-level wizard (i.e., maximum spell level of 7th); these are in addition to those willed into him, as detailed above. He can only hover above and read those same spells that the wearer himself studies, so he is most likely to have duplicate spells. Vhyridaan is a trapped soul, and while he can mentally communicate with the wearer if the mantle stone is held or contacted, he has no Ego or any chance of possessing its wearer.

The *mantle stone of Vhyridaan* is first encountered as an item of the Hlondathan lich Laummas. After his defeat and destruction at Twilight's Fall, the *stone* falls into the possession of Laummas' puppet Nezas for a short time. The traitor and coward delivered the *stone* to Aulmpiter the nycaloth over-commander, who retained it until the final Fall. There, in battle against Captain Fflar, Aulmpiter, the *mantle stone*, Fflar, and his sword *Keryvian* may have all been destroyed in the explosion that killed them (as *Foebane* appeared to shatter the *stone* in midair) and signaled the end of the war; then again, only twisted and shattered bones remained, and no sign of either item.

The Orb of Pyxaanthal

When most folk seek this fabled item from long-gone Uvaeren, they assume it is a crystal ball or some ocular device such as a gem of seeing. Imagine their surprise to discover the Orb of Pyxaanthal is a diamond-hard crystalline beholder, fully articulate and animate yet made of hard, cold, transparent crystal. All of the details (even blood-shot eyes) in living crystal make many believe this is less a construct than a bound and transformed creature.

The *orb of Pyxaanthal* acts, for all intents and purposes, as a standard beholder with a 17 Intelligence and a Lawful Evil temperament. The *orb* hovers and has full maneuverability within its set location (i.e., it can rotate freely to allow the use of all of its eyes), but it cannot move laterally or vertically; in other words, it cannot move from the place in which it hovers.

The *orb's* powers are unique and suited to its new form. Its central eye acts as a standard *crystal ball*, and it shows whatever scene Pyxaanthal wishes to show (or is ordered to show). The six eyestalks atop its head can fire *magic missile*, *hold person*, *hold monster*, *lightning bolt*, *burning hands* (projected from one eye), and *create water* (also projected from one eye) at a rate of one eye per round, and each effect may be used twice a day.

The *orb of Pyxaanthal's* special power is well documented, and it also likes to brag about this power and its accuracy. All it needs is a *dimension door* spell cast into it to recharge this ability, and it can emit a *teleport without error* effect through its six eyestalks and send those affected to the site depicted in the central eye and *crystal ball*. Of course, folk must get its word of honor that no harm comes from the *orb's* actions. Fools who trust Pyxaanthal with their welfare for no reason can find that it shifted the image of their destination to somewhere else. The *orb* can *teleport* creatures without any harmful effects up to 1,500 miles away, which also determines the extent of its scrying.

This *orb* is intelligent and moves and speaks and acts just as a beholder does, though its powers are much different. The *orb of Pyxaanthal* obeys requests, but its vanity and pride must be assuaged in order to get it to work. Roleplaying the pleading PCs and the obstinate crystal beholder should lead to some great character play. The *orb* is controlled by a small golden circlet with a diamond set at the brow; originally, this circlet was stored with it, but thieves separated the two items, and now the *orb* cannot be totally controlled. When within 20 yards of the circlet, the *orb* and the gem in the circlet both pulse with a soft light. The wearer of the circlet can command Pyxaanthal to utilize its abilities without fear of rebellion or reprisal.

The origins of this mysterious object/creature are entirely unknown and lost to history, and Pyxaanthal is certainly not forthcoming with any information. Is the *orb* actually Pyxaanthal, crystallized and forced into servitude, or is Pyx the wizard who caught it? In any regard, it was long trapped in a long-lost treasure and lore cache of Uvaeren. It was uncovered during the war and used to great effect on both sides.

The Defenders' Munitions

There is no lack of magical weaponry among the elves and their allies, for they defend the greatest of the modern magical realms—Cormanthyr and its capital and shining star of Myth Drannor! Any magical items in the *DMG* are to be found among the defenders as lowly as the foot soldier or as lofty as the High Court Mages. These below are merely those which performed special services during the Weeping War or those most often told of by bards.

The Baneblades of Demron

The baneblades of Demron are six individual swords of various types all linked by their creator's name. While considered a collective group of weapons by history, the baneblades were merely six separate commissions over 300 years for magical swords to be made by this great enchanter. While Demron gets all the credit for these swords, all of them were a collaborative effort: Dwarves forged and shaped the blades; elves crafted the ornate, elongated hilts; halflings created the finely-tooled leather and metal scabbards for all; and the human Demron laid the enchantments.

Demron received the commission for the first three swords from Arms-Major Pirphal Faerondaryl for his newest lieutenants. After

serious misgivings about elf military conduct, the Major wanted a sword for each of his new non-elf officers. Thus, in the Year of the Battle Talons (358 DR), a great military ceremony presented *Evaelathil*, *Mhaorathil*, and *Morvian* to their respective halfling, dwarf, and human wielders, all Akh'Velehr officers. More than a century later, Demron created *Faervian*, a blade for the use of the senior officers of the Akh'Faer in the Year of the Empty Helm (462 DR). While a special *baneblade* was ordered for Major Pirphal of the Akh'Velehr in the Year of the Gored Griffon (574 DR), it was lost a mere 16 years later in battle against the black wyrms Crinabnahor. By the Year of Chasms (633 DR), Demron had spent the last three years creating his final baneblade as the symbolic weapon for the leader of the Akh'Velehr. The human wizard was found dead, slumped over his worktable and the flickering magic of his greatest work. It was later rumored that some thief used this last *baneblade* to kill him (a rumor spread by one who did not know the true origin for the blades' names), but most believe he died of overexertion and the exhaustion of casting such deep enchantments.

Another misconception and curiosity about the *baneblades* are this collective and human name for them. While some still believe an old wives' tale that they were so named because they proved to be the bane of their creator, it is the loose and liberal translation of their elvish that give them their collective name. As Demron explained to the elves carving the hilts of these weapons, each sword was for a certain type of wielder, and it would have certain powers along certain themes to be reflected in the hilts. In fact, the elf whitesmiths were often the ones to name the blades before enchanting had even begun, thus their elvish names. Since the first two swords were named with "-athil," an elvish suffix meaning "bane," the dwarves and many of Demron's assistants took to calling the swords "baneblades". Even before the third blade was finished and its suffix of "-vian" ("boon") countered the others, too much word of mouth saw the *baneblades* adopted as their semi-official collective name. Though their truenames sometimes mean otherwise, all the swords have a "bane" name by which they are most commonly known to humans and other non-elves.

For some reason, these swords have generated far more than the usual mantle of rumors and speculations, and even now apparently have some great hidden secret. A popular myth created by a bard from Myth Drannor a century after the Fall claims "Demron and the Coronal had an intricate and secret plan, whereas six swords would be made, one each for life, love, Art, death, hate, and war. The magic of each sword would be mighty, but were ever all six united, a great lost secret of Myth Drannor would be revealed, and elf and N'Tel'Quess alike would understand the truth of the Coronal's and Demron's dreams."

Standard Powers of Baneblades

All of Demron's created blades share these powers and abilities. It is unknown if Demron built the swords this way at someone's (the Coronal's?) direction or if he had a number of standard enchantments when creating items. It is known that he made a set of daggers keyed only for him with some of these powers and the ability to constantly dance about, as if having the combined powers of dancing swords but moving more like ioun stones, their orbits continually weaving around him.

- **Alignment:** All *baneblades* are of good alignment, and the swords' powers are tied to their wielders' alignments. If an evil person grasps a *baneblade* and tries to use it, the sword's magic goes dormant, and its ever-present flames flicker out and die. The magic can be restored only by the touch of a good assigned wielder (see below).
- **Assigned Wielders:** Each *baneblade* was created either for a particular race or type of character (warrior, wizard). In the hands of its correct wielder, the *baneblade* grants its wielder the THAC0 of his next XP level (i.e., an 8th-level fighter uses his 9th-level THAC0). If a *baneblade* wielder is not among its assigned users (i.e., a thief swinging a warrior's blade), that

person fights with a THAC0 of one level lower (an 8th-level PC uses a 7th-level THAC0).

- **Combat Bonuses:** All the baneblades apply a +4 bonus to attack and damage rolls. This bonus also applies for saving throw rolls when the sword is in hand.
- **Light/Corona of Flames:** All *baneblades* flicker with magical fire along the blade whenever drawn. The flames "burn" things that Demron deemed "wrong"—any undead creatures, beings not native to the Prime Material Plane, or evil-aligned creatures. These targets suffer double the base damage of the weapon (i.e., a 1d8+4 long sword deals 2d8+4 damage vs. undead, and so on). These magical fires are also equivalent to torchlight for lighting purposes (30'-radius).

Each of the *baneblades* has at least three other powers beyond the above abilities. While some have parallel abilities even there, each has one power all its own that serves its primary theme, purpose, or wielder. While powerful and unique, these swords are not hereditary or keyed to a specific person or bloodline, like *moonblades*. While all of the powers (both standard and individual) respond to spoken command words, an assigned wielder who has wielded the blade for more than a month can mentally will and command the blade's powers. As they were created for the military of Cormanthyr, most (if not lost) remain in the service of the Akh'Velehr or Akh'Faer long after the Fall of Myth Drannor. The swords are fully detailed below in order of their creation.

Evaelathil

A.K.A.: "Flamebane"; the Blade of Hate; the Scoutblade; the Halfling's Blade.

Assigned Wielders: Halfling (any class); implied wielder was second-in-command of the Akh'Velehr scouts.

Sword Type: Short sword.

Flame Corona: Green.

Description: This short sword is a clean piece of dwarf forge art, and the hilt is the shortest of all the baneblades, fitted exclusively for halflings. The entire hilt is shaped like a miniature shadowtop tree, with the leafy crown as the seat of the blade. Its emerald-green blade flames are cool to the touch.

History: *Evaelathil* means "nemesis of intensity" or "enemy of affection," but it was not created to be a powerful weapon of darkness and abhorrence. Demron created this to be an equalizer between its wielder and any aggressive foe, more in terms of using an enemy's hate against itself than fueling a wielder with it. Always created with the halflings in mind, the sword is as they are, at balance with nature, where there is no excess of emotion, only contentment or lack thereof.

This weapon saw 29 wielders in the 35 decades between its creation and the Fall, since either the halflings' natures drove them to retire from their posts and allow another to succeed them or they died in the line of duty. At the time of the Weeping War, the Akh'Velehr scout Ellidor Snowtoes (NG halfm T9) bore *Evaelathil* proudly throughout the war until his death at the Honorsgate War in Myth Drannor. Someone stole the blade from his corpse and secreted it out of Myth Drannor.

Powers

- **Fire Control and Resistance:** When the sword and its wielder are within 20 feet of an open flame, they can manipulate flames by will as if using an affect normal fires spell. If the sword is thrown into a fire without being held by its wielder, it simply snuffs the fire automatically (though magical fires get a saving throw against this effect).
- **Friendflames:** Any intelligent creatures that enter the radius of light emitted by Flamebane suffer the identical effects of a *friends* spell (reaction check against enhanced Charisma, etc.). Any creatures of animal or lower Intelligence automatically become docile and do not attack the wielder unless wounded or controlled by magic or psionics.

- *Sense of Nature*: Within a 200-yard radius of *Evaeathil*, the wielder can sense the emotions and feelings of intelligent beings (Intelligence 3 and up), including some animals. In general, this power is nonspecific and only allows the wielder to sense emotions from a compass point direction. Stronger emotions and responses (including pain) allow the wielder to gauge approximate numbers and approximate distance (in terms of up to 50 yards, 100 yards, or 200 yards away from the wielder).

Mhaorathil

A.K.A.: “Plaguebane”; the Blade of Life; the Trooper’s Blade; Dwarfblade.

Assigned Welders: Dwarf (any class); implied wielder was in command of Akh’Velahr shock troops under the Arms-Captain (Akh’Velahr’s second-in-command).

Sword Type: Short sword.

Flame Corona: Orange.

Description: This blade is gripped by a wide, heavy hilt well-suited for a dwarf and the blade itself is thicker and heavier than *Evaeathil*, well suited for a dwarf’s heavier swing and slash. The blade’s seat is a head, split along the line of the blood groove with one half as an exposed skull and the other a smiling face (though not one specifically of any race). The quillons under the healthy face are entangled ivy, while the quillons under the skull-side of the blade are a morass of skeletal bones and limbs. The blade’s flames are isolated on the upper two-thirds of the blade, though orange flames frequently flash within the eyes of the pommel head/skull and flash up the blade into the corona.

