

THE BARI AUR BOOK OF BELIEF

WRITTEN BY Gary L. Ray

EDITED BY Simson Leigh

FEBRUARY 14TH, 2000

<http://www.bariaur.com/>

The Sacred Triad.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	4
Advice on Designing a Spiritual Bariaur .	6
<i>The Average Bariaur:</i>	7
The Payira	8
(The Hornless).....	8
THE ORDER.....	8
PAYIRA CHARACTER KIT.....	9
The Mystic's Manifesto	13
ON THE FACTIONS.....	13
ON GOOD AND EVIL.....	13
ON LAW AND CHAOS.....	13
ON THE CORE.....	13
ON ACTION.....	14
Bariaur Shamanism.....	15
BARIAUR SHAMAN MEDICINE STICK.....	15
THE SAYINGS:.....	15
Outland Powers	17
Bariaur Ritual	26
<i>The Ritual</i>	28
<i>How to Trim a Hoof</i>	29
THE RITUAL OF ASCENSION (TAB'GOMA)	30
<i>PREPARATION FOR RITUAL COMBAT</i>	31
<i>RITUAL COMBAT</i>	32
<i>THE AFTERMATH</i>	32
BARIAUR MARTIAL ARTS	34
FOOD OF THE BARIAUR.....	37
MI-GOKA: THE MALE COMING OF AGE RITUAL	39
YAT'RA: THE FEMALE COMING OF AGE RITUAL	41
SAGOMA: BARIAUR SPIRIT MEDITATION.....	43
<i>I. PREREQUISITES FOR SAGOMA MEDITATION</i>	43
<i>II. THE REASON TO PRACTICE SAGOMA MEDITATION</i>	43
<i>III. PRELIMINARY PRACTICES OF SAGOMA MEDITATION</i>	43
<i>IV. THE PRELIMINARY PRACTICE</i>	44
<i>V. THE PRIMARY PRACTICE</i>	44
<i>VI. THE PRACTICE OF RETURN</i>	45
THE DECK OF SHIS	47
<i>What Does It Mean?</i>	47
THE RENA: SPIRIT DRUM OF THE OUTLAND BARIAUR.....	50

<i>Additional Bariaur Instruments</i>	51
SHEK	52
BARIAUR MUSIC: INTERVIEW WITH BERIG BAKURABA, RENA MASTER.....	54
STARE (STA-RAY) TWO-HANDED FIGHTING STYLE.....	57
<i>Axemaster Kit</i>	59
WIND BLADE:	60
TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING STYLE SPECIALIZATION	60
<i>Wind Blade Kit</i>	62
THE BARIAUR WAY TO KNOWLEDGE (AN EXCERPT).....	65

Bariaur Myth & Legend 67

<i>The Creation of the World</i>	69
<i>The Bariaur Powers</i>	69
TANAR'RI, LESSER - TANAR'RIAUR.....	71
BARZU.....	74
HOW THE BARIAUR GAINED THEIR SPIRIT FROM THE GODS	77
SHEK	95
SAMURAI BARIAUR	97
<i>Part 1</i>	97
<i>Part 2</i>	100
THE VICTORY SADDLE:	103
THE 5 PEELS OF THE SIGIL TOUT.....	105
<i>The 3 Rules</i>	105
<i>The 5 Peels</i>	106
BARIAUR PORTAL POLO	109
DOG, KAYI	111
THE INTERNAL OPERATION OF ACHERON CUBES, A BRIEF SURVEY	114
THE SHRINE OF NOMOLOS	116
THE REALM OF PAM'PARA	118
<i>The Realm of Pam'para</i>	119
ABOUT PAM'PARA	119
BREAKING THE BUBBLE:	121

Bariaur and the Factions..... 123

<i>Overview</i>	123
<i>Faction and Belief</i>	123

INDEX..... 125

Appendix A - Wild Surge 127

NEUTRAL PLANES	131
INCLUDING THE OUTLANDS AND SIGIL.....	131
EVIL PLANES	135
LIMBO	138

The Sacred Triad

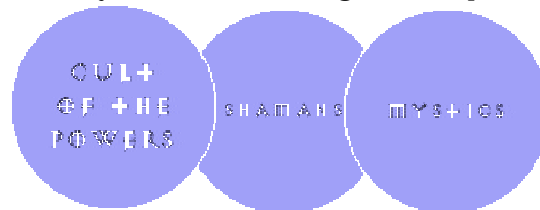
Introduction

Like every aspect of Bariaur society, Bariaur religion is heavily affected by the Bariaur nomadic lifestyle. Religion in sedentary cultures is formed and determined by centres of worship. Temples or churches are built, religious orders acquire land (and thus power) and believers congregate around these centres in villages or towns, supporting the religion. Nomadic cultures are quite different.

Religion in nomadic cultures can develop in a variety of ways. In the case of nomadic Bariaur culture, three distinct religious traditions have emerged: The Cult of the Powers (believers and priests of various Bariaur Powers), Shamanism, and Mysticism. They range within the spectrum of belief, with the Cult of Powers representing True Faith on the left to The Mystics, representing Open Belief on the right. In the middle sits Shamanism; a composite balance of the two extremes.

The Cult of the Powers worship Bariaur deities, such as Nomolos (Br: Nomolosa), the God of Old Wisdom and Va'sha "The Battle Bringer." The Cult's usually form on the planes where the powers reside or in areas of greater cross-cultural influences, since most two-legged religions fit this model and tend to cross-fertilise Bariaur culture. The Cults tend to represent the outgoing, social nature of Bariaur society. Shamanism is the worship of nature and its manifestations. Shamanism tends to be concentrated in areas farther away from foreign influences, where Bariaur are most self-reliant. Shamanism tends to represent the independent, aloof nature of Bariaur society. Note that in Ysgard and similar regions, the shaman is instead a druid.

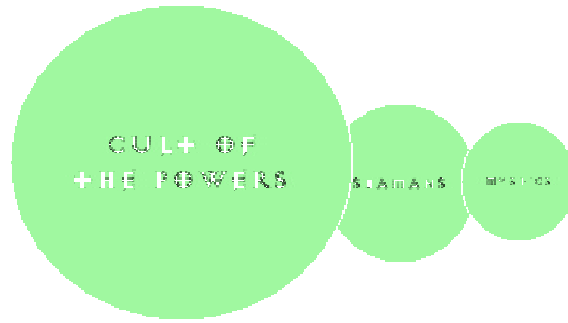
The third religious group is The Mystics. Mystics believe in the universality of all religions and philosophical traditions. For mystics, there is a heart of intuitive truth to be discovered in every belief system. They represent the far right of the religious spectrum, Open Belief of every system. For the Mystic, the only way to discover this truth is to immerse oneself into that tradition until it is discovered. The relationship between these three traditions is fascinating. Think of three circles from left to right: The Cult of the Powers, Shamanism/Druidism and Mysticism. The Cult circle (far left) overlaps the Shamanism circle (middle) and the Mysticism circle (far right) overlaps the Shamanism circle. See below.



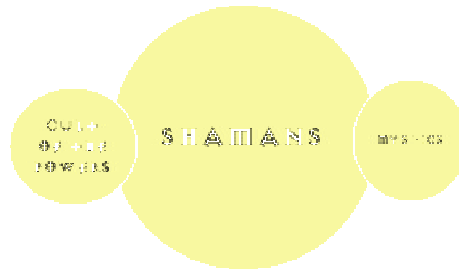
The area where the circles merge represents the overlapping responsibilities, powers and philosophical influences of the three traditions. Each overlapping tradition borrows freely from its neighbour. Thus, the Ritual of Sheka, or hoof trimming, could be performed by a priest of The Cults or a Shaman, or in unusual cases (possibly when the flock is threatened), both working together. The Mystics wouldn't be involved in such a ritual or any ritual really.

In practice, this overlap tends to be a little more complicated. The Mystics tradition, which contains almost no practical ritual, tends to borrow strongly from the Shaman philosophy of unity and openness, while incorporating every new philosophical system into their own tradition. The Shamans tend to incorporate new philosophical outlooks observed in the Mystics into their ever-changing environment to help the Bariaur flock. The Cults attempt to better serve the Bariaur by utilising their wisdom and powers, usually influenced by needs elucidated by the Shamans. This pastiche of belief and tradition ensures the survival of the culture as a whole and preserves important aspects of each system.

Differences in this system exist from plane to plane and in The Outlands. In The Outlands, the example above usually holds; an equal balance of power and numbers of each of the three traditions. In the Upper Planes, planar influences tend to modify the makeup of the three traditions. For example, on planes where Powers reside, the makeup is overwhelming Cult of the Powers, with the other two traditions in much smaller numbers and influences. See below.



In planes away from these influences, such as Bytopia, Shamanism or Mysticism may be the predominant tradition:



In all cases, the three traditions generally get along with each other, placing the well being of the flock before their personal differences.

Advice on Designing a Spiritual Bariaur

I recommend the following, based on the rules allowed in your campaign:

Archetype	Core Rules	Player's Options
Mystic	Any non-priest, using Mystic Kit	Any non-priest, using Mystic Kit
Shaman/Druid	Priest with Shaman Kit or Druid (Ysgardian Bariaur)	Shaman, Priest Specialist from "Spells and Magic" or Druid, Priest Specialist from "Spells and Magic" (Ysgardian Bariaur)
Priest	Priest	Crusader, Priest Specialist from "Spells and Magic"
Payira	Mage (invocation / evocation specialist)	Wild Mage, Mage Thaumaturgical Specialist from "Spells and Magic"

THE SHAMAN: I highly recommend the Player's Option rules for these classes, especially the shaman. If you don't have the "Spells and Magic" book available, you can check out Greg Jensen's excellent Skills and Powers treatment of the shaman. If you use the Core Rules 2.0 program, you're probably going to have problems with the shaman, as it's not possible to modify character classes.

If you play a Ysgardian Bariaur, you may wish to make your "shaman" character a full-fledged druid. Druids fit well with the Norse culture and they're much easier to play. I find little cultural difference between a shaman and a druid. Historically they often played identical roles. You can find various religious resources, including interesting nature rituals on the Internet by performing a keyword search for *druid* AND *Norse*. The Sheka ceremony is loosely based on a Norse druidic ritual.

THE PRIEST: The Bariaur priest is the typical AD&D priest. I would recommend adding the Crusader sub-class, but this isn't necessary. The monk and druid classes should definitely not be chosen. The idea of a cloistered Bariaur priest would not work, as Bariaur are naturally social. Druids would play the shaman role, mediating with nature, rather than preserving cultural values. I see priests as conservative preservers of culture. They get their orders from their powers, and powers don't change often.

THE MYSTIC: The Bariaur mystic is the least powerful of the spiritual archetypes. The mystic is meant to be more of a philosopher, rather than a defender of faith (priest) or mediator with nature (shaman). The mystic can be flexible in this respect. Where a priest or shaman have responsibilities, it is actually the duty of the mystics to wander off and experience the world, leaving the flock to fend for themselves. Thus the mystic must be adept at something useful in keeping herself alive, such as spellcraft, psionics, or basic fighting skills. A mystic should never be a priest, as they would never tie themselves down to a single belief. Mystics should also remain relatively independent when it comes to faction loyalty. The mystic should stick with the Player's Option mystic kit, rather than trying to forge a new class. Note that a mystic is only a mystic if she is determined to bring back her wisdom and knowledge to share with the tribe. An adventurer mystic who never returns home is pointless.

THE PAYIRA: I don't recommend that PC's be allowed to play Payira. Payira are culturally neutral, and thus make for poor role-playing. Payira are only useful in groups. They define themselves by their

group affiliation and their best abilities only appear when in groups of other payira. Payira NPC's should be Wild Mages.

The Average Bariaur:

The average Bariaur will respect each tradition and will likely practice a syncretic form of religion based on a composite of folk rituals from the shamans, offerings to the Bariaur powers, and a philosophy of open-mindedness inherited from the mystics. Most Bariaur are more concerned with fun and games, however. Spirituality is part of everyday life for a Bariaur and is never oppressive or overbearing. This means that they also expect religious professionals to be active flock members, including chores, fighting battles, and everything associated with bariaur culture. In fact, religious professionals are held to a higher standard, as they represent bariaur culture.

The Payira

(The Hornless)

So berk, you think you've figured out the ins and outs of Bariaur culture. Does with horns are a disgrace, magic is outlawed, and Bariaur roam in nomadic flocks.

Well, that's only the half of it. You see, there's a little known group of Bariaur that no one talks about. They're outside the flock, they don't hold traditional Bariaur beliefs, and most Bariaur think it best to keep their existence secret.

Some of you have seen them and have asked me about The Payira, the strange hornless bucks with pelts dyed black, a small golden horn shaved onto their right flank. They seem surrounded by a maelstrom of strange magical energy. I'm here to tell you a Bariaur secret, in the true tradition of the mystics, in the spirit of sharing.

Bariaur does born with horns live a painful life of ridicule and despair, at least those who aren't drowned at birth. It's an unhappy fact of Bariaur life. But what happens to Bariaur bucks born without horns? Ah, you never knew this happened.

You see, statistically, one in twenty Bariaur bucks is born without horns, while one in twenty does is born with horns. This is not a curse from the gods (the powers tell us) or nature's retribution (the shamans declare), but just the way things have always been (say the Payira).

While parents lament over horned does, the birth of a hornless buck is a mixed blessing. Within hours of a hornless birth, a representative of the Payira arrives to greet the newborn and congratulate the parents. No one knows how the Payira discover these births. Some suspect the Payira of causing birth of the hornless, others think them to be psychically attuned to the birth of hornless bucks, cursed or blessed like themselves. Whatever the suspicions, there is no place for a hornless buck in Bariaur society, and the flock is thankful for the Payira for providing an opportunity for this unusual situation.

When the hornless Payira buck arrives, the parents are given a gift. They are presented with a solid gold horn, a symbol of the heroism that the newborn buck will no doubt accomplish, and compensation for nature's cruel dispensation. The newborn buck is taken with the Payira representative with promises of great accomplishments and tender care. Fathers wear their golden horn proudly around their neck (some several), a show of honour demonstrating that one of their offspring serves proudly with the Payira.

Flocks never again see their young hornless ones. However, some couples end up forming a relationship with the Payira representative, as a kind of visiting uncle from far away. These couples seem to produce multiple hornless bucks, due to whatever reasons. The Payira call them blessed, but the flock is not so sure. This is where the story ends for most Bariaur flocks, but this is just the beginning for the hornless buck.

The Order

As in most things of this world, the Payira are bound by the rule of threes. These three rules bind the Payira to each other and to their cause. It is taught to the youngest of the order, even before they are old enough to possibly comprehend it's full meaning. The rules are also liberating as they free the buck from cultural constraints and racial prejudices.

1. **The Order Fights for Good.** Although a simple command, the Payira have turned the execution of this statement into an art form. Payira are the only bucks ever to practice magic. Although the area of expertise is up to the buck, all Payira, due to their training and possibly their physiology, are wild mages. See the custom Wild Surge tables for special planar effects. Payira mages hire themselves out in groups of five or more to good causes, either in war as mercenaries, protection for caravans, or security for important heads of state. They always require payment and always insist on working in groups.

MAGIC: Payira groups of five or more are able to work together to focus their wild surges. These are unique surges, unlike anything experienced by other wild mages. Focusing energy increases the

surge's potency or redirects the effects to safe locations. This turns a group of frightening, unpredictable mages into a single focused force for good.

MONEY: Some criticise the Payira for taking money. Payira not only take payment, but their rates are quite steep. Although they are not inexpensive, their results are always guaranteed. Most of this money is given to the Payira organisation, which then covertly distributes it to worthy causes of good. Mages and technicians work as hard on their philanthropy as they do studying and learning their magical craft. It is said that with practice, anyone can harness the power of magic, but it takes a true genius to give away money without corrupting the receiver.

2. **The Order is Your Family.** Payira may never return to their flock. They may never visit their parents or even know of them. Payira are completely cut off from Bariaur society, including religious beliefs, learned racial traits, and even the ingrained desire towards wanderlust. Payira are forever banished from their past life, even going so far as to treat Bariaur in need as just another client.

The order is the family for the Payira. They count the order as their brothers, their mentors, their students, and their friends. The Payira are more stable and orderly than the typical Bariaur flock, enabling young bucks to accomplish things not possible within Bariaur society. Thus Payira mages exist in a race that forbids magic and only rarely tolerates it among their females.

3. **Your Good Deeds are Your Offspring.** Payira are forbidden to reproduce. There are several reasons for this. First, it distracts the Payira from their cause, diverting their energies towards mating, raising a family, and other paternal duties. In a traditional Bariaur flock, the males have little to do with the raising of children, but outside a flock a male would have an incredibly difficult time managing a family.

Second, the Payira ability to focus their surges is thought to be a function of their sexual energy. To mate would be to limit a male's sexual energy, thus effecting their magical abilities and placing the order in danger.

Third, the Payira, the hornless ones, have been essentially culled from Bariaur society. In theory, the order should grow smaller and smaller as males who produce hornless bucks are removed from the reproductive pool. Over the last thousand years, the order has seen itself drop in numbers from many tens of thousands to only a few thousand today.

IN THE END: it is ingrained in the minds of the Payira that one day their order will cease to exist, thus the immediacy of their current goals. Evil must be fought and the poor and downtrodden must given a chance to survive. One day the last Payira will fall in battle, surrounded by his brothers, but behind him will be an army of the oppressed and the meek, standing up for their freedom.

Payira Character Kit

Role: Outsider to Bariaur society. Some Payira regularly visit Bariaur flocks to adopt hornless bucks into the order. They generally are not expected to stay with the flock for more than a few hours. Sight of a Payira is an inauspicious sign. They are not welcome during celebratory events or rituals.

Secondary Skills: A Payira should have a craft related skill in use within the region of his influence.

Weapon Proficiency: They may be proficient in any weapon approved for mages.

Bonus Nonweapon proficiency: Etiquette, A Craft (cooking, woodworking, etc.) This demonstrates the dual role of the Payira, as an elite fighter and a champion of the downtrodden.

Recommended Nonweapon Proficiencies: Cooking, Herbalism, Instrument, Local History, Modern Languages, Religion

Recommended Traits: Empathy, Lucky, Instrument

Distinctive Appearance: Payira dye their pelts completely black, except for a small shaved golden horn on their right flank. They generally dress their upper bodies in simple black cloth.

Special Abilities: Payira have the ability to control their surges when in groups of other Payira. This effect is 1% per level, per Payira within a 60' radius. At least three Payira must be present for this to be possible.

For example, five 1st level Payira mages within 60' of each other would have a 5% change of controlling a wild surge. The control aspect simply allows the Payira to direct the spell elsewhere, possibly onto the caster or target or changing the area of effect. If those mages were 10th level, the chance would be 50%. At no time is the controlling effect more than 90%.

Related Links:

- Wild Surge Table (see Appendix A)
- Planar Wild Mage Player's Option Rules (see Appendix A)
- Planar Wild Mage Spells (see Appendix A)

Meet a Payira Leader:

Majestic Goodfellow (Pl/male/b/M13/Payira/NG)

BACKGROUND: I am but a simple servant of the people. My true craft is woodworking, mostly carpentry. My designs are straightforward. I build furniture mostly; bed frames, stools, cabinets and the occasional desk or table. Built for utility, these items are meant to last lifetimes, to be used by many generations beyond their current owners. I build furniture meant to last the life of a home, not just their occupants. Designs are straightforward, compact, and simple.