History: While undead were not often a major concern among the central woods around Myth Drannor, there were a number of areas to the north and east where skeletons and other abominations roamed far more commonly than was normal Demron, believing correctly that dwarves are notorious undead-haters, crafted this blade as ordered for a dwarf officer, but imbued its special undead-battling talents to complement dwarf attitudes and the task at hand. Thus, *Mhaorathil* is the baneblade most focused against a particular type of foe; thus, the name of “Corruption’s Bane” is fitting for its cleansing flames and singlemindedness against abominations.

Mhaorathil has rested in only one wielder’s hand throughout its entire existence: Battlemaster Vuth Steelire (CG dm F11). The mastermind behind the Northdark Skirmishes and the hero of the Mythal’s Mettle Campaign, Vuth was a loud, brash, arrogant dwarf with no patience for politics or prejudices. Despite the many faults the elves (especially the nobles) tried to lay at his feet, Vuth’s honor and ability to inspire troops of all creeds outshone any reproach or conspiracies until long after the Fall.

Powers

- *Curing Flames*: When placed in the hands of any good-aligned creature, the flames of the sword can flare up and burn away any disease (including mummy rot) within the holder and cure 1d6 hit points of damage. This power can be used twice per day, but only once per person, including its wielder.
- *Flare*: *Mhaorathil* can project a burst of flame into a 5’-radius from the sword and its wielder. The flames are harmless to all things except undead. The *flare* itself acts to repel undead as if the dwarf were a 5th-level priest; if the wielder is actually a priest, this effect (if used while turning undead) adds five levels to the priest’s normal effectiveness against undead. Any undead that actually contact the flames incur 1d4 points of damage (save vs. spell for half), though these flames only last for one round.
- *Undead Wounding*: *Mhaorathil* acts similar to a *sword of wounding* when used against undead. Successful hits on an undead creature inflict the standard *baneblade* damage (2d6+4+Str bonus), but *Mhaorathil* leaves small flickering

flames in the wounds. These flames inflict an automatic 1d3 hit points of damage in each successive round for the next ten rounds. These cannot be extinguished by any normal means (such as water, sand, smothering, etc.), though *dispel magic* does cancel them. Damage inflicted by *Mhaorathil* on undead creatures also must be healed normally, rather than by potions or spells, since it feeds on and depletes the Negative Plane energy that fuels the undead.

Morvian

A.K.A.: “Darkbane”; the Blade of Death; the Dragon Rider’s Great Sword

Assigned Welders: Warrior (fighter, paladin, or ranger); assumed wielder was to be human, though Demron secretly did not make it exclusive like the first two; implied wielder was the commander of the Wing and Horn.

Sword Type: Two-handed sword.

Flame Corona: Yellow.

Description: Easily the most impressive and flashy of the baneblades, *Morvian* also is the largest at six feet in length. The blade itself is a single forged piece of mithral, its honed edges carved to appear as flames. Most believe the blade is also gold-plated, though that may come from its constant golden-yellow flame corona. The hilt is a masterwork of elf white-smithing; from a core of steel, gold and bronze wirework entwine and alternate with the dark gray steel work to make the elongated hilt appear to be a snake with scales of three different metals. Its tail wraps around to form the seat of the blade, and the quillons are carved bands of the three metals shaped like licking flames.

History: Given the size and length of the sword, *Morvian* was always intended as a cavalry officers blade, its long reach most useful when the wielder is astride a mount. While most believed this blade was created for human hands only (like its two racially limited predecessors), it was to be assigned specifically to one of the cavalry’s two top officers. For strategic reasons, Demron chose to make *Morvian* more powerful than the others, and thus he gave it a test similar to an elfblade or a moonblade. In other words, while many might desire to wield it, few were worthy enough to do so. Thus was the fate of the three gold elf thieves who tried to steal the blade from Demron before it was presented to “a foul hairy ape of a human”. Unfortunately, it also happened to the human lieutenant chosen to draw it first, and the blade came into the grasp of Itham “the Dragonfriend,” a human paladin who had befriended the young gold dragon *Haklashara* from the western mountains near the old Rystall Woods. Lieutenant Itham wielded *Morvian* for 40 years, and then died violently in an aerial battle over Myth Drannor against two black dragons (with seven dragons assaulting the mythal, probing for weaknesses) in the Year of the Nightsun.

After the death of Itham “Dragonfriend,” his great blade *Morvian* and his mount and friend *Haklashara* the Gold fell near his second-in-command and lover Lady *Ahskahala* *Durothil*. One of few gold elves to respect (and dare to love) humans, *Ahskahala* was respected by her troops and their mounts far more than her noble House and clan. She retrieved *Morvian* from where it fell, knowing full well it might harm her, and she took to the skies and brought the battle to a close without even a mount to help her. Due to her long friendship with *Haklashara* and her defense of him while wounded, *Ahskahala* became the gold dragon’s next rider and the leader of the Wing and Horn.

In more than 300 years, only one other being besides Lady *Durothil* has touched this blade, let alone wielded it, and that is her dragon companion *Haklashara*. Some witnesses swear the gold dragon uses a polymorphed form of a male elf and wields *Morvian* as easily as the commander; as this is a serious breach of etiquette and both beings are known as lawful and loyal officers of the realm, these stories are dismissed as idle rumors.

Bladerite: The person who draws this blade from its scabbard is immediately judged by the magic of the great sword itself. If the wielder is not of good moral alignment, the blade becomes far too heavy for the wielder to lift, and then the yellow flames erupt along the person's arms. The wielder's arms become withered and nigh-useless (Strength 4) for 1d10 years (treat as a curse, not a standard magic effect). If a drow should touch this drawn blade's hilt, he needs to make a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon at a -4 penalty or the yellow flames engulf the wielder and reduce him to dust instantly. A drow of good alignment makes the saving throw without penalties, but failure to save shares the same result.

Powers

- **Combat Bonuses:** *Morvian* was forged as a blade to combat chaos and evil, and specifically it was to defeat the embodiment of chaos and evil in red dragons. Thus, if used against opponents as noted below, the baneblades' combat bonuses increase:

chaotic foes:	+5 attack/damage
evil foes:	+6 attack/damage
chaotic evil foes:	+7 attack/damage
CE red dragons:	+8 attack/6d6+4 damage
- **Magic Resistance:** *Morvian's* wielder gains a 50% magic resistance for up to 10 rounds per day, once activated by silent act of will. At all other times, whether the sword is drawn or not (but within five feet), the wielder gains the *baneblade's* standard +4 saving throw bonus vs. magic.
- **Sunfires:** Once per day, *Morvian's* yellow flame corona can be commanded to expand visually to a radius of 60 feet around the sword, though it takes the flames a round to spread out that far. In effect, it often appears that the wielder and her mount are enshrouded in translucent yellow flames, a fearsome effect in battle! For all intents and purposes, the light is equal to sunlight (including all harmful against undead, drow, and other creatures), and does not hinder the visual sight of the wielder or any creatures used to sunlight. The sunfires last for 10 rounds and then recede back into the blade corona.

Faervian

A.K.A.: "Battlebane"; the Sword of Art; the Mage's Blade.

Assigned Wielders: Wizard (any type, including multi- or dual class characters); implied sole wielder was Akh'Faer Spell-Major until return of the ary/faern'kerym elfblade, then Spell-Captain (Second in command of Akh'Faer).

Sword Type: Long sword.

Flame Corona: Purple.

Description: The long sword, unlike the others with intricate hilts of different metals, appears as if it were forged from a single, solid piece of burnished steel. The hilt is elongated, just like all elven blades, though its smooth, simple twisted design was done merely to give a good gripping surface. Strangely, the blade has no quillons, though the hilt obviously stops at the rounded blade seat. The top of the hilt is a large, perfectly spherical eye for the blade seat. The carved eye's pupil only appears on one side at once, though it always faces outward away from the wielder. Some dismiss this effect as merely how the wielder holds it, while others swear the eye actually roves along that sphere, and when its magic are activated, the eye flashes purple, just like the blade's flames. The blade itself is quite strong, though its weight seems to be about half what a long sword normally weighs.

History: In the Year of the Empty Helm (462 DR), after two years of work, Demron completed Faervian, the fourth baneblade and the only one for the Akh'Faer to replace the long-lost Artblade.

Josidiah Starym returned to Myth Drannor in the Year of the Nomad (674 DR) with the Spell-Major's original blade of office, the ary/faern'kerym or Artblade in hand. The bladesinger took his rightful place as the Spell-Major of the Akh'Faer, and Faervian's wielder—Paeris Haladar—drops to the Spell Captain's

second-in-command position. Fifteen years later, Paeris attempted to reclaim his place as Major, but the Artblade found him unworthy and stripped him of all magical power and ability. Josidiah named Phyrria Iliathorr, a moon elf bladesinger, as Faervian's new wielder.

Phyrria wielded the blade until her ignoble death in the Battle of Fallen Flight. Acting as the point in a flying-V formation of soaring elves, Captain Phyrria was among the first to fall as the mythal's powers corrupted under the increased presence of yugoloths in its midst. Their strategy to strafe the yugoloths engulfing the main streets shattered, the elves fell from a great height, and few rose (painfully) from where they landed. The traitor-mage Nezas, fully in the thrall of Aulmpiter and his Army of Darkness, cast dig, earthquake, and sink spells on the elves, including Phyrria, entombing the noble defenders and their equipment (including Faervian) deep beneath the crumbling Towers of Song.

Powers

- **Armathor's Armor Rest:** If commanded, the purple flames of the blade engulf the caster; this power requires one round to activate. With only a -4 penalty to initiative in the following round, the caster can step to one side, leaving any spellcasting hindrances such as armor and the sword itself within the flames, and cast spells with a casting time of 4 or less. This power creates a flaming mannequin upon which floats the wielder's armor; it can be stepped into as easily as removed, but if another creature other than the previous wearer touches the armor or flames, they suffer 4d6 points of damage (even if immune to fire), and the armor clatters to the ground. This power was often used when the Spell-Major went into major battles armored, and this power quickly divests the armor to allow full spellcasting capabilities. The armor rest lasts for the ten rounds, after which the armor clatters to the ground, and the flames dissipate. This power can be activated at will up to three times per day.
- **Prismatic Pyre:** With a command word from its wielder once per day, *Faervian* could launch itself up to 50 feet away and balance itself point down on a surface. Then, its flames poured along the surface in a many-colored flood and covered all areas of the surface out to a 30' radius around the sword, creating a flaming surface for one turn per tenday. If any creatures stood on the flames holding or carrying metal weapons, they needed to make saving throws vs. magic for each item or the weapon(s) were thrown outside the circle of flames (magical weapons get saving throws vs. this effect). For those creatures without innate spellcasting abilities, the flames affect them as a slow spell. In effect, this fiery platform clears away all nonwizardly opposition.
- **Spell-slashes:** Thrice per day, the wielder can cast a contact-range spell and store it within the blade for up to six hours. At a later time (whether the following round or five hours after casting), the wielder can activate the spell and have its magic among the flames of the sword. Then, if the sword makes a successful hit within a round of recalling the spell, it takes effect on the target in addition to the blade's standard damage. Only one spell can be stored in the blade at once; if a second spell is cast into the blade, the first spell is lost, and its effects are wasted.

Dragathil

A.K.A.: "Hatebane"; Blade of Love; the Unity Blade.

Assigned Wielders: Warrior (fighter, paladin, or ranger); implied sole wielder was Defender by Arm, Akh'Velehr Arms-Major.

Sword Type: Long sword.

Flame Corona: Red.

Description: Dragathil is an atypical long sword with a slightly curved blade and a slim row of rubies inset along the blade's center length. Its basket hilt is made of an oddly-tinted rosy

steel, and the basket itself appears as a trio of harps intertwined with roses and thorns. It is subtly crafted so humans can wield it with hands inside the basket, while elves would grasp the blade around the outside of the basket (and magical solid-as-steel quillons are formed from the flame corona at the touch of an elf to protect his hand from harm in battle). The red-dragon-scale leather wrap on the short pommel accentuates the red color of the hilt, as do the red flames of the blade.