I never actually see the new owners of my crafts. Each item is given away to those in need, whisked away as soon as it's finished. They are never sold. Although rich merchants often beg to purchase our crafts, we always refuse them. Our work is for the benefit of the downtrodden and the needy. Working for money would have a corrupting influence on our craft. Of course we charge for our other services, but that's the opposite extreme: strictly business.

It is like this with the brotherhood. We believe in honest work, dignity for all, and vigilant struggle against all that is wrong with this world. The brotherhood is all I've ever known. Since I was a small kid, the brotherhood has been my family, and as I've grown to adulthood, I've cultivated good deeds as my beloved children.



Woodworking is one way we connect with the spirit energy of nature.

Unfortunately, we're known more for a different type of connection with energy.

You see, I, like my brethren am a wild mage. Magecraft is important in the struggle against tyranny and oppression. Using nature's energy to bring justice and harmony is as natural as carving a fine oak table for a family in The Hive. Yes, oak is an excellent material for tables. An oak table will last hundreds of years if taken proper care of. A mage lives for about a hundred cycles and dies, soon to be forgotten. True immortality lives on in your children, be they flesh and blood or your good deeds. Power and wealth are fleeting, and rarely give happiness even when possessed. Magic is necessary to defeat evil and lawlessness, but real power is gained through giving of oneself.



I'm sorry I haven't spoken of our work defending the weak and fighting evil, of wild surges and the slaying of fiends and dragons. These are simply things we do. Think of them as fund-raisers. It's like a bake sale or a furniture auction, only more lucrative. But the money all goes to good causes. In fact, you'll find our crafts and philanthropic work to be even more effective than our spells and magic wands. I am but a simple servant of the people. May you one day find the true happiness found only through the opening of your heart and may justice prevail in your realm.

DESCRIPTION: What am I wearing? This old thing? It's a simple cotton shirt, black of course, like all our clothes. Black represents the simplicity of our lives, the removal of distracting influences that might colour our thoughts. My pelt is also black, dyed that way. Again, harmony and simplicity go hand in hand in our crafts and our way of being in the world. I am clean shaven, like all my brethren. Beards are dirty collectors of filth and vermin, and they hide ones face like a rogue or thief. It is better to come clean, to present oneself to the light of day.



I notice you staring at my head. You seem puzzled. Yes, it's true I don't have horns. We are the hornless bucks, the Payira. It is a sign of our order. We have been chosen before birth, to fight for the downtrodden against the forces of ignorance and tyranny. We use our heads in other ways, usually as mages. We find our brainboxes much more powerful when used for harnessing energy rather than smashing them against our opponents.

Motivation: I do have one conceit, I admit. I've been saving my allowance to purchase several logs of Dothion Pine for use in building a dishware cabinet. Working with Dothion Pine is a joy! After removing the bark, the pine can be shaped very easily, as if it were made of butter. As the moisture in the wood evaporates, over a period of several days, the pine hardens, becoming stronger than oak and more beautiful. It's a true joy to work with the Dothion varieties, and I know such a work will outlast our entire order, possibly several millennia. Luckily for me, I don't have to give away my works; that is done by several assistants. I would have a difficult time subduing my pride if I were to meet the new owners of my works.



Magic? Oh yes. There is always new magic to learn, but it is like a tool. My study room, with its tomes and cryptic works is like my woodshop with my lathe and chisels.

STATS: Well, let's see. I've got this nice staff and my black velvet robe and I know a lot about wood. Oh, you wanted to do this part?
THACO 16, Dmg 1d6+3 (+3 Quarter Staff), AC 1, Hp 31, MV 18, SZ L: Int 16 - Reason 18, Dex 18 - Balance 19)

NWPs: Spellcraft, Reading/Writing (Aarakocra), Ancient History, Sculpture, Agriculture, Carpentry (20), Chaos Shaping, Portal Feel

Languages: Dwarf, Elf, Githzerai, Gnome, Hill Giant, Lizardman, Minotaur, Ogre, Orc, Bariaur, Planar Common, Sign Language.

WP's: Quarter Staff

Magic Items:

- Robe of the Archmage
- +3 Quarter Staff
- Potion of Giant Strength (Frost)
- Scroll, Protection from Elementals

- Scroll, Protection from Plants
- Scroll, Protection from Possession
- Wand of Wonder

The Mystic's Manifesto

By Sal Drin Thanol

Bariaur Mystic

In a world where belief is power and thought can change reality, some would say that revealing one's beliefs is as dangerous as revealing one's power.

As a mystic, however, I understand that this power was given to us to share with others. By sharing, we enrich our beliefs, enrich each other and nourish the soul. Therefore, I now reveal my own beliefs in the hopes that others will benefit from my understanding, and that they too may reveal their beliefs so that we all may be enriched.

On the Factions

I align myself loosely as a Free Leaguer. At their core, Free Leaguers believe in the freedom to choose. That is as much as I believe of their philosophy. They say that all factions are deluding themselves, that the truth is "out there," but that it's not available to those who shut their minds to one concept. Here I disagree. I believe that each faction holds onto one aspect of the truth. Their truth is pure and perfect. This philosophy goes against every faction's belief system, including the so-called "free league." I choose to study each faction, gain some of their understanding without joining or converting, and integrate it within my own belief system. This is a dangerous proposition, but that is how I express my spirit of adventure.

Reality is not to be sampled, as the Sensates might say, but it is to be assimilated. It is not order or chaos, it just is. It's not the one or the many, but the whole. Life and death are concepts, like the illusory concept of time. They hold minimal sway on our mindscapes. They exist as signposts along the path to freedom. And the mind, also, is only a mental concept. So who is this mind thinking of mind? That is my question and my quest.

On Good and Evil

My people say that when you create a thing, you also create its opposite. This is never truer than when it comes to good and evil. To name something as being good, to discern that one thing is better than another, is to invite its opposite. To call something evil, to forbid it, likewise is to set oneself up for disappointment. Those who are wise know better than to wear these foul-smelling hats. It is the lifelong quest for self-understanding through mystical knowledge that has value to the mystic. What allows one to follow that path is thought to be positive. What prevents one from following that path is considered negative.

True happiness comes from accepting what is, and devoting ones life to fostering this understanding in oneself and others. The method: the "fostering," is performed by the sampling of various philosophical and religious outlooks and finding their core truths.

On Law and Chaos

Law and chaos are concepts only. For a mystic, these concepts are relative. Chaos, for example, is often understood to be the absence of law. Law, is often understood to be chaos subdued. As slippery and self-defeating as good and evil, law and chaos are concepts to be noted, assimilated and understood. But always remember that they have no real substance to them. The only real order and disorder are internal mental functions. And even these are to be noted, experienced but never suppressed.

On The Core

Each person, each faction, each religion, has core beliefs. It is the mystic's mission to expose and assimilate The Core. But what is the core of the mystic? When a mystic asks this of her teacher, she will often be told to study a particular belief system or culture. The teacher refers the mystic to the belief system that that mystic needs to break down their mental conditioning. The teacher rarely, if ever, points

to the student's own mind. Some teachers say that this would be too much for the student to handle. He might say, "If I pointed directly to your mind, and you were to understand, your mind would be crushed like dry leaves." Thus the mystic is always left to herself to find these answers, with the help of a teacher to point the way, if she's lucky.

On Action

Our actions are determined by our minds. Our minds are conditioned by our actions. It is imperative that the two are in sync. For example, a mystic must never use a weapon. A weapon creates powerful mental scars on the mind. If a mystic is to defend herself, she should learn to use her mind, or her bare hands. The best defence is to avoid conflict. But as our goal is to seek the core of belief systems, there are often those who would oppose us, out of greed, suspicion, or ignorance. These are the people most in need of our insights. By finding like-minded individuals within an organisation, we can exchange knowledge and belief and increase our power by giving it away.

Bariaur Shamanism

As a mystic, I seek wisdom everywhere. Often this means listening to the flock's shaman or going on pilgrimage to holy places like the Sacred Mounds or the One Tree. But as the shaman will tell anyone who asks, real wisdom comes only from within.



Bariaur Shaman Medicine Stick

It is wise sayings like these that inspired me to take note of the Wise Ones' wisdom. And yes, all Bariaur shamans are female. In our shaman tradition, there are twelve books of wisdom. These "books" were engraved on cedar bark thousands of years ago. The shaman council consists of the Wise One, (the head shaman) and twelve lesser shamans. The lesser shamans spend their lives memorising one of the twelve books. They completely master the book, all its philosophies, commentaries and arguments and fully understand the books place among the twelve.

In this fashion, it is thought that the shaman council is at full strength when all twelve lesser shamans have mastered their text and the Wise One is capable of channelling the power and teachings.

Often, one or more of the lesser shamans do not have complete mastery of their text, as they are difficult to read and master and take many decades to fully comprehend. This is considered part of the natural ebb and flow of nature. Only half of the lesser shamans had obtained mastery when I left my home.

Finally, I humbly ask that you take what small crumbs of wisdom I have accumulated. This is by no means a systematic attempt to collect my peoples' wisdom, but a small taste of our understanding. Please drink from the well. I only hope you find it nourishing.