History: At the behest of the elves among the Akh'Velehr, the Coronal had Dragathil created as a sword of office for the Arms-Major. A number of gold elf families tried to impress upon Demron the need for an elf-specific sword, like Eraelathil and Mhaorathil, though Demron kept his word to the Coronal never to create a divisive sword for the elves—they had the elf-blades and moonblades and that was enough. Unknown to the Arms-Major, the Coronal asked Demron to enchant a sword to promote peace, alliance, and love rather than violence and dominance. And Dragathil, the “bane of hatred,” was forged and enchanted in the Year of the Gored Griffon (574 DR).

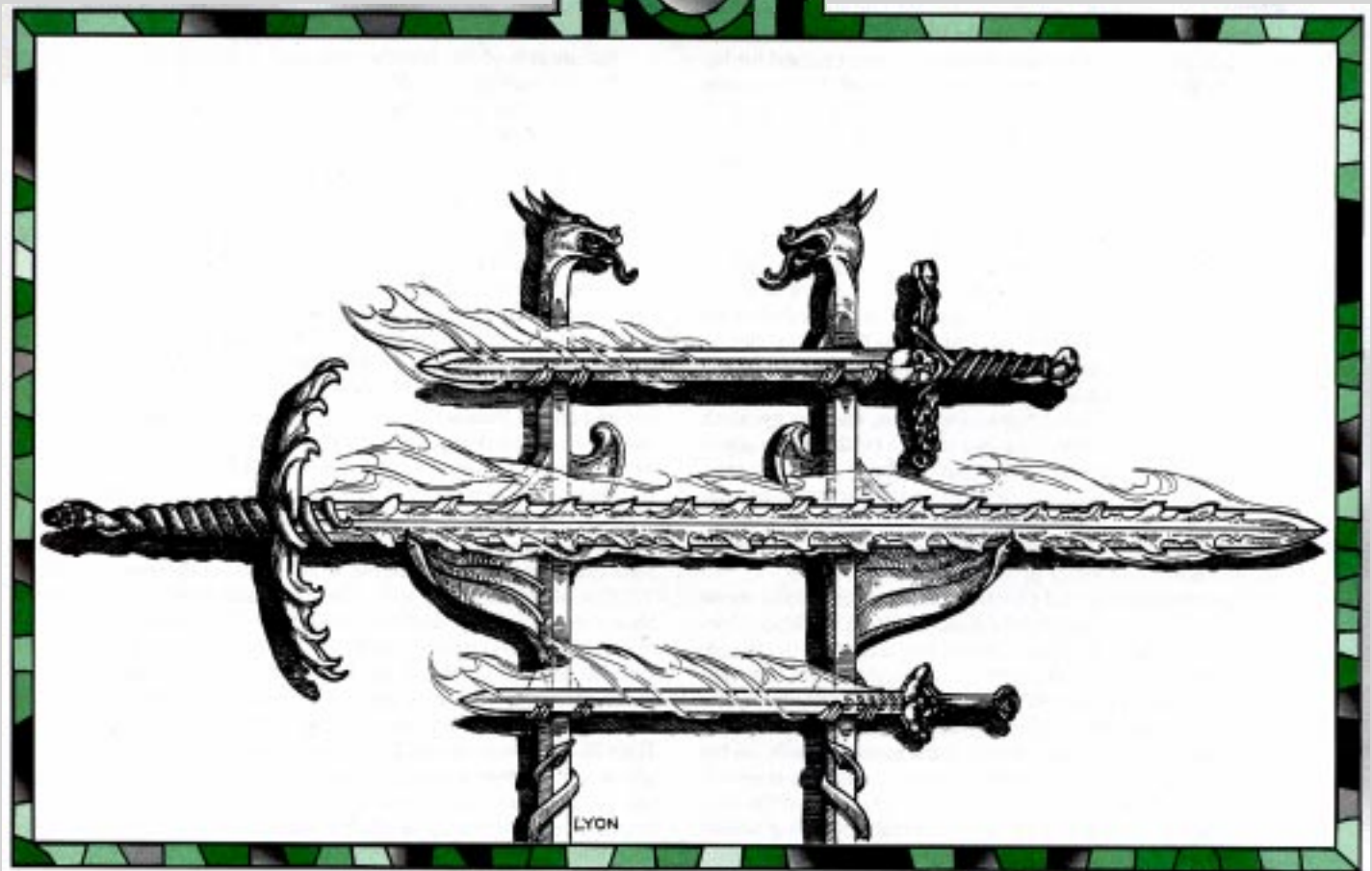
Tragically, 16 years later in the Year of the Turning Leaf, Major Pirphal died while hunting a marauding black dragon along with 24 of his patrol scouts. The black dragon Crinabnahor, due to heightened and vengeful patrols, abandoned its raids on Cormanthor and fled to its mountain hoard west of Dragon Sea with Dragathil and other items. Many a young elf warrior went in search of Dragathil over the next centuries, all to no avail.

Powers

- **Hold Person:** Three times per day, Dragathil’s wielder can cast *hold person* at his own level or as a 9th-level mage (whichever is higher). The *hold person* effect leaves a light layer of harmless flames around the character, allowing *Dragathil’s* owner the chance to speak peace-

ably with attackers. If anyone should attempt to attack held and helpless targets, the attack is successful, but minimal damage (1 point per die) is done to the target while the attacker takes the rest of the rolled damage (including all Strength and magical bonuses) as the magical flames rush up the weapon and cause a backlash for “breaking the peace.”

- **Crystal Parry:** Once per day, this power can be unleashed against nonmagical (or evil-aligned and magical) metal weapons. The wielder must parry an oncoming hand-to-hand metal weapon attack (i.e., forfeit attacks and add half the XP level to her AC, and failed attack by foe meaning a successful parry). Once the power is activated, it remains in effect until a successful parry. The parried metal weapon suffers all the effects of a *crystalbrittle* spell, and is often shattered by the next attack by *Dragathil’s* wielder.
- **Dancing Sword:** *Dragathil* acts in all ways as a standard sword of dancing with a +4 combat bonus.
- **Forgiving Fires:** On an unmodified attack roll of 18 or better, the wielder can choose to unleash *forgiving fires* upon the head and heart of the target, twice per day. Flames snake off the blade and surround the head and the torso over the target’s heart. Within the flames, the target is unharmed, but he is subject to powerful *spectral force* and *fire charm* effects. If a successful saving throw is not made against the *spectral force*, the target believes he has been teleported to safety and into a very desirable situation (whatever that entails for that target). In this case, the *fire charm* holds him motionless for its duration or until the target is attacked again. If the first save is successful, the target character realizes he is surrounded by harmless flames but is fascinated and immobile (by the *fire charm*) unless this saving throw is successful. Even if both spells fail to hold a target long, they are distracting enough to incur a +3 initiative penalty to the target.



Keryvian

A.K.A.: “Foebane”; Blade of Battle; the Leader’s Sword.

Assigned Wielders: Warrior (fighter, paladin, ranger, or multi-class); implied sole wielder was the Arms-Major, the leader of the Akh’Velahr.

Sword Type: Bastard sword.

Flame Corona: Blue.

Description: This long-hilted bastard sword has a 6’-long massive kris blade (wavy edges) treated with blueshine to give it a deep azure hue and permanent shine with a resistance to acids and rust. The hilt, also treated with blueshine, appears as the body of a blue dragon, its body and tail forming the pommel while its jaws clamped firmly on the massive blade to make the blade’s seat and its outspread wings creating the great serrated quillons. The horns of the dragon are diamonds, but no other precious gems adorn the blade or hilt. The flame corona varies from sky blue with white highlights to deep midnight blue with purple highlights, depending on how light-hearted or angry the wielder is.

History: The last of the baneblades of Demron, Keryvian, the blade of Battle, was forged to become the new symbol for the Arms-Major after the loss of Dragathil after less than two decades. While its use only graced Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr for barely more than eight decades, Keryvian, or Foebane to the humans, is the most famous and reputedly most powerful of all six baneblades. This is due to its significance to the Fall of Myth Drannor, since the legendary blade fell to Fflar, the legendary Last Captain of Myth Drannor, and it felled the Grand Commander of the Army of Darkness!

After many long years, Demron completed Keryvian, but died soon after his work on the blade was complete. Arms-Major Kelvhan Olortynnal took up the blade and wielded it well for 81 years until his fall at the Battle of Crownfrost Capture in the City. Many of his officers saw him and his Arms-Captain fall to attacks by a horde of mezzoloths, though one enraged officer broke their ranks and retrieved their corpses. In the rush, the young commander had picked up Faervian with no apparent regard for his safety, and the troops recognized this as a battlefield promotion by the Seldarine. Whether the young commander wished it or not, his troops called him Captain Fflar (“Captain of True Valor”) and looked to him for direction in a hopeless battle. The Captain lifted Foebane aloft and led the retreat from the lost battle, saving 400 out of the defending forces of 1,200 allies.

Captain Fflar bore Foebane for only 19 days, but his brief time saw many great accomplishments of which many still sing ballads today. He rallied the demoralized elves, commanded five more victories against the Army of Darkness, and engineered the escape of nearly 1,000 more elves trapped in the falling city by the hordes. Fflar died in heroic battle on the 15th day of Flame-rule, when Foebane’s Last Strike ended the Bane Duels battle, Aulmpiter’s control of the Army of Darkness, and the nycaloth commander’s life. That saved the day and the battle for the allies, but for all its power and all Fflar’s skill, Foebane could not save Myth Drannor. After the death of Fflar, neither Keryvian nor the bodies of the Last Captain or Aulmpiter could be recovered; all that was found was a blast point amid a huge array of over 20 dead mezzoloths and lesser nycaloths.

With this mysterious end providing no answers, many more abilities have been rumored to be hidden within the blade Foebane since the Fall. Of course, history has forgotten the mages and bladesingers that stood with Fflar nearly to the last, and many of the blade’s rumored powers could be attributed more rightly to others’ spells than to Keryvian. Much of the lore arose from Captain Fflar’s own heroism and the stand he took. As his position was merely a battlefield promotion made in desperation, little is truly known about Captain Fflar beyond the fact that he was the last officer of the Akh’Velahr standing within Myth Drannor at the end. It can be corroborated that he alone

slew no less than 12 nycaloths in the final battle, including the Grand Commander of the Darkness, Aulmpiter, even though legends have him fighting heroically atop a mound of hundreds of yugoloths!

Powers

- *Feather Fall:* Any character touching *Keryvian* and up to eight characters touching him or the blade are protected by automatic *feather fall* defenses when falling.
- *Guardian:* *Foebane* can be commanded to “guard” whenever held or touched by its owner. If the owner ceases to touch it after the order is given, the blade remains vigilant; if the next entity to physically touch the blade is not the owner, the sword emits a very loud singing sound as it animates and attacks that entity. The sword levitates about at MV Fl 24 (A), strikes with a THAC0 6, and should be considered as having 77 hit points when it is striking by itself (damage just knocks it about, and does not permanently damage to the blade). The guarding sword attacks the entity that touched it until it does 20 hit points of damage, the entity dies, or its owner reclaims it. This power helps guard against the theft of the blade from a sleeping owner.
- *Jump:* Activated at will, *Keryvian* has the power to *jump* with up to three beings twice per day.
- *Lifedrink:* Once per day, Foebane can “drink” life force, when in use and ordered to do so. After this power is activated, the next successful attack made inflicts double its normal damage—and these points are gained by the blade-wielder, as hit points for healing only. The blade-wielder gains no extra hit points in this way, and the blade cannot drain more hit points than a target has (if zero is reached, the target dies, but is never made undead).
- *Magic Reflection:* *Foebane* reflects magic cast at it or at its wielder: Each round, roll 1d8. If a hostile magical item discharges or spell effects are of a level lower than the roll, they are completely reflected back at their source. If their levels are higher, they have their normal effect on their target. If the roll and the spell level are a tie, both the sword-wielder and the source of the hostile magic are affected (50% reflection) for half damage or half the normal results. If the nature of the spell makes this result impossible, a “wild magic” effect occurs instead.

The Highfire Crown

Sighted only briefly after the establishment of the mythal over Elven Court, the Highfire Crown was a mysterious portent for the surviving elves after the Fall of Myth Drannor. As the mythal rose and bloomed throughout the newly restored holy city of Elven Court, the 13 High Mages unexpectedly erupted into pillars of fire that lanced toward the central Grand Caster. When the conflagration subsided, all that remained of them were 13 selu’kiira, each surrounded by silver and amber flames and moving in graceful, controlled orbits that sketched out the design of a crown of seven points in trailing licks of arcane flame. The soon-to-be-legendary Highfire Crown hovered at the peak of the new mythal for the first night of its life, then merged with the next day’s dawn, like Eltagrim’s Passing.