THE SAYINGS:

- The sharpest sword cannot cut itself
- The best way to help others is to lead them to the shaman's wisdom
- The simple truth is that the truth is too simple
- When one creates a thing, its opposite is also created
- Beings are sustained through the power of subtle mental energy
- Everything is perfect. But there is a lot of room for improvement
- Be less to become more. Become broken to remain whole. Bend like the trees to stand tall. Be empty to receive. Be used to become new. Have little to gain more. Those who have much will not understand
- Wise persons hold fast to the natural ways as a standard for use by all. Reclusive, yet known by all. Unassertive, yet respected by all. Modest, yet praised by all. Ambitionless, yet followed by all
- Do not argue and no one will argue with you
- The universe acts only according to the laws of nature, even though such laws may seem chaotic and elusive
- Chaotic, still there are patterns. Elusive, still there is life. Mysterious and obscure, still it contains the essential. Power that is immeasurable, still is true and active
- If others are not shown the errors of their beliefs, how will we save the world?
- If I stop working on the ignorance of others, what else is there?

- The mind's nature is pure from the beginning. It has no beginning or end, like space. To remain in this space is true meditation
- It is through faith that absolute truth is realised.

Outland Powers

Bariaur Deities

"...whereupon I, Tarn Fireheel, discuss the nature of this obscure and little known pantheon, its origins, its ties with Bariaur culture, its connections with the Nordic Pantheon and its place in the multiverse, specifically, the Outlands."

Nomolos

"Old Wisdom"

Nor'bah

"Life-Mother"

(Not detailed in this book)

Tirag Thunderhooves

"Ring-Winner"

Va'sha Battlefleece

"Battle-Bringer"

G'wrn-K'ton

Weapon of all True Bariaur Warriors!

Sog'ma-K'ton

Blasphemous Weapon of a Fallen Proxy!

? **Proxies** ?

As sure as Shurrock's upside down (or is that the other way 'round?) - anyplace a sod can find plenty o' Powers, she'll be sure to find plenty of their mouthpieces - Proxies, as well. Let me tell ya cutters, the Outlands are not exception to this rule. In some spots on the 'Land, the Proxies are as thick as fleas on a fforge, others, they are as sparse as a Carcerian menu. While there are plenty of 'em around, one thing that I've noticed is that they always seem to be roamin' about - the bloods are almost **never** standin' still. Some graybeards would wigwang that its 'cause all of the Proxies on the 'Land serve Powers of Balance and Neutrality and thus they are always havin' to rush 'ere and yonder ta balance things out. Ol' Ashy couldn't tell ya one way or another, but I can lann ya the chant on some of the Proxies that I've run 'cross.

V'ann Blackhoof

Proxy of Nomolos, Bariaur God of Wisdom and Death.

Soran Fleethoof

Primary Proxy of Tirag Thunderhooves, Bariaur God of Brotherhood and Skill

Throndas Battlehorn

Proxy of Tirag Thunderhooves

Xurdas Nightfleece

Proxy of Tirag Thunderhooves

Lyelian Dewhoof

Proxy of Tirag Thunderhooves

Klorn 'Foe Hammer' Warhorns

Proxy of Va'sha Battlefleece

Nomolos

By BranNon Hollingsworth
Greater Power, "The Grizzled Horns", "The Old One"

AoC: Death, rebirth, wisdom

AL: N

WAL: Any

Symbol: Elder bariaur horn

Home P/L/R: Ysgard/Ysgard/The Echoing Vale

Known Proxies: V'ann Blackhoof (**Px/male/F12,C13/NG**)

Nomolos is the eldest of the bariaur deities, he is the first born of the pantheon and all of his siblings owe their origins to him. He is said to have sprung to life from the first words of wisdom spoken in the multiverse, although exactly who spoke those words is a widely contested point. Most bariaur, of course, hold to the course that it was Nomolos himself that spoke these words, for they say that wisdom gives birth to itself all of the time. Just as life passes eternally into death and then death turns again into life, so does wisdom spawn and create new knowledge. This all seems as simple as a Bytopian hand tool to the bariaur, they say that it is merely the Unity of Rings, upon which all of the Outer Planes are based. Now, even a hard-boiled Athar would be hard pressed to argue with that!

With an aged, but steady hand, the "*Old Goat*" (as he is sometimes referred to) doles over the realm of the dead of the bariaur, and yet he also is the protector of new life amongst the vibrant, life loving warriors. It is for these two reasons that Nomolos is one of the most beloved and venerated of all of the bariaur gods. To the bariaur, death (especially death through honourable combat) is nothing more than a natural progression of life. They say that they have nothing to fear in Nomolos' Realm, The Echoing Vale, for within that Realm, there are only the eternally echoing songs of heroism, bravery, and revelry that all bariaur love and cherish. Death, as well, is a path to not only wisdom, but also a chance at rebirth through the will of Nomolos.

Truly, there are nearly as many birthing prayers and songs that pay homage to Nomolos as there are to his sister-daughter, **Nor'bah**, who presides over the realms of life and fertility, among others. Nomolos is responsible for assigning not only the spirits that shall inhabit those new lives, but also what ever wisdom that they might take with them from his Realm into that of the living. Considering the harsh conditions that bariaur inhabit daily, any gifts from the Lord of Wisdom are gratefully welcomed. Nomolos appears as an old griseled bariaur with immensely curved and scarred horns. His dusty grey beard nearly brushes the ground when he walks, yet his aged silver eyes are always full of mirth, life and wisdom. He carries no weapons, but wears the traditional battle armour, or *Gr'don*, of the bariaur, as he is a champion of all honourable warriors.

He carries a scroll woven from the dust of every battlefield (past, present and future) whereupon any bariaur has fallen in battle. It is said that upon this scroll are recorded the deeds of each of those bariaur champions and from this scroll come the echoing songs which fill his Realm. (Some graybeards believe that the upsurge of bariaur bards in Sigil and the Outlands are a direct result of this, and some speculate that "*The Old One*" may expand his portfolio to that of a bardic patron).

Nomolos is also never without his sacred and quite legendary horn, *Relyt*, which is said to have been carved from the thigh bones of the first Fire Giant ever slain. Amongst bariaur tribes, the story is told that Nomolos blows the magical horn twice during each life - once upon the birth of every *kid* (young bariaur) and once upon the death of every bariaur. It is considered to be a good omen if horns are heard upon the birth of a *kid*, so each bariaur birth is heralded with a mighty chorus of blowing horns, hoping to draw the attention of "*The Old One*" so that blessings might be bestowed. There are also countless stories of great bariaur warriors, such as the mighty **Draugnian Steelhoof**, who have heard *Relyt's* call upon the field of battle as life fled from his body. It is said that the call of the *Horn of Nomolos* is like a calling to a long deserved rest, an almost comforting sound of finality.

Whereas it seems that this involvement with the warrior caste of bariaur society might intervene upon his sister-daughter, **Va'sha Battlefleece's** portfolio, this is not the case. Planar theologians, such as the great sage **Dismus Torben** of Amoria, submit that there must exist some sort complex inter-relationship between Nomolos and his sister-daughter, **Va'sha**. While **Va'sha** reigns over the realm of the living warriors, her interest ends upon their deaths. It seems that she knows that her brother-father, Nomolos, will through his infinite wisdom, treat the warriors fairly and honourably in the 'Realm Beyond'.

While it seems logical that Nomolos and Odin, the Norse Power of wisdom and knowledge would see

eye to eye, this is not the case. It seems that Nomolos, with his even-handed and sublime approach towards death and wisdom does not look fondly upon the often erratic and sometimes violent outbursts of the father of the Nordic pantheon. Not that "*Grizzled Horns*" would ever call Odin's actions to the fore - far from it actually; that is merely not Nomolos' style.

Nomolos has only one known proxy and by all accounts has only **ever** had one. The cutter's a mighty warrior priest by the name of **V'ann Blackhoof (Px/male/F12,C13/NG)**, who is known more so for his sense of penetrating wisdom and 'cut-to-the-quick' reasoning that for the might of his weapons and spells. He's a small blood (by bariaur standards) with long, curly tan wool than slowly darkens as it moves down his flanks and legs until finally ending in his namesake - dark, black hooves.

- T. Fireheel , Esq.

Tirag Thunderhooves

By BranNon Hollingsworth

Intermediate Power, "The Fair-Bringer", "Winner-of-Rings", "Hoof-Brother"

AoC: Brotherhood, fellowship, fair competition

AL: NG

WAL: Any except evil

Symbol: Clasped hands

Home P/R: Outlands/The Rutting (The Ring of Champions - although frequently wanders)

Known Proxies: Soran Fleethoof (Px/male/bariaur/The Free League/P10/CG); Throndas Battlehorn (Px/male/bariaur/Believers of the Source/P5,F7/LN); Xurdas Nightfleece (Px/male/bariaur/The Free League/P6,T6/CN); Lyelian Dewhoof (Px/female/bariaur/Believers of the Source/P9/LN)

Tirag is the youngest and most exuberant of the bariaur pantheon and his status as an Intermediate Power reflects this. His sheer charisma and ever growing following amongst the Outland bariaur, however, seem to indicate that a change in classification cannot be long off. The second (and first male) born of **Nor'bah**, it is widely whispered that he is destined for things of greatness. Some spread the chant that the great bariaur warrior **Draugnian Steelhoof** is the father of the "*Ring-Winner*", but most folks (including the prophetess of **Nor'bah**) dismiss these ravings as pure screech.

No matter his origins, the white-wooled, golden-eyed bariaur Lord of Brotherhood is the only one of his pantheon that has left their comfortable realm in Ysgard and followed the roaming flocks of Outland bariaur. For this reason alone the massive flocks would have rallied beneath his banner, but the real reason is that Tirag spends more time **physically** amongst his faithful than he does with the other gods in his pantheon! As far as deities go, practices such as this are nearly unheard of.

More often than not, Tirag manifests himself amongst his clergy, or wherever an honest contest (or a contest that needs to become honest) broils. With long, flowing, white, woolly locks of hair and eyes that shine like two celestial halos, he is not easily missed. He always arrives with a loud clap of rolling thunder but likewise always extends an open hand and a friendly smile to both bariaur and other races alike, unless, of course, there is an unfair competition at hand, which invokes his wrath.

He is usually very well liked amongst bariaur, for he cannot restrain himself from entering a friendly contest with others. It is almost as if he forgets that he is a god for a time and lets himself enjoy the mere concept of being amongst mortals, doing as mortals do. He always seems more surprised when he wins the contests than an omnipotent being really should be. Those bariaur that compete against him, in true bariaur fashion, hold no grudges against Tirag. Truly, it is more of an honor to say that one lost to the God of Skill than won against the greatest mortal that ever lived! His favorite contests, above all, are tests of drinking, brawling, and feats of speed. It is said that anytime a thunderstorm rolls across the Outlands that Tirag is no doubt in another hoof-race.

Tirag also seems to expend much more of his divine energy in the form of maintaining proxies than most other deities. He seems to feel that being the Lord of Brotherhood requires that he touch as many as possible with his teachings of fairness and the importance of working together as brethren in all things. Currently, he maintains four proxies and has an untold number of priests and priestesses of not only bariaur, but also many dwarves, gnomes, humans and aasimar - all of which have taken a gleam to Tirag's teachings. This is yet another major difference between the "*Hoof-Brother*" and his fellow gods - most of the other bariaur deities have a hard time accepting any of the other races into their midst, much less as clergy! Apparently, however, this does nothing to bother the Lord of Brotherhood and Fairness and has yet to harm his standing amongst the Outland flocks.

His proxies are well known for their friendliness and sharp eye for fairness in all things and all but one can be found wandering the 'Land, much as their Lord, Tirag. **Soran Fleethoof (Px/male/bariaur/The Free League/P10/CG)**, a bariaur born and raised on Ysgard, left his native home to follow the God of Brotherhood. Now, he maintains the Lord's Realm, whilst he is away, wandering the Outlands and beyond. Tirag's Realm, The Ring of Champions, is nothing more than a large arena, bounded on all sides by the tents of the wandering petitioners of the Realm, within which constant displays of skill and prowess are seen. The contests are as constant as the drinking and the revelry. Once a year, during **The Rutting**, the Realm shifts and joins the other Realms of the bariaur pantheon at an unknown location beyond the Hinterlands, where in a grand festival that encompasses a holy rite of all the bariaur tribes occurs. The Ring of Champions is wherein all disputes and wrong doings are settled fairly, with tests of strength and speed, and all proceedings are presided over by not only Tirag but also his sister, **Va'sha**

Battlefleece.

Tirag's other proxies, **Throndas Battlehorn (Px/male/bariaur/Believers of the Source/P5, F7/LN)**, **Xurdas Nightfleece (Px/male/bariaur/The Free League/P6, T6/CN)** and **Lyelian Dewhoof (Px/female/bariaur/Believers of the Source/P9/LN)** all spend the majority of their time roaming about the Outlands, spreading the word of their lord, Tirag Thunderhooves.

- T. Fireheel , Esq.

Va'sha Battlefleece

By BranNon Hollingsworth

Greater Power, "War Mother", "Blessed Fury", "The Honor-binder"

AoC: War, justice, honor, independence

AL: CN

WAL: Any

Symbol: A **G'wm-k'ton** (Bariaur War-Club)

Home P/L/R: Ysgard/Ysgard/BattleGrim

Known Proxies: **Klorn 'FoeHammer' Warhorns (Px/female/bariaur/F15/CN)**

It is said, amongst the bariaur, that as long as a single member of their proud race lives, so will Va'sha. Whether she is actively worshipped or not, it matters not - for it is the very core of the race of bariaur, the three truths of war, honor, and independence, which give her life. The accuracy of this statement is nearly unverifiable (although if some members of certain lawful factions had their way, it would certainly be tested), it does provide a very jarring view of this grim war goddess of the proud race known as bariaur. If the bariaur pantheon were compared to mortal children, Va'sha would be neither the oldest nor the youngest, but rather, the oft forgotten child that must lash out in fits of rage to gain their parent's attention. Now, Va'sha's reasoning seems to be different, but the end result could only be described as strikingly similar. The daughter of **Nomolos** and **Nor'bah**, Va'sha gained neither her father's even-handed temperament nor her mother's gentle nature. Rather, she gained the darker parts of both parents and in her actions, these dour, grim parts are magnified.

Va'sha changes her appearance as often as the wind alters the direction in which it blows, or so say the bariaur. Apparently, however, she tries to maintain (at least in the presence of the other deities of the pantheon) a visage of a lean, well-muscled, and fiercely wild gray-wooled bariaur. She often appears with unruly and tangled mats of wool hanging in disarray about her and constantly flaunts her individualism in both word and deed. Her eyes appear as swirling, colorful pools of pure light and it is said that any who can peer into those orbs and not perish of fright will see his last day played out before him.

She always carries a massive version of the bariaur's honored weapon, the **G'wm-K'ton**, at her side and utterly disdains the usage of armor. It is said that her hide cannot be pierced by anything other than the deeds of a cowardly warrior. Truly, this is one of the few things in the multiverse that can harm her, for it strikes directly to her heart and not her hide.

No matter which form she takes, however, there are always three things which remain constant in all of her visages. First, she always bears horns upon her head, which normally is considered a disgrace for females amongst the bariaur. To Va'sha, however, that are the weapons of a true bariaur warrior and she considers them anything but a disgrace or dishonor. (It has often been found that those few bariaur females that do sport horns often become followers of Va'sha for this very reason). Second, her horns are always decorated in the manner of a true warrior, with carvings and gilded trappings unlike any known to bariaur kind. Thirdly, her skin is always covered with ever-swirling and scintillating tattoos, depicting every deed of honor or independence that has ever been amongst her people.

Relations between Va'sha and the rest of the pantheon are, to say the least, tenuous and strained. Other than **The Rutting**, it is rare occurrence (and usually one that foretells ill times to come) when they are all together. Relations with her father, **Nomolos**, are by far the closest of the four but many graybeards theorize that this is due to the fact that their portfolios overlap so intimately. Va'sha tolerates her brother, **Tirag**, but only for short periods of time which usually end in tumult, or rarely, violence. Finally, she seems to utterly despise her mother, **Nor'bah**, (whom she has the least in common with) with a passion bordering on fury. Not that the goddess would ever lash out against her mother - neither her father nor brother would allow such a deed to go unpunished. However, it is this rumored that due to this feeling of near hatred betwixt Va'sha and **Nor'bah** that the *War Mother's* realm, BattleGrim, seems to be shifting away from Ysgard and closer to Pandemonium.

BattleGrim, ruled by Va'sha's single proxy, **Klorn 'FoeHammer' Warhorns (Px/female/bariaur/F15/CN)**, is a foreboding realm where the sounds of constant battle can be heard, but only barely over the cries of those found guilty by Va'sha's Justice. Their cries resound with such magnitude because of the punishment they receive for the crimes they committed in their mortal lives - they are eternally reminded that gone forever is their independence. Most of those that are judged worthy, enter into **Nomolos'** realm, *The Echoing Vale*, but a select few are chosen by Va'sha herself to remain within BattleGrim where they are hardened by an eternity of battle. After this 'hardening', beneath the astute tutelage and direction of the

constantly growling or yelling Klorn, they become the elite guard of BattleGrim, protecting it and leading heaven-shaking battles against the loathsome giant-gods of Ysgard.

Truly, of all of the bariaur pantheon, it is only Va'sha that seems to be on more than good terms with the Norse gods. Not suprisingly, she and Odin, the quick-to-do-battle Norse Power of war, see nearly eye to eye. Some planar theologians believe that Va'sha has more of an affinity for Odin than for her own father,

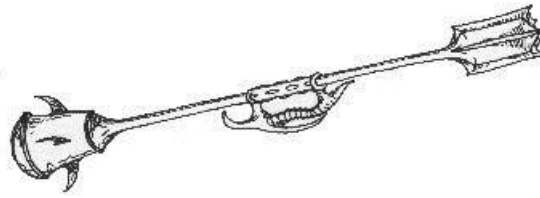
Nomolos. It is these same theologians that reason that this, not a difference in belief, is the true dark on the unusual distance that exists between the two Gods of Wisdom.

There is, however, little doubt that Va'sha 'tends to her flock', so to speak. Those that worship the war goddess do so with a fervor that is unmatched (although the faithful of the "*Ring-Winner*" beg to differ) amongst the bariaur pantheon. It seems that it is this sole fact that allows Va'sha the leeway that she is often afforded by the other members of the pantheon. Further, it seems that as long as the "*Blessed Fury*" maintains the strength of the Ysgardian bariaur and the Outland flocks, she will continue to be so 'respected' - (or should that be 'feared')?

- T. Fireheel , Esq.

G'wrn-k'ton

"War-maker"



An ancient bariaur weapon known in song and deed, the *G'wrn-k'ton*, literally 'War-maker', is an unusual weapon that ranges in length between six and eight feet long (the length of the weapon greatly depends on the bariaur for whom it was made). The *K'ton*, as it is more commonly called, is a heavy iron or steel shod staff with large mace or warhammer-like nodules crafted upon either end. The weapons are always purposefully and expertly unbalanced in one of the two ends, which effectively makes the weapon much easier to swing. The reason for this, quite plain once put to use in battle, is not readily evident. Effectively, however, this allows for more use of the weapon's own momentum (once put into a looping, swinging type of motion) instead of sheer brute force to move it through the air.