Notes: The *Highfire Crown* effectively contains 13 special *selu’kiira*, or *High Lore Gems* which contain the essences of the 13 High Mages. As they were absorbed into their own *lore gems*, their full knowledge and sentience remains. However, without a conduit person (or persons) to walk out and perform the rituals, the collective High Mages are little more than a magical phenomenon. In terms of power, anyone who can don this crown would immediately become a Grand Mage with the ability to cast any High Magic rituals alone. The Crown acts as three to thirteen supplemental casters, creating flaming doppelgangers of their original forms to aid the physical central caster. Other effects and secondary powers may apply, but this is the basic function of the legendary Crown.

The DM is urged to make the *Highfire Crown* the object of great elf quests for wizards, much like the Grail Quest of Earth inspired many paladins and knights. The location of this major relic is utterly unknown to all mortals, though the Seldarine (and perhaps Amlaruil of Evermeet) know of it and might send visions of it to properly penitent seekers. The legends never make it certain if the High Mages intended to form this communal mind, or something during the mythal ritual affected them thusly, but they all allegedly smiled broadly as their forms burst into flames.

Kiira N'Vaelahr

Numbering two dozen in all, the “*Shadow Lore Gems*” are the badges of honor for the few, proud covert agents of the N'Vaelahr during the Fall of Myth Drannor. Especially constructed by Grand Mage Ualair the Silent, these magically-created gems were all formed from beljurils and emeralds, and when enchanted, they fused to form one glowing green gem in the shape of the Coronel Eltargrim's personal sigil (whose work the gems were to support).

Unlike standard *kiira*, which bonded invisibly to the wearer's forehead, these gems remained visible but could be bonded anywhere on a wearer's body. Traditionally, they were bonded over the heart and kept hidden under clothes, and the gems could be moved by concentration if the heart needed to be exposed. Also unlike the *kiira*, these gems did not rest placidly upon the skin, but they seem to dig painlessly into the wearer's flesh, as if it were stamped rather than magically bonded. A *kiira N'Vaelahr* cannot be removed from its wearer once bonded. Attempts to forcibly remove one cause it to *teleport* to the safekeeping of Aolis Ildacer, just as it would do upon the death of its bearer.

A *kiira N'Vaelahr* is far less powerful or forbidding than a House *kiira*, though the military and commoners of Myth Drannor learned to respect (and even slightly fear) “those who bore the emerald mark of Eltargrim.” Each *shadow lore gem* contains five standard powers. And due to their High Mage creator, the powers of a *shadow lore gem* are not hindered at all by the mythal.

- *Storage of Knowledge*: Like all *kiira*, the gem stores memories and experiences of its wearer, though these are far more specific if consciously willed into the gem. No matter the gem's location, the images are as seen or experienced by the gem's wearer. A *kiira N'Vaelahr* never records a wearer's thoughts or emotions unless willed to do so, and these impressions are embedded within the recorded sights and sounds. Such knowledge can be stored away mentally within each gem, and each separate experience or scene becomes visualized as a separate gem floating within the mind; these isolated memories cannot be unlocked without a mental command by the bearer or by pre-set command words. These memories can be relayed telepathically through other agents to senior officers for swift response to dire situations without the risk of any disturbing the information locked away (see *Telepathy* below).
- *Telepathy*: All N'Vaelahr can communicate telepathically with each other through their gems, and this is limited solely to gem-bearers, not to other forms of telepathy. The maximum range for mind-to-mind contact is a one-mile radius (in all directions) or a three-mile, 300'-wide directed beam (i.e., contact an agent known to be south of you). The telepathy is identical to standard verbal speech in terms of speed and understanding.

Agents can take certain memories and information from their own gems and telepathically send them to other agents. If the receiving agent is also given its lockword to access the information, he can see/experience the event noted. Most often, agents transmit their reports to others, and they are projected via mental relays all the way back to Myth Drannor and Lord Aolis or Lady Amara. It takes 1d4 rounds to “send” each memory telepathically to another gem-bearer, but only one round to unlock them and another round to quickly “read” the information therein.

- *Mind Blank/Mental AC*: In terms of psionic combat, the bearer gains a Mental AC of 0, and his mind and the information stored in the gem are protected as if under the constant influence of a *mind blank* spell. A *kiira N'Vaelahr* bearer immediately notices when attempts are made to contact him mentally by another N'Vaelahr, and this communication can occur even while under other psionic attacks.
- *Phantasmal Force*: As storage units of information, these lore gems record everything just as experienced by the wearer (whether by infravision, magically enhanced senses, etc.). With a command word and a given time frame, the gem can project a small three-dimensional illusion of any memory of what the bearer experienced during that time period. While worn, this power is only commanded by the wearer of the gem. If the wearer dies and the gem arrives in Aolis' hands, he or one of his designated officers can command the ownerless gem to emit its last recorded images and impressions.
- *Furious Flight*: A combined *haste* and *fly* spell was created long ago by Ualair and embedded in each of the *shadow lore gems*. This power can be used only once per tenday, and is solely for the purpose of quick escapes from hazardous situations, rather than swift travel to one's destination. When activated, the gem-bearer alone gains a -1 initiative bonus and is able to fly at MV 36 (B) for 2d6 hours. All other variables and effects are as per the standard *fly* spell.

Ruehar's Flute

Ruehar Oakstaff, one of the original Harpers at Twilight, was a long-time confidante, lover, and friend of Lady Steel. In gratitude, she created for the green elf mage and musician a unique magical transverse flute that looked like a rolled-up mage's scroll made from silver, with its holes lined up along the scroll's edge.

While the flute has some minor powers tied to its music, no bard has ever played this flute, so the powers are as yet unknown to the owners (standard abilities mentioned for musical instruments in the *Cormanthy* book). It has two other powers, neither of which are tied to musical talents, though Ruehar's musical abilities were well-noted.

This flute survived the Fall of Myth Drannor as it fell into the possession of Ruehar's granddaughter Lyraesel with his death at Twilight's Fall. Fulfilling his last wishes, Lyraesel led much of her clan and a number of other sylvan elf families south out of the forest. After a long trek on foot, the unified clans soon to be called the Elmanesse reached safety down among their distant kin within the Forest of Tethir.

- Its minor power, activated with two short blows on the flute in any note, surrounds the flute-wielder with a 30-foot-radius globe of ambient light equal to a full moon's light. This globe of light lasts for two hours, and during this time, all fog, mists, and airborne gases and mists outside the globe of light remain there (though any gaseous poisons released within the globe and within 10 feet of the flute-wielder have one round before the glowing magic forces the gases out of the sphere's area).
- The primary power that Ruehar and his descendants know of is its use as a spellbook: With a command word, the holder of *Ruehar's flute* can cause it to actually unroll and reveal spells recorded on the nine silver sheets that comprise the instrument. Seven of the sheets each hold one spell (as a spellbook, not a scroll), which were Ruehar's most commonly used spells as a Harper in Twilight. The two remaining sheets had yet to be inscribed with spells at the time of Ruehar's death, though they may have been written on in the interim. The spells of *Ruehar's flute* are as follows: 1st level: *affect normal fires*, *Tenser's floating disk*; 2nd level: *glitterdust*, *lively step*; (see below) 3rd level: *Leomund's tiny hut*, *phantom steed*, and 4th level: *massmorph*.

Lively Step

(Alteration, Enchantment/Charm)

Level: 2

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 4

Duration: 1 hour/level

Area of Effect: 30-yard radius around caster

Saving Throw: Neg.

This spell enchants all elves and half-elves within hearing range of its song (the spell itself). A sprightly, energetic tune and corresponding magic lends energy and animation to those who listen, and their speed is slightly improved for dancing, running, and broader movements (but not for use in direct combat).

This enchantment/charm spell was created to affect only elves and half-elves. In essence, it is a song-spell that increases the movement rates of elves by 50% (MV rate 18) and cancels fatigue, allowing them continued movement at this enhanced speed for extended periods of time without any corresponding penalties (like those for the more abrupt and powerful haste spell). *Lively step* was often used by Ruehar while on patrol with elf Harpers to speed their return to Myth Drannor. The spell's area of effect and the elves within that area determines how many can be affected by the spell. Any elf who ignores the song/spell can make a saving throw to negate its effects and remain at normal speeds.

It is unknown if the *lively step* spell works only with *Ruehar's flute* and if the unusual effects of the spell are some facet of the instrument's magic. Still, this is the only known copy of this spell, and only the owners of *Ruehar's flute* across the centuries have been known to use this spell.

Symrustar's Choker

This ornate choker of a tightly linked trio of platinum chains beset with gems was made exclusively for Symrustar at her request and enchanted by her to be, in effect, her spellbook. After its completion in the Year of the Dagger (348 DR), Symrustar never appeared anywhere without the familiar diadem glinting on her shapely neck.

The choker's three chains share a singular clasp, though once worn, the clasp disappears and the chains unite until the death of the wearer. Two rows of nine diamond-cut blue gems link the chains together, and these act similarly to *kiira* in their storage of specific knowledge. In all, the choker has 36 spells in "memory," and Symrustar can study the spells within the choker while in an extended reverie period (acts as both sleep and study phases as per normal spell restoration). The choker contains four spells from each spell level. The choker also contains two unique spells that cannot be physically recorded into a spellbook, and thus are known only to the wearer of the choker. The spells within the choker are: 1st level: *burning hands*, *grease*, *spider climb*, *Tenser's floating disk*; 2nd level: *alter self*; *ESP rope trick*, *spectral hand*; 3rd level: *blink*, *dispel magic*, *haste*, *lightning bolt*; 4th level: *Evard's black tentacles*, *ice storm*, *magic mirror plant growth*; 5th level: *cone of cold*, *contact other plane*, *distance distortion*, *extension II*; 6th level: *antimagic shell*, *eyebite*, *globe of invulnerability*, *veil*; 7th level: *Drawmij's instant summons*, *duo-dimension*, *mass invisibility*, *prismatic spray*; 8th level: *binding*, *glassteel*, *prismatic wall*, *sink*; 9th level: *foresight*, *Mystra's miasma*, *prismatic sphere*, and *The Symrustar's spellbinding*.

Mystra's Miasma

(Abjuration, Evocation)

Level: 9

Range: 60 yards

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 9

Duration: 1 turn/level

Area of Effect: 30 yards + 2 yards/level radius

Saving Throw: None

When cast, thick shimmering silver mists billow out from the center to instantly fill the area of effect, and the miasma lessens all physical movement and magic within its mists. Like a heavy fog blanketing a sea town, it mutes much activity and makes it difficult to see within its area.

First and foremost, *Mystra's miasma* limits all visual senses (infravision included) to a maximum range of 30 yards while inside the area of effect. This field also slows all entrants' movement of all types by half, and maneuverability classes are dropped by one. The *miasma* also affects all active magic and spell effects so all operate at absolute minimums (1 point of effect per die; i.e., a 7th-level caster's *fireball* only deals 7 points of damage) or at -2 against permanent effects (*bracers of defense AC5* now act as *AC5*, etc.).

Multiple castings have no additional effect on the area or its effects on those within it (i.e., no quartering of movement), they will add to the duration of the mists and the spell's standard effects.

Symrustar's Spellbinding

(Alteration, Divination)

Level: 9

Range: 10 yards

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 9

Duration: Special

Area of Effect: Caster

Saving Throw: None

This spectacular spell deconstructs wizard spells targeted at the caster or area-effect spells of which the caster is included, canceling their effects and using their own magic to inscribe the particulars of the spell into the book or scrolls marked as the recording medium. In essence, this spell cancels incoming spells and writes them down for the caster to learn later.

When cast, specially prepared scrolls or a spellbook must be touched by the caster. Any spell that comes within 10 yards of the caster (whether targeted there or cast as a missile, etc.) is immediately canceled, and its magic is transformed. Instead of the expected visual effect, the magic becomes a small glowing quill that rushes to the book or scrolls and breaks down the magic of the spell into spell instructions (just as they are in that spell's caster's spellbooks). Under the spell's duration, no magic can harm the book or scrolls upon which the magic plays, though they can be physically affected during this time. If the book is destroyed or damaged physically, the spell ends.

Symrustar's spellbinding can absorb and transcribe the details on quite a number of spells, though it affects only the first contacted spell each round. The magic also can only affect and deconstruct up to the caster's level in spell levels. The magic otherwise lasts for 1 round + 1 round/3 levels before it stops grabbing spells out of the air to record them for posterity. The writing itself is still magical and only lasts for 1 hour/level. If the caster wishes to save the spells, he must cast *permanency* and then *dispel magic* on each spell individually to make them into true spellbook pages for later use and study. If not, the "spellbound" spells fade away and are lost.

The *Symrustar's spellbinding* spell was developed by Symrustar after she became a Chosen of Mystra in the Year of Soaring Stars (261 DR). Acting as an advocate for the sharing of magical knowledge, this spell granted Symrustar both a unique defense while allowing her to snatch powerful magical knowledge from her foes and spread its secrets among all the races. After three centuries of using this spell, Symrustar managed to record over 100 spells that were once close-kept secrets of one House or another. These spells were always shared with Elminster Aumar, the Srinsee, the Coronal, and various faculties of wizards' schools in Myth Drannor. This spell alone made her the political enemy of so many nobles, though they did not stop its use, as they were just as eager to gain information on a rival House's magic as humans were to learn the simplest of elven spells.

MAGICS AND MYSTERIES OF THE FALLEN REALMS



The wizardly magic of Myth Drannor and Cormanthyr ranged from amusements and cosmetic magic to spectacular workings that stretched the boundaries of magical knowledge among wizards all across Faerûn. In the fabled realm of peace, aside from the very few, spells devised by the court, its armathors, and the Akh'faer, most known spells were less combative in nature (though many created by secretive clan wizards were deadly and kept among the clan's loyal members). Much of the peaceful spell-lore during this time was lost in the city's destruction. However, a number of crucial military texts survive, and these provide a window into the magic of lost Myth Drannor, her defenders, and the magic used against the Army of Darkness.

Contrasts to "Modern" Magics

While much of this campaign can operate with the standard AD&D® 2nd Edition rules system, magic works slightly differently. Only after the Time of Troubles in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR) are there limits to the amount of damage all spells do by level (maximum of 10 dice). Therefore, while no spells below list a level limit for 2nd Edition rules, the 10-dice limit on damage applies to all spells below in another seven centuries or so.

Also, a few limited 10th-level spells are listed below that were used during the ARCADE AGE campaigns. Tenth-level spells can be cast only with the express notice and allowance of either the god Azuth or the goddess Mystra after the Fall of Myth Drannor. These spells, even though their forms and castings have not changed in the millennia since their creation, are later reduced to being direct pleas to the gods of magic for attention and power. Should the appeal be proper and respectful, the divine powers not be otherwise occupied, and the caster be of at least 20th level, there is a 25% chance that this spell can be cast successfully (and that chance increases by 5% per Intelligence point of the caster beyond 18). The final paragraph notes at the end of each particular spell reveal whether the spell still exists among modern Realms spell libraries and in what forms, since some have been reduced to 9th-level spells.

Akh'Faer and Armathors' Magics

The magical forces responsible for the protection of Cormanthyr and Myth Drannor spent centuries perfecting their battle-spellcraft. While all fighter/mages that joined either branch received the same basic training in military magecraft, numerous units and even individual commands needed different magic and tactics. New magic were jealously guarded among the ranks, though senior officers might trade spells to redistribute to those under their commands if deemed useful or proper for their jobs as scouts, shock troops, cavalry, or infantry. In all, quite a number of combat-oriented spells common in the modern Realms may have originally come from an elf military wizard's spellbook, whether from Cormanthyr or another earlier realm. Unfortunately, much of this lore was lost in the Fall as the Akh'Faer and armathors remained in the city until the bitter end. Even so, two eminent books of military magic survived the Fall, sent away to the renewed Elven Court on secret orders of Arms-Captain Hacham Selorn.



The Scrolls Ardentym

Created by the Circle of Flames and encompassing the history of the city of Cormanthyr, the Scrolls Ardentym are 38 sheets of vellum stored inside a delicately-carved platinum tube with a worked copper flame pattern for the cap. These scrolls constitute a military tactical text on spell-casting in combat and they also record a number of unique spells for the Akh'Faer. In the Year of Thirteen Prides Lost (132 DR), the Circle of Flame began its work compiling the

scrolls after its members ended their careers as instructors or officers of the Akh'Faer. Over five centuries later, the Circle completed the Scrolls Ardentym and allowed fragments of its contents to be copied for training or scholarly purposes.

The unique Akh'Faer spells within the *scrolls* are all older than the Circle of Flames and the scrolls themselves. The two spells of Coronal Sakkratars Irithyl were his only creations shared with the public, and only then among his spellcasting troops. The other spells were closely guarded secrets among specific units, primarily the cavalry (grounded or flying).

Moryggan's Mythaleash

(Conjuration/Summoning, Evocation)

Level: 10

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 5 rounds

Duration: 3 hours/caster level

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: None

When cast, Moryggan's mythaleash allows the recipient to travel away from a mythal while stretching or pulling an isolated piece of the mythal along with her. In effect, the target is tethered to the mythal, and the spell allows the normally static mythal to stretch along a direct path from the mythal to the target. The mythal's full effects can be accessed anywhere along the mythaleash's area of effect as if it were the normal mythal.

The *mythaleash* creates a 30'-radius globe of the mythal centered on the target, though the *mythaleash* is better imagined as a 60'-diameter tunnel stretching in a direct line from the mythal to the target. The *mythaleash* and its effects are not impeded by physical barriers, and areas between the mythal and the target are subject to all standard strictures and benefits of being within the standard mythal. The maximum extension of a *mythaleash* is the caster's experience level in miles from the outer edge of the mythal. If this distance is exceeded by even one foot, the spell breaks, and the *mythaleash* "snaps back" to be absorbed by the mythal.

Even the healthiest of mythals can support only so many demands stretching it from all sides at once. Therefore, a mythal can handle a maximum of three *mythaleashes* linked to it at any given time. Any casters attempting to further link to a mythal and cast this spell waste their spell, as the mythal's power limited sentience cancels the spell effects. Of course, this spell can work on damaged or corrupt mythals easily, but there is a 5% cumulative chance per mile that the *mythaleash* will become corrupt like the mythal. If this occurs, the *mythaleash* degenerates into a nonpermanent dead-magic zone all along its area of effect, though it anchors itself to the location, not the target.

The target of the *mythaleash* cannot cast any spells or use any innate magic while the spell is active. She can use only mythal powers known to her (since the target is inside the mythal, technically) or personal magical items that do not change her physically. The *mythaleash* attaches both magically and physically, and any change to intangibility or any sudden shift in location (such as a *teleport* spell) snaps the connection and ends the spell. All others within the *mythaleash's* area of effect can act, cast spells, and use mythal powers as they normally would within the mythal itself. Only the target of the *mythaleash* is restricted from using other spells, though she can use magical wands and staves provided they do not alter her form or location.

Beyond this noted source, the *mythaleash* spell exists within only five other spellbooks and tomes throughout all known Realmspace. Of these, only two of them contain the full spell as noted above: The *Arcanabulum Irrakà*, believed long lost in the Moonwoods and unseen or noted since the Fall; and the fabled *Sanded Scrolls of Jafalliya Xyam*, a sheaf of copper-reinforced vellum sheets buried within the tomb of a long dead Coramshite pasha in the Marching Mountains. The other three recordings of

this spell contain a reduced version of the spell at 9th level; the only difference in effect is the duration—3 rounds per caster level, rather than hours. These three tomes are all known to Elminster, as he speaks of them all: the human-recorded *Book of the Blade-singer*, missing after the death of its Hillsfarian creator. ("A woefully misleading and inaccurate text which elicits only laughter among elves, though its six rare elf spells make it worth seeking." —E); *The Covenantaalis*, a massive gold-stitched and leather-bound tome of spells exclusively of elf, half-elf, and drow origins. ("This masterwork of Ederan Nharimlur's greatest apprentice contains more elven spell-lore than any other text outside of the libraries of lost Uvaeren, and the silver-sheeted tome has been missing since the ship that was to bring it to Evermeet sank with all hands more than 400 years ago." —E); and the *Book of Banes*, a tome on protective magic compiled by Undalthar the Protector, the great abjurer of Baldur's Gate more than 100 years ago. ("While Undalthar was a boastful oaf and his presence often brought more danger than safety, his research and writings were sound, and this tome of nearly 20 protective spells makes it worth the hypocrisy of remembering that dolt as a hero." —E)

Sakkratars's Triple Strike

(Alteration, Enchantment, Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 4

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 4

Duration: 1 round/level or 4 hits/image

Area of Effect: One hand-to-hand weapon

Saving Throw: None

When cast, the triple strike forms two arcane duplicates of a target weapon held by the caster, which hover within an inch of the actual physical weapon to which they are linked. The glowing images do not interfere with the wielder's movements or grip on the actual weapon. These slightly translucent phantom weapons follow the same exact movements as the wielded weapon, allowing multiple attacks with only one strike. The triple strike images add light equivalent to a torch in their vicinity for the duration of the spell.

This *mirror image* variant spell triplicates the melee weapon touched by the caster when this spell takes effect. After casting, the true weapon can be handed to a wielder who can take advantage of its effects (or the caster can cast the spell while the weapon is held by its wielder as well). Each of the three weapons rolls separately to hit, the real weapon always striking first. The images hit and affect targets as +2 silver weapons. Each illusory weapon (whether a staff, sword, dagger, etc.) inflicts the same damage as a normal weapon of its type without any Strength or magical bonuses. If the true weapon leaves the hand of the wielder (only one other person can touch the enspelled weapon after the caster), the spell ends.

The Coronal Sakkratars, long considered one of Cormanthyr's most elegant swordsmen and a great fighter-mage, created this spell merely to even the odds for lone scouts, as the orcs often singled out lone elves for ambushes. Long held secret among the fighter-mage scouts of the Akh'Faer, this spell came into usage among Akh'Velahr scouts by the time of the Shadow Wars, and the armathors of Myth Drannor commonly used this two centuries before the mythal's rise.

Sakkratars's Circle of Swords

(Alteration, Enchantment, Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 6

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 6

Duration: 1 round/2 levels of caster

Area of Effect: One target creature

Saving Throw: None

When this spell is cast, the target creature's weapon (or hands) glows and weaves a glittering swath of magic while in motion. Within a few seconds, the magic sketches out a perimeter 20' in diameter around the target, and illusory swords of dancing materialize along that perimeter. The images defend the target until dispelled or the duration expires.

The number of *dancing blades* whirling within 10' of either side of the target depends on the caster; for every three levels of experience, one *dancing blade* appears. The images are enspelled to surround and defend the target creature, and they move quickly enough to both parry up to their number of hand-to-hand or missile attacks (and suffering damage thusly) and attack opponents within 14' of the target creature (a 10'-radius perimeter plus reach of weapon). Each *dancing blade* image chooses a separate target unless the caster distributes the images otherwise (focusing defense and attacks on a weaker flank).

Each image can intercept and absorb incoming physical attacks as if the *dancing blade* were wielded by an *invisible* person of AC6 and 18 hit points. If an attack is parried or intercepted, the damage is taken by the image. Once its hit points are spent, the image dissolves at the end of the round. Each *dancing blade* image also attacks with the target's unadjusted THAC0, though they affect targets as if they were +2 silver weapons (like *Sakratars' triple strike*). The blades always deal 1d6+1 hit points of damage to those foes struck.

The *circle of swords* images can be altered visually by either the recipient or the caster. They can mimic any weapon ever seen by either manipulator. In general, elves visualize long swords identical to their own, but some have made the *circle of swords* into hovering quarterstaves, whips, or even ephemeral fists with brass knuckles! None of these cosmetic changes alter the spell's effects or damage, and simply serve to impress or frighten onlookers.

As an expansion of his earlier *triple strike* spell, Coronal Sakratars created his *circle of swords* as a defensive spell for both the Akh'Faer and the Akh'Velehr. After much study of a *sword of dancing*, the Coronal crafted this spell to allow elves the freedom to defend themselves from a crush of enemies on all sides. This spell allowed them to continue spellcraft or other attacks in relative safety from a surrounding battle. In general, officers memorized this spell and, while watching battles from above in the trees, casted it on those elves separated from their fellows in battle.

Symkalr's Spells

One of the founders of the Circle of Flames, Symkalr Vanduir, was equally horrified and fascinated by the destructive capacities of the fireball spell. Over the course of his centuries as an Akh'Faern, he developed a number of spell variants that allowed the use of this staple magical attack in ways that would not harm the forest or his fellow elves. The moon elf sorcerer also penned a large section of the military uses of fireball spells (the standard and delayed blast versions, as well as his own) among the scrolls. Still, despite the strategic usefulness of these spells and Symkalr's ingenuity in fireball tactics, most elves held a severe distaste in the use of explosives and fires within Cormanthor. Thus, these spells were used rarely aside from Symkalr's personal students (the last of whom was a girl who became the Lady Herald "Alais" Dree).