Commonly, bariaur using this weapon make a stand and begin whipping the *K'ton* into a murderous pitch, (which they can do fairly quickly and with little effort on their parts) and then use the weapon's greater striking distance to keep foes away from their flanks. Once the weapon is set into motion, it takes little to maintain the momentum, and thus the bariaur does not tire as easily. Bariaur have been known, however, to use the *K'ton* for other 'inventive maneuvers, and most of the race are at least familiar, if not proficient with this deadly weapon. (Thus, all bariaur gain a +1 to hit with the *K'ton*, regardless of Strength or specialization).



Legends circulate of a few rare specimens of these weapons being specially enchanted. Most of these rumors speak of *K'tons* with powers similar to other magical weapons found throughout the multiverse, however, there is one special 'feature' that many bariaur seek out before others. *K'tons* that have the magical properties to allow them to split apart into two smaller, detached melee weapons which can be used in close quarters are highly sought after. To most bariaur, once a weapon like this is gained, there is little need for any other type of close-quarter melee weapon. Once these particular *K'tons* are halved, they can never be taken a great distance from one another and if one end is destroyed, the other end is consumed as well. As long as the owner (or whomever) holds one end of the *K'ton*, the other will join it at the speaking of the joining phrase.

Most bariaur favor this weapon over any other, and will become highly proficient (and often times, even specialized) before even considering another weapon. Their unique structure and materials, if crafted by a true bariaur warrior with experience in the weapon, lends them as much power as any known weapon created by nearly all other races. (They commonly do 1d8 to 1d12 points of initial damage, depending on the particular *K'ton*).

- T. Fireheel , Esq.

Sog'ma-K'ton

"Women's weapon"

Created by a now defunct proxy of **Va'sha Battlefleece**, the *Sog'ma-K'ton* is a vicious weapon that has been outlawed in most bariaur societies. Considered a perversion of the holy **G'wrn-k'ton**, the *Sog'ma-K'ton* is a brutal weapon with razor sharp axe blades on both ends.

The Annals of Va'sha tell of the creation of this abominable weapon:

"Then she (Sheula Ralom'pa) did the unspeakable. Sheula insulted the holy *G'wrn-k'ton*, the symbol of Va'sha, by commenting on how blunt and unbalanced it was, "like the brainbox of a buck" she said. Sheula created a new weapon, the *Sog'ma-k'ton*, a brutal weapon based on the *G'wrn-k'ton*, yet it had axe blades upon both ends."

The *Sog'ma-K'ton*, besides being a sacrilege, was found to be an equally deadly weapon to the wielder. Numerous accidents occurred when it was introduced to BattleGrim after its wielders lost control of the weapon's intense, unbalanced twirling motion. Fearing for their lives, the wielder's often attempted to throw the weapon aside, resulting in serious injury to bystanders and often the *K'ton* wielder herself. When the *Sog'ma* was first created, one buck countered Sheula's insult to the *G'wrn-k'ton* by saying that the *Sog'ma* was like Sheula's talk: vile, unbalanced, yet brutally sharp.

The does had a difficult time wielding the heavy weapon, while among the bucks the weapon was spurned for its feminine name. Ma means mother or the feminine in Bariaur. Tsoga is the root for the word society, or group. The *Sog'ma-k'ton* is literally 'the women's weapon', which fit well with anti-male bent of the small female V'asha sect that later took up the weapon. Only this small group is permitted to use the *Sog'ma-k'ton*, and never upon the battlefield with other bariaur who fear its reputation. The K'pak sect, as they're known, subscribe to the heretical beliefs that does should have every right afforded to buck's, including leadership of the flock.

Does of the K'pak sect of V'asha Battlefleece wield this weapon differently than the *G'wrn-k'ton*. Often they will wade into battle with the *Sog'ma* twirling, daring their opponents to risk the whirling blades of death. Other times, in larger battles, *Sog'ma* wielders will rush into battle in a blind rage known as "The Blessed Fury." The Blessed Fury is another name for Va'sha, but also represents a berserker-type insanity that takes over the priests and warriors of this obscure sect.

Most bariaur shun this weapon and those who use it. (Members of the K'pak sect who wield this weapon receive a -4 reaction adjustment when encountering other groups of bariaur. Those who attempt to pick up the *Sog'ma* without training automatically roll an attack with the weapon against themselves. A failed attack results in the weapon spinning away in a random direction, possibly injuring a bystander.)

Unlike some versions of the *K'ton*, the *Sog'ma* is not capable of detaching into two weapons. (The *Sog'ma-k'ton* inflicts 1d12 to 2d10 points of damage, depending on the target and the weapon speed is 2. Those attempting to attack a wielder of a spinning *Sog'ma* must make a save vs. paralyzation or automatically take a hit from the weapon on the first round of combat. Wielders may force this attack on opponents by wading into combat at their normal move rate.)

- T. Fireheel , Esq.

Bariaur Ritual

- ◆ **Hoof Trimming (sheka)**
- ◆ **The Ritual of Ascension (Tab'goma)**
- ◆ **Bariaur Martial Arts (Zhod'yo)**
- ◆ **Food in Bariaur Society (Zha'sa)**
- ◆ **Male Coming of Age Ritual (Migoka)**
- ◆ **Female Coming of Age Ritual (Yat'ra)**
- ◆ **Bariaur Spirit Meditation (Sagoma)**
- ◆ **Deck of Shis**
- ◆ **Spiritual Drum of the Outland Bariaur (Rena)**
- ◆ **Shek: Intermediate Power of Freedom**
- ◆ **Bariaur Music: Interview with a Rena Master**
- ◆ **Stare (Staray) Bariaur Two Handed Axe Fighting Style**
- ◆ **Wind Blade Two Weapon Scimitar Fighting Style**
- ◆ **The Bariaur Way to Knowledge**

Sheka: The Ritual of Hoof Trimming

Guvner Faizel Bekley

Outland Anthropologist

The most well known of Bariaur rituals is Sheka, ritual hoof trimming. Sheka unites a tribe once a month in celebration of life, freedom, and sacrifice. All Bariaur of adult age participate in sheka, while the younger Bariaur must await puberty before they may be allowed to join in. The ritual strongly unites Bariaur, socially integrating them with their peers and fellow flock-mates. Sheka helps reinforce a Bariaur's personal identity, his flock identity and his values. Sheka is also an opportunity to celebrate and play, remembering that life is meant to be joyous and carefree.

The history of Sheka is the history of the Bariaur themselves. There was once an age, the shamans tell us in their storu of creation, when Bariaur had no spirit or purpose in life. Evil giants preyed on Bariaur in large numbers and thousands were killed or enslaved.

During this dark time, there was a buck named Shek. Shek had been captured by the giants. The giants used large metal chains placed around the front right leg of captured Bariaur to prevent them from escaping. There was little likelihood of escape anyway, since Bariaur along with most creatures at that time simply wandered listlessly, without purpose, like sheep. The giants treated Bariaur like herd animals, and the Bariaur acted much like docile animals. The giants never hesitated to kill captured Bariaur, but they preferred to keep them alive since they had no way to preserve the thousands of carcasses that would result in a massive slaughter.

Shek was different from the rest of the Bariaur, who at this stage in evolution, were barely self aware. In fact, Shek is believed to be the first Bariaur to embody true Bariaur spirit. Shek felt the pain of his people who, deep down inside, yearned to be free. Shek's instinct for freedom was stronger than his compatriots. Freedom was the sole focus of his every thought, the purpose of his every breath and action. Yet Shek was a captive. What was he to do?

One day Shek's sister was taken away for slaughter. Shek was incensed by his helplessness. He flew into a wild rage and with his sharp scimitar horns, he pierced his own right leg, ripping through muscles and tendons. Shek ripped into his leg over and over until nothing was left but a bloody stump. Freeing himself from the chains of oppression and slavery, Shek vowed never again to be taken prisoner or allow his flock to be enslaved. Never again would Bariaur be held down in one place. They would forever wander in freedom and joy. That night Shek freed a contingent of thirty Bariaur, who then rescued his sister and his entire flock.

The spirit of Shek spread through the flock and every flock that came in contact with them, like a fast moving plague. Soon Bariaur everywhere found their true spirit, the spirit of life and freedom and happiness. Never again would Bariaur live in a world of slavery and misery. They would rather cut off their own hooves than live under terms not their own. Shek had delivered his people by sacrificing his own flesh, his own mobility and he stood as an example of sacrifice for Bariaur beliefs and values.

The spirit of Shek is celebrated each month in the ritual of Sheka. Sheka celebrates the physical sacrifice made by each Bariaur in their long travels. It represents a sacrifice to nature, which sustains the flock. It represents freedom and joy and the spirit of fighting against all odds to maintain freedom and the Bariaur way of life. Trimming of the hooves is a remembrance of Shek's physical sacrifice for the freedom of all Bariaur. Bariaur try to think about the pain of cutting through one's own leg each time that they cut away the excess of their hooves. Sheka also plays an important role in Bariaur health and hygiene.

Bariaur, like most hoofed creatures, require periodic hoof trimming to avoid disease and lameness. Dirt and mud must be removed every 4-6 weeks from the hooves to avoid foot rot. The excessive growth of the hooves must then be trimmed back to avoid infection, caused by cuts and bruises that naturally occur on the hooves. These highly contagious diseases have been known to strike an entire flock lame in a matter of weeks, and that means certain death to the nomadic Bariaur.

Hoof trimming is important for all Bariaur, even those in cities. Although Bariaur in cities often wear down their hooves on the rough cobblestones, they must still clean and trim their hooves, as the muddy streets are especially dangerous breeding grounds for disease and illness.