Symkalr's Forest Fireball

(Evocation) Reversible

Level: 5

Range: 10 yards + 10 yards/level

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 5

Duration: Instantaneous

Area of Effect: 20-foot-radius globe

Saving Throw: 1/2

Identical in visual and casting effects to a standard fireball spell (see the *Player's Handbook*), this spell alters the effects of the said spell's magical flames and explosion so they are utterly ineffective against plant and vegetable matter of all kinds. The only distinct difference between the forest fireball spell and its parent spell is the lack of lingering fires; the explosion and blossoming fire of this spell implodes, drawing in and snuffing out its own fires at the end of the round.

In other words, the mage points a finger, speaks the range in distance and height, and a streak of flame arcs from the pointing digit to the range at which the spell is to detonate. Once it explodes, the forest *fireball* deals 1d6 points of damage per experience level of the spellcaster to all animal and mineral matter within its area of effect (save vs. spell for half damage). All trees, grass, wood (including wooden weapons, axe handles, wands, and even parchment from wood pulp or leaves) is unaffected by either the explosion or the flames. All vegetable-based beings (treants, dryads, shambling mounds, etc.) are immune to the effects of the *forest fireball*, as are any items they carry (like the immune items on a PC who makes a successful saving throw vs. a standard *fireball*).

If the spell is memorized and the casting is reversed, the *forest-razed fireball* harms only plants, plant-based material, vegetable matter, and plant- and vegetable-based beings. All plant material must make item saving throws against magical fire or be consumed. Plant-based creatures suffer damage (or half-damage, if saved) as normal characters.

Symkalr's Friendly Fireball

(Abjuration, Evocation) Reversible

Level: 8

This spell duplicates the statistical (range, damage, casting time, etc.) and visual particulars of the fireball and Symkalr's forest fireball spell. Its differences lie in its effects: The magical flames and explosion of a friendly fireball are utterly ineffective against one specific type of animal type or race (and any derivative matter) stated during casting. Like the forest fireball spell, there are no lingering fires after a friendly fireball; the spell's fiery explosion soon implodes, drawing and snuffing its own heat and fires out at the end of the round in which it is cast.

A human caster can name his own race immune to a *friendly fireball*, detonate the spell, and no humans within the area of effect are harmed by the spell. Just like the standard *fireball* spell, any items carried or worn by a character immune to the spell's effects are likewise immune despite the magic's specific actions. This spell cannot be discriminatory to singular beings or ethnic types (i.e., a human wizard cannot name himself the sole immune character); the recipient of the immunity must be a distinct race or racial type.

While whole racial types are protected as named (elf, dwarf, etc.), half-breeds such as half-orcs and half-elves suffer half damage (or 1/4 damage with a successful save). Of course, a half-elf wizard can make all half-elves immune to her *friendly fireball* and then these effects apply to the two races of the caster's parentage (i.e., elf/human, orc/elf, etc.). This also applies for other mixed race beings like cambion and tieflings.

The reversed spell, *unfriendly fireball*, makes the stated animal/race the sole target(s) affected by the spell. Nothing else, from paper to grass and flowers underfoot, is damaged in any way by the spell. In fact, an *unfriendly fireball* set against humans will visit full effects on them, but leave no effect on their items or environs; thus, opponents can be killed, but their treasures and weapons remain intact.

Of all of Symkalr's spells, this spell was the most widespread in the early days of Myth Drannor. One of the mage's apprentices allowed money and wine to influence him; he stole a copy of the spell from his master, and gave it to his benefactress, the Lady Imra Maendelyn. The reversed spell soon found its way into

Starym and other bigots' hands, and it rained down upon humans and other N'Tel'Quess with abandon, harming only them and not a whit of the forest. Thus, once the use of this spell became noticeable to the Coronal, the use of *unfriendly fireball* on any allied races of Myth Drannor (dwarf, gnome, halfling, human) became a crime punishable by banishment or death. This stricture was justifiably lifted during the Weeping War to allow its use against the Army of Darkness.

Symkalr's Deathbane Fireball
(Evocation, Necromancy) Reversible
Level: 8

This spell duplicates the statistical (range, damage, casting time, etc.) particulars of the fireball and Symkalr's other fireball spells, though its visuals are different; the flames are black and purple, rather than the standard orange and red blossoming blaze. Its major differences lie in its effects: The magical flames and blast of a deathbane fireball affect only undead beings.

In fact, this *fireball* variant is less a physical explosion of flame and fury and more of an explosion of Positive Material plane energy that burns away at the undead creatures' links to the Negative Material plane. Like all of Symkalr's spells, there are no lingering fires after a *deathbane fireball*; the spell's fiery explosion implodes as quickly as it explodes, drawing and snuffing its own heat and flame out at the end of the round in which it is cast.

Given its unique effect, no nonliving items that might normally shield an undead person from the effects (such as a *ring of fire resistance* or a *ring of spell turning*) have any effect, since the flames and effects of a *deathbane fireball* occur more on a life-energy level rather than a physical level. Innate powers of flame resistance or magic resistance still apply, as do saving throws and other defensive spells active when the *deathbane fireball* was cast, but items offer no protection against this.

The reversed spell, *lifebane fireball*, predictably affects all living beings within its area. It unleashes its 1d6 points of damage per caster level on only living beings. As noted above, items and physical defenses offer no protection against the effects of this spell, though they are protected from any damage by this spell.

The Keryfaertel

Strictly translated, the *Keryfaertel* is "The Lore of Battle Magic," and this certainly applies to its primary writers and users, the Court Mages and armathors of the Coronal's Court of Cormanthor and Myth Drannor. While no evidence exists to support the idea, the folk of the Court believe the solid silver cover and bindings of this small 1'-square, 5"-deep book were crafted in long-lost Uvaeren for its greatest Lorekeeper, the Coronal Intevar, since the major decoration on the covers is a highly stylized ancient moon elf rune for "I," the symbol most folk attribute to the great mage Intevar. The pages of the *Keryfaertel* are far more recent, made during the last three centuries of the city of Cormanthor before the raising of the mythal and the city's renaming as Myth Drannor. To many among the armathors, the book is a symbol that embodies Cormanthor's changes.

In the past, armathors and Court Mages were allowed merely to use their own family's and clan's spells, and they were not required to share their spells or knowledge with their comrades-at-arms. Both the Coronal and the Srinshree, Eltargrim's High Court Mage for centuries before resigning to become a baelnorn and protector of the Vault of Ages, grew tired of seeing some armathors fail where others succeeded not due to flawed ability but to lack of shared knowledge. At the Coronal Eltargrim's insistence, the Srinshree began training the Court Mages and armathors, and forcing an exchange of information. While some "clan-exclusive" magic were learned among the armathors and Court Mages, far more of the Srinshree's teachings leaked out to the clans.



Therefore, the *Keryfaertel* is simply the book that tells the basics of armathor duties, the details on how to prepare and defend the Coronal's Court for (and from) an audience, and some recorded spells for use by Court Mages and armathors alike. This tome survived the Fall of the city by leaving centuries before the crisis. The Srinshree and Coronal Eltargrim assigned its safekeeping to Elminster Aumar upon his exodus from Myth Drannor in the Year of the Cold Clashes (331 DR), while keeping copies within the offices of the High Court Mages. Though many objected to such a treasure leaving the city, Eltargrim wanted it to wander the Realms with Mystra's Chosen so others unable to visit their fabled realm could see some of the glory of its craftsmanship in silver and spells. Aside from its theft for a decade during the Harpstar Wars, the *Keryfaertel* has remained secure in Elminster's keeping for the long centuries.

Note: In fact, Elminster is oddly more secretive about this work than many other tomes far more dangerous, of which he talks more freely. The few spells that we are privy to are hardly the extent of this book's collective magic. Gauging by these below, whatever other secrets the *Keryfaertel* holds must be powerful and dangerous, indeed.

Bladechill

(Alteration, Conjunction/Summoning)

Level: 4

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 4

Duration: 3d4 rounds

Area of Effect: One target weapon and 10'-radius globe

Saving Throw: Special

Bladechill is a highly specific and localized weather-affecting spell developed by the armathors for fighting dragons and other cold-blooded creatures. Cast on a sword or other slashing weapon, the spell causes both the temperature of the weapon and a 10-foot radius around it to drop 2d20 degrees per round until reduced to -40 degrees Fahrenheit. The cold generated within the radius forces all those within the area to make successful saving throws vs. paralysis to fight and move normally; failed saves result in -2 penalties on all rolls and Armor Class. Rings of warmth and boots of the North provide complete protection from this spell and all its effects, but even the heaviest of furs are penetrated by the cold created by this spell. In addition, creatures struck by this enspelled weapon must also make a successful saving throw vs. spell or suffer 1d6 points of additional cold damage; creatures vulnerable to cold attacks receive no saving throw against this effect.

The *bladechill* lasts for 3d4 rounds only, and then the target weapon returns to normal temperature instantly with no ill effects or saving throws needed; any ice or snow generated within the *bladechill*'s radius area melts as normal for the season and the climate.

Keep in mind that the magical cold generated by this spell is limited to the weapon upon which it is placed, the reduced temperature radius is actual cold. Thus, magic-resistant creatures only gain a bonus against the additional cold damage dealt by successful strikes. The cold generated by the enspelled weapon is not inherently magical and thus gets past many defenses.

The archwizard Tsilmas Durothil created *bladechill*, one of the oldest elven spells in Faerûn, as an aid in fighting the dragons and wyverns infesting Arcorar and the rising Elven Court during the time between the Fourth and Fifth Crown Wars. This spell rarely came into use even among the armathors due to its many drawbacks to all but the magically protected. Still, its effectiveness came into play during the Weeping War, as this spell gave many bladesingers and Akh'Faer the edge needed to help them defeat the many mezzoloth commanders of the Army of Darkness whose only vulnerability seemed to be cold.

Bloodbriars

(Alteration, Illusion)

Level: 4

Range: 1 mile + 100 yards/level

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 4

Duration: 1 turn + 1 round/level

Area of Effect: One target creature

Saving Throw: 1/2

By manipulating and enchanting a mere drop of the target creature's blood, the caster can entangle the target in invisible brambles and briars, intangible to all spells and physical attacks yet still greatly evident in the target's painful wounds and immobility.

When cast, the target creature need not be in sight, though the blood of that creature must be at hand. When cast, effects are instantly felt by the target if within the spell's range. Likewise, the caster feels a tingling that continues to grow stronger the closer he moves to the target, allowing the caster to catch the target.

The target creature feels as if its body were tightly bound by razor-sharp briars, brambles, and thorns. Any attempt to move beyond simple breathing or speaking inflicts 1d8 points of damage automatically, leaving deep scratches and cuts, as if the creature had stumbled through a thick hedge of thorns. A successful saving throws vs. spell allows the target creature to reduce the damage by half. Keep in mind the simplest way to negate the damage of this spell is to immediately cease movement entirely, limiting its effects to the initial onset. The spell lasts for exactly one turn plus one round per level of the casting wizard.

The brambles and briars are intangible and invisible to all things and magic, including the target's armor and magical items. Thus, the target could be walking along and suddenly gashes and scratches from unseen *bloodbriars* instantly appear. Only a natural Armor Class of 3 or better or magic resistance allows the target to escape damage. Note that magical *rings of protection* and other defensive magic are ineffective against the offensive effects of a *bloodbriars* spell, though any benefits they might have for saving throws still apply. Characters bound within *bloodbriars* can still move if they so choose, but they must take damage (halved by saving throws). If they incur only one point of damage in a round, there is a 40% chance that a spell cast by the target creature will be successful, but any greater damage hinders even this slim chance to cast any spell. *Dispel magic* will negate this spell only if cast by the target creature, and *bloodbriars* is usually effective enough to at least leave a slight trace of blood by which the creature can be tracked. Often, spellcasters wrapped in *bloodbriars* either *fly* or *teleport* out of the spell's range (especially if within the mythal). However, the unexpected nature of the *bloodbriars*' pain and injuries make many cry out, and that sometimes is enough for witnesses to aid the armathors in catching a criminal.

As hinted above, this spell's primary function was the apprehension of criminals. While its use was semi-barbaric in its torturous overtones, the armathors justified its use by claiming the only hurt done by this spell was self-inflicted by those resisting arrest. It was rarely used during the Coronal's rysar, though it became more common with the rise of the Ruling Council and more aggressive tactics condoned among the armathors. In fact, a number of gold elf armathors and at least two Court Mages used these spells as shackles when escorting questionable supplicants into the Ruling Council's presence to ensure their cooperation. Many decried the spell's use during the Weeping War as a way to capture or restrain deserting or AWOL Akh'Velehr and Akh'Faer. As a result, all remaining copies of the spell within Cormanthor control were destroyed as of the Year of Lost Wayfarers (757 DR), but others had copied the spell and passed it on to those willing to pay well for such knowledge.

Glasshields

(Abjuration, Alteration)

Level: 9

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 7

Duration: Permanent

Area of Effect: One magical field/spell

Saving Throw: None

With a touch, a wizard can transform the most powerful of magical fields into common glass! Any constant field of magic, be it a wall of fire, shield, or globe of invulnerability, becomes nonmagical glass. The effect looks like ice crystallizing at the touch of the caster, and swiftly spreading and encompassing the entire field until it becomes regular glass.

Only abjuration or evocation spells are susceptible to this spell, though one type must be chosen at the time of casting. Of those schools, only spells with a set, independent field effect are affected, since the field must be touched to work the transformation. The caster must cast the spell and physically touch the barrier or spell effect to change it; the caster suffers all effects of contact with the magical field for one round and then the *glasshields* transforms the field (even if the caster is killed by contact with the field). This spell only affects an external magical effect; it cannot affect active, pre-set spells such as contingency or invisibility, though it can touch a *Bigby's hand* spell and change the magical hand to glass. Once the magic changes to glass, any magic used to maintain their mobility fail. *Bigby's hands* fall and shatter, while *globes of invulnerability* merely become glass domes surrounding their casters.

While this spell usually only affects a single magical field effect, it also has been designed to affect spells with multiple field effects, such as *prismatic wall* and *prismatic sphere*. *Glasshields* can affect all seven layers of these particular spells (and any similar workings that link one field within another) with one spell, and the transformed glass spheres effectively create a prison around that whom they once protected.

Even the magical field generated by *bracers of defense* and a *ring of protection* can be turned to glass; if this occurs, the person wearing the item is surrounded by a very thin layer of glass (though it thickens depending on the AC bonus or rating). The magic is temporarily disrupted for 1d3 rounds, during which the glass field provides the wearer with an AC of 8. No Dexterity penalties apply to the glass-encased character, since the stiff glass prevents any major movements. When this field is shattered (either by the target's movements or attacks), the wearer incurs 1d3 points of damage from glass shards (unless natural AC without Dexterity exceeds AC6). Once the glass shatters or the spell wears off, the wearer's normal magical defenses immediately shore up and restore the character's normal AC.

Curiously, while this spell affects nearly any other magical field effect, the *glasshields* spell does not function on these spells and effects: *Alustriel's mantle*, *Alustriel's improved mantle*, *Alustriel's queenmantle*, *eye of Mystra*, *moonlight*, *the Simbul's spell sequencer*, and the *Simbul's spell trigger*. It also has no effect on mythals or wards that cover more than a 40' radius, and even those are only transformed and negated for 1d3 rounds.

Created by the aged wizard Mythanor (who also created the very mythal that rises over Myth Drannor), *glasshields* became a well-hidden secret among the ranks of the Court Mages and senior armathors. Its usefulness as a final surprise captured many rebellious spellcasters who thought themselves safe behind magical defenses as they laughed at their pursuers.

Truthfully, this is a scaled-down and surviving version of the spell; Mythanor's original version of *glasshields* was a 10th-level spell, though it was recorded thus only in his personal Folio. That spell, should it be uncovered, allowed the caster to transform all standing field-effect spells of both the evocation and abjuration schools within a 20' radius of the caster to glass.

The Khidell Spells

Khidell Nhaésal, one of the earliest Court Mages of Cormanthor, trained many armathors in his day, and he always stressed learning from each encounter and from every source possible. His maxims still teach many armathors up through the time of the Weeping War, especially "Knowledge of one's enemies makes one stronger for the next meeting." He developed many spells over his eight centuries, and these are the two most enduring; created to allow armathors and Akh'Faer to claim items and weapons from vanquished foes (and used quite extensively when rummaging through the spoils of wars with Netheril) and safely handle trapped or harmful items. By the time of Myth Drannor, these spells had lost their exclusivity among the magical military and the wizards among the general public found them quite a boon in analysis of uncovered magical items from other lands and the creation of new items.

Khiidel's Glamour Glove

(Abjuration)

Level: 2

Range: Personal

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 2

Duration: 4 rounds +1 round/3 levels of caster

Area of Effect: Caster's hands

Saving Throw: None

This spell wraps the caster's hands in glistening magical fields that protect them from contact with any fell substances, be they poison or magic. While the spell is in effect, the glamour glove spell allows the caster to touch places and things without incurring any ill or beneficial effects, since nothing comes into contact with his hands. He can touch portals coated with contact poison and open them safely; this doesn't apply if the trap's damage is not limited to the hands of the intruder or if the poisons are injected by a puncturing needle trap. (Gloves protect only the surface of the hand.)

Cursed magical items can be touched or worn (and identified with other spells) without affecting the *glamour glove* wearer, unless the items remain in contact with the wearer after the duration expires. This spell makes it safe to handle any magical items, but without other magic, the caster cannot determine if the item's effects are good or ill. Magical items worn on the hands at the time of or previous to the casting of this spell continue to operate normally (*gauntlets of ogre power* or a *ring of protection* and the like), but if removed and placed on while *glamour gloves* are in place, they too are negated and do not affect the wearing caster.

The only drawback of this spell is the delay in casting other spells while this continues. All spells cast by a wizard using *Khiidel's glamour gloves* add a casting time penalty of +3 due to careful castings needed to not have both spells disrupted. The caster can cancel the gloves any time before the spell's duration expires.

Khiidell's Hand

(Abjuration, Evocation)

Level: 5

Range: 10 yards

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 5

Duration: 2 rounds + 1 round/3 levels

Area of Effect: One caster-sized hand

Saving Throw: None

This spell summons a magical, immaterial hand identical to the primary hand of the caster, though it is transparent and formed of small sparkles of light. It can touch and handle only items with an innate enchantment, so it can be used to detect magic by willing it through an item or place. *Khidell's Hand* is designed to help a

wizard identify the relative power and dangers of handling magical items in a dungeon.

When mentally commanded to touch such an item, its reaction determines the general power level and hidden dangers of the item. The greater the overall power of the item contacted, the more "solid" *Khidell's hand* appears, as the sparkles increase in number and coalesce into more solid lines and textures on the hand. The *hand's* glow, normally equal to a standard candle, increases if the contacted item's primary purpose is for combat, and the glow increases to levels of torches, moonlight, or daylight in relation to its relative bonuses for combat (whether a *+1 dagger* or a *vorpal sword*).

If the item carries any harmful curses of any kind, the hand's sparkles flare up into small purple flames (rather than the normal winking light they generate); the flames react to power as did the lights. How "solid" the *hand* appears is sketched out in glowing red lines, as if the *hand* were now made of coals.

Shalantha's Delicate Disks

(Alteration, Enchantment)

Level: 7

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: Special

Duration: Permanent

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: None

This spell creates a number of pellucid disks of magical energy, each about 1' in diameter and an inch thick. The *disks* are fragile, appearing physically as formidable as rose-and-ivory tinted egg-shell; while they can easily be broken, they can contain powerful magics. Their purpose among the elves was in laying spelltraps within them and hiding the *disks* where prey would break them and unleash the spells within.

Casting *Shalanatha's Delicate Disks* creates one *disk* for every three levels of the caster's experience. During the casting process, the caster first prepares a cleared, flat area upon which to summon the *disks*. The casting occurs in three stages, though the *delicate disks* conjuration flanks only the central stage. First, this spell is cast, and the appropriate number of glowing circles appears before the caster within a 3' radius. Next, the caster (or another attending caster or casters) separately casts one spell within each glowing circle; the spells placed within the disks can be either wizards' spells of up to 5th level or priests' spells of up to 4th level. No matter the standard effects of the spell being cast, the caster places his focusing hand into the circle, and the magic is stored within by the *delicate disks'* magic. Lastly, the original caster completes the *disks* spell's casting, which causes each magical circle to seal itself and harden into the thin, rosy shells that are *Shalanatha's delicate disks*. The spell lasts indefinitely until the *disks* are broken.

Once the casting is complete, a *delicate disk* can be handled by anyone, and it can be moved to any locations whether by physical or magical mobility, now that its magic is not tied to its casting place. Contact with a disk of more than 20 pounds of pressure or 1 hit point of damage breaks it and releases the spell stored within it. The broken *disk* acts as the spell's point of origin, and the spell within reacts as set by its caster. Touch-oriented spells take effect immediately upon the being or object that breaks the *disk*; thus, *shocking grasp* or *chill touch* work to great effect on whomever contacts the *disk*. Ranged spells that require no line of sight to targets are either set to use the *disk* as the center point (turning a *fireball* into more of a hemispherical effect) or they fire straight up from the *disk* (limiting the effectiveness of a *lightning bolt* to the target who breaks the *disk* and any creatures that happen to be flying directly overhead. Obviously, the DM (and the NPCs or PCs who cast the spells) can set particular conditions to alter how the spell unleashes itself from the *disk*. For example, a

dig spell could be set within a *disk* and be set to affect the ground 10 feet south of the *disk* to deter pursuers (this sort of tactic worked well for many elves with the time to prepare a site for battle on their terms), just as a *phantom steed* might be stored within a *disk*, waiting for someone to release the magic so it might appear instantly beneath the contacting being.

The *delicate disks* themselves can be affected by magic as well. Damage-causing spells will shatter them as easily as the crunch of a heel, unleashing their magic either ineffectually or at least prematurely. They also can be cloaked with illusions to hide them or gifted with *levitation*, *spider climb*, or *cling* spells to place them where they might not normally go, since they are as subject to gravity as mundane things.

This spell allowed armathors and the Akh'Faer alike to place hundreds of trap-spells throughout the forest of Cormanthor, the *disks* set with *hold* spells to trap game or prisoners, filled with *create water* during droughts to provide the forest with needed moisture, or even hidden within tree hollows known to the Akh'Faer so they might break them to *fly* out of danger to home, etc. The bulk of this spell's uses during the time of Myth Drannor was peaceful. Only during the Fall did these begin to get loaded with offensive spells such as *ice storm*, *fireball*, or *stinking cloud*; the elves also took to carefully setting the *disks* beneath underbrush or burying them just beneath the surface soil to create areas of spell-mines.

One of the most canny tactical uses of this spell came from a forgotten faernae and his Akh'Faer troops early in the Weeping War. He would create an array of *delicate disks* loaded with *dispel magic* spells within them (since the spell was inactive and didn't disrupt the primary casting) and command his frontlines to throw the *disks* at opposing spellcasting troops to bring down *shields* or other such defenses. Much to the chagrin of some mezzoloth commanders and their troops during the Weeping War as they discovered hidden *delicate disks*, casting *dispel magic* on an active, unbroken *disk* only canceled it, while the magic inside was unleashed as it was set to do.

Shalantha Ombardawn, who would later become acquainted with some of Mystra's Chosen after the Fall, was a short-term Akh'Faern turned wizardess adventurer. This spell, she admitted, was an intermediate-stage spell, as she was attempting to create a spell-bottle that would perform as these *disks* did but have a far stronger shell or a particular activation key. With such a spell, spellcasters could easily grant spells to travelers and such spells could be saved until needed (like granting a *cure serious wounds* to a courier). It is unknown if she ever completed this sought-after spell, since she survived the Fall of Myth Drannor only to wander the Realms beyond Elven Court and Cormanthyr for the remainder of her years. Her death was never recorded, though none have heard of anyone encountering this red-haired silver elf sorceress for more than 400 years.

The Srinshree's Spellshift

(Abjuration, Alteration, Divination)

Level: 10

Range: 100 yards + 10 yards/level

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 round

Duration: 1 round/level

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: None

At the least, this spell cloaks the caster (or a target creature) in an immobile, faintly shimmering magical 10'-radius sphere. This sphere prevents all spells from entering its boundaries to affect those within, though spells can be cast from inside with no effects on the sphere or cast spells. If the spell is focused on its caster, the spellshift's full capabilities are discovered, as the caster now views the Weave in all its glory, using the sphere as the lens through which it is viewed. With this sight and the magic

active to a wide range, the caster can reach out and manipulate the Weave for various effects on active spells.