Therefore, Sheka acts as a physical and spiritual cleansing ritual, one essential to the physical and spiritual survival of the Bariaur as a flock and as part of their personal identities. Sheka is a ritual

performed solely by the shaman, the flock's link to nature and nature's power. The shaman performs most rituals of preservation and nature, while priests perform rituals that preserve the flock's culture and beliefs.

The Ritual

EARTH: The shaman starts the ritual seated in a place of earth, the element most important to the ritual. This place might be a cave, a hill, or a small mound. This is the center of power for the ritual, which involves the focusing of the earth's energy. It is the earth's fertility and stability that allows the Bariaur to wander in their nomadic ritual of life. The shaman pays homage to the earth, wishing peace, prosperity and fertility on the earth and all who walk it.

AIR: The shaman then lights candles and incense. The candles, twelve in number, are placed in a circle around the shaman, providing shadowy light for all in attendance. Sticks of incense are then lit and placed next to the candles, one stick between each candle. Participants are invited to inhale the incense and experience the element of air, which provides sustenance to all creatures and life to the plants that the Bariaur eat. The shaman says this while holding a large unlit candle, representing the potential of what is yet to be.

FIRE: The shaman says various prayers at which time the candles flare momentarily. Then the shaman lights the final candle and begins handing the candles out to the surrounding flock, keeping the last one to illuminate himself. He starts with the candle in front of him and works his way around, sending candles and light through the assembled crowd. The crowds huddle around their closest candle. This represents the power of fire to illuminate and bring Bariaur together. It is also the fire that brings the buck and doe together to perpetuate the existence of the flock.

It is by the light of the fire that the hooves are cleaned of earth. A trusted friend or ally cleans one's hooves. Bariaur never clean their own hooves, as it's a sign of ill omen. Once the hooves are cleaned of earth, they're carefully trimmed with a sharp bone knife. This is an intimate moment for Bariaur, one in which lifelong friendships are made. To trim a Bariaur's hooves is to become a true hoof brother.

WATER: Finally the shaman produces a bowl of water. It is in water that all Bariaur are born; encased in a sack of fluid upon birth. It is water that sustains and preserves the earth, allowing plants to grow and animals to drink. It is water that cleanses and purifies.

The bowl of water is passed around to each group of Bariaur, who dip their trimmed hooves into the herb scented mixture. Blood from the trimming often mixes with the fragrant herbs, a unique, nostalgic smell known to all Bariaur. The herb water acts as a protectant against disease and illness, despite the many hooves that pass through it.

The bowl passes around to each of the twelve groups, lit in the flickering shadows of a single candle. The last Bariaur to wash his hooves uses a handful of the liquid to douse the candle. The bowl is then passed to the next group in clockwise order. Eventually, sometimes over a period of many hours, the candles are snuffed out and the Bariaur solemnly return to their tents.

Final Prayer

The shaman gives a final prayer in praise of the Bariaur:

May the rich earth beneath us sustain our flock through
the next season.

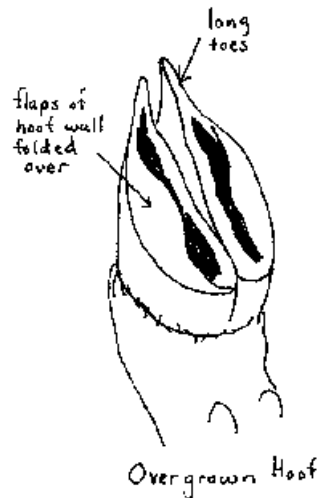
May the pure air around us ring true with the joy of our
young.

May the immaculate fire of the stars above shine pure and guide us.

May the holy water of this land wash away our fatigue and troubles.

The next day is time for celebration and games, festivities and mating rituals.

How to Trim a Hoof



All ritual aside, to properly trim another's hoof is an intimate experience that separates the bucks (or does) from the kids. Trim too little or unevenly, and disease or lameness can set in. Trim too much and you'll get extensive bleeding and possible infection that could result in permanent lameness. Some say that the hoof trimming experience is more intimate than mating. The term hoof-brother comes from this intimate experience. There is an art to a proper trim and luckily we're here to show you how.

1. Remove dirt trapped in hooves.
2. Trim outer walls back until the edge of the wall is parallel to the nail line.
3. Trim back the heels to the level of the soles
4. Remove excess hoof on the inner surface of each claw that may cause the claws to spread outwards.
5. You should see pink tissue once the hooves are trimmed. Excessive trimming results in bleeding and is considered poor form. In either case, dip hooves into herbal water for safe healing.

The Ritual of Ascension (Tab'goma)

Guvner Faizel Bekley

Outland Anthropologist

The few known Bariaur rituals pose difficult puzzles for scholars attempting to understand the intricacies of Bariaur culture. Most nomadic egalitarian societies, such as that of the Bariaur, rarely use formalized ritual. Ritual in these cultures is usually reserved for dealing with outside conflicts, such as battle, intruders or migration. Since the Bariaur do not have a stratified vertical social structure, such as other societies, like the Baatezu (see the theories postulated by Guvner Igin Negodo in the well known work "*Baatezu Ritual and High Grid Social Movement*"), ritual plays little role in defining Bariaur social status. Egalitarian Theory states that all Bariaur are equal. Therefore there is no need to establish vertical social status, with or without ritual.

However, there is one exception to this rule known as the Ritual of Ascension, or Tab'goma. This ritual involves the internal struggle between the current male chief and a rival. Although it is an exception, this model fits well with scholarly knowledge of internal rituals as used to define boundaries within a society or in establishing vertical position. As the role of chief is the only leadership position on a vertical matrix, it makes sense that a ritual exists to smooth over this unusual social situation.

In simpler terms, the ritual addresses a complex problem with a culturally accepted solution that everyone in the flock agrees upon. To engage in the ritual is to accept its ritualized outcome as final. To not engage in the ritual is to give up one's right to protest proper discharge of the ritual, and in the case of a chief buck, to automatically abdicate social position. To refuse the outcome of a ritual is to deny a vital aspect of Bariaur culture, and thus become an outsider, open to all the ritual and magic reserved for one not of the same flock. Therefore, the ritual binds the "office holder" to the cultural prescript and prevents usurpers from bypassing the ritual in a form of coup.

Of course The Ritual of Ascension is a social construct designed to preserve Bariaur society and values, even to the detriment of the individuals within it. Therefore, The Ritual of Ascension, like all rituals, has a particular flow of events: ritualized conflict resolution, ritual combat, an outcome, and a resolution. This ornate flow of activities provides a smooth and orderly resolution to a potentially devastating conflict that, in the end, leaves both participants with their social status relatively intact. In other words, there is no social stigma involved in losing the ritual, only in attempts to subvert or bypass the ritual, which in essence would be universally viewed as an attempt to subvert the social order of the flock. Of course most Bariaur would simply see such an action as deeply wrong and inappropriate, without the academic analysis presented here.

Without further analyzing general Bariaur ritual (which will be analyzed in a paper presented next cycle), let us examine the ritual in detail.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF: The role of the chief is relatively simple. He may accept a challenge or decline. If he chooses to decline, the chief recognizes the claimant's valid right to challenge his authority and implicitly agrees with the position of the challenger. Thus a chief may simply wish to retire with honor, passing on his leadership role to a younger challenger. Of course this is only theory, as no Guvner has ever seen or heard of a buck voluntarily relinquishing control to a challenger.

THE ROLE OF THE CHALLENGER: The role of the challenger is much more complex. Challenging the chief is no small affair. It involves serious preparation at the highest levels of the flock.

RESOLUTION BEGINS

MYSTIC RITUAL (ragayudepa-koga): First the challenging buck (does are forbidden to challenge) meets with a mystic of the flock to discuss his grievances and views. Most often, the mystic works as a cultural go-between, bringing up valid points of the challenger with the flock's shaman, who then may take up these points with the flock's council and chief. The mystic is by no means bound to champion the beliefs of the challenger, but is required to forward them as an alternative opinion to the shaman.

SHAMAN RITUAL (gona-koga): If the challenger's needs are not met by the flock leadership as relayed by the mystic, either because they disagree with his position or refuse to hear them (rare, but it occurs), the challenger may meet with the flock's shaman. The shaman, by this time, knows exactly what is happening with the challenger and the flock. It is the job of the shaman to dissuade the challenger from his course, possibly suggesting a compromise or offering to meet with the chief to discuss the problem.

PRIEST RITUAL (balama-koga): If the challenger's needs are not met by the flock's shaman he may approach a priest, preferably of Tirag Thunderhooves, to arrange ritual combat. This is a most serious request and the priest often requires several days of ritual purification before he will meet with such an individual. This usually gives the challenger enough time to allow emotion to cool down and allows him to clearly think about his goals and its repercussions for the flock. If the challenger still wishes to proceed, the priest hears his grievances and begins arranging the contest in the center of the flock's territory. This is a very grave event, one which everyone takes seriously, regardless of the challenger's chances of success.

THE DARK OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION: Note that there are set questions, rituals, spells, and the like that take place at each step of this ritualized process. Although every member of the flock and all the participants in this process know and accept the outlined ritual, only the group responsible for a particular step knows the exact details. Mystics know nothing of the detail of the shaman's role and the priests know nothing of the details of the mediation process of the mystics.

Other problems arise when, due to extreme situations, a flock finds its harmony out of balance when it lacks a group. A flock without a mystic, for example, is a totalitarian flock, unlikely to accept dissent and new ideas because of great social unrest or ultra-conservatism. The ritual without a mystic is possible but becomes much more confrontational.

A flock without shaman is without balance and is out of harmony with nature, and it is unlikely that the flock would survive more than a season before splitting apart. The ritual is still possible, but it is unlikely that the mystic would be able to convince the flock's council to accept a new idea out of the blue. Nor would a mystic be likely to convince the conservative priests to accept such new ideas.