With the expansion of senses through the *spellshift*, the caster can visualize an opponent's forming spells and targeted area of effect by observing the manipulations in the Weave around them. The caster can now manipulate the Weave a bit to either focus or blur it around one target per round, causing wild and dead magic zones. If the *spellshift* - protected caster has initiative, he can forfeit his normal spellcasting or other actions to reach out and affect an opponent's forming spell (or a pre-existing spell), changing its effects without the knowledge of its caster. The rules for and primary effects of such maneuvers are below:

- *Aid*: Any spell forming or existing within range can be boosted for a round, increasing its range, damage, or area of effect by double its normal effects. Thus, a comrade's *fireball* could be *spellshifted* to explode with a 40'-radius or its damage could be boosted to double the caster's level in six-sided dice! This effect can be used only on wizards' spells, so it cannot double the amount of healing gained from a priest's *cure light wounds* spell.
- *Cancel*: The *spellshifted* wizard can snuff one forming spell within the Weave before it is fully formed, so none of its effects ever manifest. The casting wizard of the cancelled spell, unless aware of the actions of the *spellshifted* character, would merely believe that the spell failed or was improperly cast.
- *Deaden*: The *spellshifted* caster can place a 5'-radius globe of dead magic around one target creature or areas within range for the remainder of the current round. All magic and all magical items within that area are canceled. This allows characters a way to pierce magical fields or penetrate the defenses of a previously invulnerable foe.



- *Manipulate*: The *spellshifted* wizard can reach out using this new spellsight to reshape a concurrently forming spell, changing either its range or area of effect. In other words, someone using spellsight can take the time to manipulate the targeting of another's mage's *fireball* and have it explode atop its own caster with normal areas of effect. The *spellshifting* mage cannot move the spell effects beyond the range of the spell as cast by the opposing mage. Alternatively, he could allow it to travel to the caster's intended target but minimize its area of effect by up to 75% (reducing a normal 40'-radius *fireball*'s explosion to a 5'-radius explosion at the target).
- *Wild*: The *spellshifted* wizard can focus and tighten the Weave in a 10'-radius globe around a target creature or area to create a wild-magic zone. All magic cast within that target area must check against wild-magic surges to ensure that it is cast without complications. If wild-magic rules are unavailable, the simplest effect is to have the caster within the wild magic target zone take shock damage (shock from agitated magic during the casting) equal in hit points to twice the level of the cast spell. Any magical items worn within this area will also spark, dealing an additional and unavoidable hit point of damage each. The wild magic endures only until the end of the current round.

Only one of the above options can be used each round, or all can be ignored in favor of standard spellcasting. Given the spell's range, it could be cast at a far-away comrade, whether that person was a spellcaster or not. In cases like this, when the caster of the spell is not the focus of the spell (as was common), the *spellshift* only provided the protection as noted above. The target of the *spellshift* gained no insights or control over incoming magics, even if the target is a wizard of proper levels. For all intents and purposes, the spell becomes solely a protective *globe of invulnerability*.

The *spellshift* is unknown as the 10th-level spell as noted above, except within the Srinshree's own personal and long-hidden spellbooks; of all her apprentices and students, only Aravae Irithyl, Mythanthor, and Elminster Aumar learned this powerful magic. However, she and Elminster Aumar created a 9th-level variant of the spell with the same name, which is now among the rarest of spells on Faerûn today. The differences between the 9th-level version and the 10th-level form detailed above are these:

- The range drops to 25 yards + 10 yards per level.
- The duration is reduced to 4 rounds plus 1 round per every 5 levels of the caster.
- The sphere prevents only spells of up to 7th level from penetrating and affecting those within it; 8th and 9th-level spells now can pierce the *spellshift*.
- Now, the *Manipulate* effect is all that remains of the spellsight ability. As long as the caster of the spell to be affected is within 50 yards, one spell per round can be manipulated so the spell's target is of the *spellshift* caster's choice. Also, the caster can only manipulate and change the course of spells equal to his level in spell levels (i.e., a 19th-level wizard can *spellshift* two *meteor swarms* and a *magic missile* spell to targets of his choosing). Once the maximum is reached, the *spellshift* burns out and dissolves, no matter what the duration is.

In fact, many learned scholars who have heard of this incredibly rare and ancient spell postulate that this spell was one of the primary precursors for the *globe of invulnerability* spells that are now quite common. Others argue that ancient *mantles* paved the way to those spells, and they don't believe this spell ever existed in its 10th-level form. As in most things cloaked in the past's mysteries, truth depends entirely on one's point of view.

Glossary of Heroes & Villains of the Fall

<u>Name</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Death/Other</u>	<u>Stats</u>	<u>Position/Status</u>
Ammath, Khyssoun	-323	713	CN moon em W24	High Court Mage; House Ammath Elder; Councilor
Argentaamn, Irhaal	355	834	LG moon ef W23/HM	Councilor; High Court Mage
Audark, Phraan	211	712	NG green em F9/T10	Lord of House Audark; Councilor
Auglamyr, Symrustar	-97	261/713	(CE) CG gold ef W24	Chosen of Mystra; Court Mage; House Auglamyr
Aunglor, Leilatha	414	714	NG moon ef W24	High Court Mage; led the Last Guardians
Braerindra	-442	-21/714	LN baelnorn moon ef W21	Last of House Calauth; guards Castle Cormanthor
Frayhammer, Artox	175	712	CG dm P11–Moradin	High Hammer of Moradin; founder of Templestars
Haladar, Paeris	108	712	N gold em W17	Spell-Major; Spell-Captain
Hawksong, Grathgor	512	714	CG green em R19	Penaal of the Akh'Velahr; led the Last Guardians
Honedaxe, Kovimal	88	712	LN dm F9/P9–Moradin	Councilor; Chief of Clan Honedaxe
Hykoshold, Vuth	466	714	CG dm P12–Moradin	High Hammer of Moradin; head of Templestars
Ildacer, Amara (Audark)	8	821	LG green ef F12/T12	Second Shadow of N'Vaelahra
Ildacer, Aolis	-90	713	LN moon em F16/W14	Akh'Faern faernaa; First Shadow of N'Vaelahra
Ildacer, Shyael	-227	714	NG moon ef W22	High Court Mage; Telessrin of Eternal Srinnaala
Irithyl, Aravae	146	664	LG gold ef C8/W9	Heir of Coronal Eltargrim; last of House Irithyl
Irithyl, Eltargrim	-612	661	LG gold em F25/HM	Coronal of Cormanthyr
Laummas the Liegelord	-244	-180/712	CE lich W22	Former Hlondathan wizard; ally of Malimshaer
Maerdrym, Kharis	-4	678	N moon em P12–Sehanine	Lord of House Maerdrym; Councilor
Maerdrym, Yrneha	-302	713	NG moon ef F10/W10	House Elder; Councilor; bladesinger
Mentor (Wintercloak)	219	?	CN hm P4–Oghma/W15 (Dual)	Senior Incanist; Councilor
Morningdove, Ithosra	361	714	LG moon hef W13/P14–Azuth	Spell-Captain
Nezras the Traitor	613	714/?	CE hm W18	Pawn of Laummas, Aulmpiter
Olortynnal, Kelvhan	331	714	NG gold em F16	Arms-Major; Councilor
Selorn, Hachaam	420	714	CG green em R14	Arms-Captain; "Elven Court's Captain"
Sévoll The Syolkiir	688	738	LN hem T8	Inter-troop liaison; fastest being of Cormanthyr
Srinshee, the	?	666	LG moon ef W30/HM	Grand Mage of Cormanthyr; High Court Mage
Starlaughter, Ailos	551	713	CN gm I13	Councilor; Armathor officer
Starym, Josidiah	101	714	LG gold em F15/W15	Spell-Major; Councilor; bladesinger
Starym, Venali	111	924	NE moon em F11	Lord of House Starym; Councilor
Tallhill, Jarrod	601	712	NE halfm F5/T6	Councilor; Hill Voice of the halflings
Tankardtoes, Heumar	582	689	CG halfm T7	Councilor; Hill Voice of the halflings
Trasaal the Gold Mage	429	713	LN hm Tr23	Senior Armathor; Councilor
Tromostar, Artair	313	714	LN gm I9	Akh'Faer officer; Councilor
Ualair the Silent	-110	712	LG gold em W29/HM	Councilor, Grand Mage

Special NPC/PC Slot

Captain "Fflar"

(LG ?m Warrior?)

The Captain's true name and race are long lost, as descriptions of the hero vary to fit the race that tells it; bards of all stripes sing of Fflar being a human paladin, an elf bladesinger, or even a half-elf ranger, and all insist that their versions of the legends are the truth. Of course, only those who stood by Fflar's side under his command on those last dark days know the truth, and of them, few survived the Final Fall.

Glossary of Terms

Akh'Faer	Army of Art; magical military of Cormanthyr (collective term)
Akh'Faern	One soldier of the Army of Art
Akh'Velaehr	Army of Arms; standard military of Cormanthyr (collective term)
Akh'Velaehr	One soldier
Aryvandaar	An elder gold elf realm
Ar'Cor'Kerym	"Ruler's Blade"; the <i>elfblade</i> of the Coronal of Cormanthyr
Armathor	A defender of Myth Drannor proper, and often more exclusively the nobility & royalty; armathors were most often wizards or wizard/fighters, though a wide variety existed later with the Opening.
Ary'Faern'Kerym	"Artblade"; the <i>elfblade</i> of the Spell-Major of Cormanthyr
Ary'Velaehr'Kerym	"Soldier's Blade"; the long-lost <i>elfblade</i> of the Arms-Major of Cormanthyr
Cinnaelos'Cor	Holiday of Corellon Larethian celebrated every 4 years; became Shieldmeet on Calendar of Harptos
Cormanthor	Multiple meanings based on context and pronunciation: Capital of Cormanthyr before the mythal; the oldest part of the city of Myth Drannor; the forest that encompasses Cormanthyr
Cormanthyr	The elf realm within the great eastern forest
Coronal	Ancient title for a leader of an elf realm; used most often in Cormanthyr
Court Mage	The commanders of the armathors of Myth Drannor; six of these exclusively female wizards in all
Dlabraddath	The "New Ward" of Myth Drannor; the eastern quadrant of the city; "N'Tel'Quess Ward"
Grand Mage	Leader/Senior of the High Mages
High Court Mage	The commanders of the Court Mages; the "Coronal's Hands"; two wizards in all (and at least one is a High Mage).
High Mage	Secret caster of High Magic; exclusively elves
Jhyrennstar	One of the former realms that unified into Cormanthyr; Northern central forest, including current lands of Myth Drannor
Kerradunath	The "Nobles Quarter" of Myth Drannor; the southern and central parts of the city
Oacenth	Coronal of Jhyrennstar who unified the elves into Cormanthyr on his deathbed.
Opening, The	The event when Coronal Eltargrim allowed the first nonelves openly into the city of Cormanthyr
N'Vaelahr	"Shadow Soldiers," covert operations (collective term)
N'Vaelahr	One member of the Shadow Soldiers
Rule Tower	The oldest structure in Cormanthor/Myth Drannor; primary tower of Castle Cormanthor
Rystall Wood	A former realm of the Cormanthor woods which abuts the desert
Sheshyrynnam	The "Temple Ward" of Myth Drannor; southwestern quarter of the capital



the Fall of Myth Drannor

By Steven E. Schend

"Know ye that time is ever so short, even for those who believed their mythal afforded them all the time on Toril; I pray that ye learn better from their mistakes than they did themselves—for the dead know many things, but grasp truth and grow in knowledge they are rarely able to do."

— Elminster of Shadowdale, Year of the Gauntlet

The *Fall of Myth Drannor* is an accessory detailing those horrible years encompassing the Weeping War, for use with the *Cormanthyr: Empire of Elves* book. Herein you will find the causes of the Fall of that most lyrical of elf cities; highlights of the twelve campaigns and their most significant battles; copious adventure hooks for involving player characters in behind-the-scenes activities; and new (or should we say ancient?) magical items and spells, most of which have been lost in time.

From the passing of Coronal Eltargrim to the shattering of the Khov'Aniessa's invisible prison to the stand at Honorsgate, the painful history of the Fall lies within these pages. Now comes the opportunity for heroes to be made—or become part of the history in their attempts.



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