A flock without a priest has lost its link to the past. It is without ritual, without a link to the powers and unlikely to respect such an important ritual as The Ritual of Ascension. If the challenger could not settle his dispute with the council, the ritualized combat is likely to be improperly performed, leaving hard feelings that may later divide the tribe.

PREPARATION FOR RITUAL COMBAT

The priest prepares a consecrated ring, dedicated to the gods. It is purified and made holy, preventing any magical evil body or possessed body from entering the ring. The gods are invoked, and on rare occasions, may even arrive to observe the ritual. The Bariaur powers are much more personally involved with their people than other powers.

Bariaur (and possibly powers) crowd around the ring, a simple sixty foot diameter circle outlined with white ash. The priest casts spells on the circle, preventing magic from working within the circle and from outside the circle. The contest is a sacred rite of physical combat. No other forms of attack are acceptable, including spells and psionics.

It is certain that this ritual varies slightly between flocks, especially between flocks on different planes. It is forbidden by Bariaur culture to write down these rituals, so there is no exact ritual or plan.

The participants enter opposite ends of the ring and await the priest. Participants are unclothed, carry no weapons and wear no armor. The nudity aspect of the contest was originally decided upon after a doe entered into combat and won a challenge. Here again is another social consideration of entering into combat. A male may be self conscious about his member and may not wish to display it to his entire flock.

The priest walks around the ring three times in a clockwise direction, paying tribute to the beliefs of the flock and the rule of threes ever present in the multiverse. The priest then enters the ring between the two participants and douses the chief and the challenger with holy water and the blessed smoke of burning fern leaves. This purification ritual is final assurance that the parties are indeed sanctioned by the gods and that neither is possessed by evil spirits, undead or a shapeshifter. The priest blesses the combatants with spells and additional ritual and leaves the ring, walking backwards.

RITUAL COMBAT

The combatants must first bow to their opponent in a sign of respect. Then the chief of the flock may introduce himself. Bariaur introductions, as you may recall from our research on the family, involves a long litany of names and accomplishments. After the chief finishes his introduction, his challenger must introduce himself in the same fashion. As dictated by Bariaur culture, it is considered rude to prolong ones introduction beyond the length of another's when first meeting. Therefore, it is important for the challenger to summarize important points of his background. There is one difference however, between the challenger's introduction and the flock's chief. The challenger must also state his reason for challenging the authority of the chief. This must be done in a concise manner, within the allotted introductory time and should conform to his original complaint as expressed to the mystics, shamans and priests. To exceed his introduction time is to insult the chief, who is then likely to ignore this final plea for conciliation or change.

In cases where the introduction and complaint is succinctly expressed in the culturally prescribed introduction time, the chief has one last opportunity to settle the matter before serious action begins. As always, it is to everyone's advantage to settle this matter without the ritual combat. Attempts to bypass this process by either party are seriously frowned upon by tribal leaders.

If the chief refuses to compromise on the contested issue or issues, the challenge continues. The combatants bow again then circle around to the other side of the ring. At that point, either participant may charge the other, continue to circle, or dodge an oncoming opponent. Timing is crucial in this setting, as multiple hits outside of the ring are grounds for forfeiture of the contest. As it takes a Bariaur roughly thirty feet for an effective ramming attack, it is crucial that one meet ones opponent at the halfway point or beyond in order to form an effective attack. This represents the balance required to lead the tribe, of trying to meet the needs of even the most difficult of flock members by meeting half way. A slower Bariaur, either because of age or size, is likely to cover less than the necessary distance to gain enough ramming speed and thus not carry enough momentum to damage his foe. This problem can sometimes be overcome by a highly skilled Bariaur who can direct his opponent's energy against him in such an attack. Although difficult, it is possible to make up for a few feet of lost ground by slightly shifting the angle of attack.

In any case, this ritual ramming repeats itself until one of the combatants is knocked unconscious. Thus there are a variety of variables at play in the contest besides speed. The size and strength of one's opponent may allow him to take many more attacks than he gives and still win the contest. Skill as a warrior may also allow a combatant to hit far fewer times but inflict greater damage to his opponent, thus winning the contest.

Ties are decided when the first Bariaur rises to his feet victorious. It would not be unusual for a flock to camp around a ring, awaiting the awakening of unconscious rivals. Interference in the ring is never allowed by outsiders for whatever reasons.

THE AFTERMATH

If the challenger loses, he may resume his life without shame or scorn, as he has proven himself brave in undergoing the ritual. His status within the flock may have even risen slightly because of his bravery.

If the challenger wins, he becomes the new chief of the flock with all the responsibilities and honor that that position holds. The vanquished chief is required to stay with the flock for at least two seasons before deciding if he wishes to leave. This prevents vanquished chiefs from quickly reforming new flocks after losing their position.

The leadership of the flock does its best to encourage collaboration between the challenger and the vanquished leader. The vanquished chief is thought to be an invaluable advisor to the new chief and it is only the most vindictive of Bariaur that refuses the chief's counsel, or in the case of a vanquished chief, refuses to give counsel.

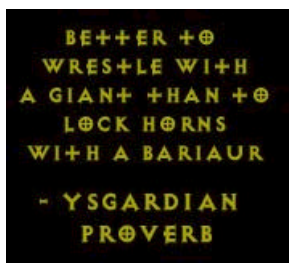
Bariaur Martial Arts



INTRODUCTION: Some have requested that I come to this place to discuss the art of Zhöd'yo, The Bariaur Way of Peace. My name is K'amm Blackhooves, master teacher and mystic of the Lightning Mountain Flock of Ysgard.

It is the **mystic** who most needs the skills taught in Zhöd'yo. The mystic is the bariaur ambassador, the emissary of our culture that enters the world in a mission of exploration and understanding. It is crucial that the hand extended in greeting does not contain a weapon. As mystics we understand that the weapon is a metaphor. It is the tongue in our mouths, the fear in our minds and the clenched fist. For true understanding, it is vital that we focus on peace and openness and avoid dangerous emotions that threaten to destroy ourselves and our people.

To use or possess a weapon is to invite fear and hatred into the temple of ones mind. To use or possess a weapon is also to invite distrust in those we wish to understand. For a mystic, understanding other cultures and peoples is the sole purpose for living, and the lifeblood of innovation and survival for the flock. However, this does not mean that the mystic must be defenseless.



On the contrary, many mystics are spellslingers and mindbenders. These types are familiar enough with using their wits to defeat a recalcitrant opponent. But for those who do not possess these powers, or when these powers eventually exhaust themselves, it is crucial that the mystic have a means of self-defense without the dangers to body and mind that one encounters with weapons.

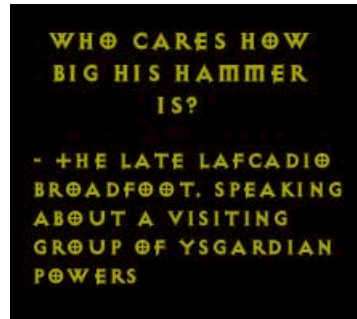
For these individuals, the unarmed art of Zhöd'yo provides a method to defeat an opponent, using the exact amount of force necessary. I cannot tell you how many times my opponents later became my friends. Would such a thing happen if I were wielding a broad sword or a k'ton? I think not.

The Art of Zhöd'yo allows a trained fighter to escalate a violent situation as necessary. One first attempts to persuade. If persuasion fails, one tries to discourage. If discouragement fails, one tries to subdue. If subduing fails, then one tries to disable. Only when an opponent cannot be disabled does the Zhöd'yo fighter consider lethal force. Lethal force against an opponent is a failure on the part of the mystic. To be forced to kill an opponent is to seriously misjudge a situation, a person and one's self. Nevertheless, to kill an opponent is within the Zhöd'yo fighter's ability.

BASICS: Zhöd'yo is a martial art designed to take advantage of the full force of a bariaur. This means that the ideal is to use the roughly 700-900 pounds of the bariaur's body to pin, crush, choke, strike or otherwise subdue the opponent. As you may imagine these attacks work mostly on smaller opponents. Generally, bariaur mystics avoid fighting hill giants and other such large creatures.

The ideal is to use an opponent's energy against him. For example, a charging dwarf would normally pose a great danger to an unarmed bariaur. The practitioner of Zhöd'yo may defuse this situation with a move like Garileba, in which the bariaur would trap the arm, bring the dwarf in towards the body, and roll onto him.

This simple move, taught the first day of Zhöd'yo classes, can be as basic or sophisticated as the practitioner desires. The lethality of this move can be modified. For example, a trapped creature can be pinned until they cease struggling. The creature may be choked until they give up, or they may be pummeled with the hands or hooves. In the most dire of situations, the opponent may even be suffocated. Again, the right amount of force is expended and no more.



BARIAUR MARTIAL ARTS STYLE: The Bariaur style of Zhöd'yo, one of many bariaur martial arts styles, is a **Style C** martial art. Style C emphasizes throws and escapes. Rather than actually throwing an opponent, which poses no advantage to the bariaur, the bariaur instead uses combination techniques to pin and crush an opponent. Holds, grapples, locks and pins are the attack of choice of a Zhöd'yo practitioner.

In addition to these attacks, a bariaur also employs regular racial attacks, such as head butts, hoof attacks and tramples. These can be modified in a way that are non-lethal so that they may be implemented with the martial arts style. For game purposes, a bariaur must break off a martial art attack if he or she wishes to inflict permanent damage with these racial attack forms.

MARTIAL ARTS TALENTS: Once a practitioner has become proficient in Zhöd'yo, they may learn special talents:

Trap-Roll (Garileba)

Dexterity/Balance

Groups: Any

Slots: 1

Initial Rating: 5

Character Points: 3

The character defends against a frontal attack by trapping the attacking limb, uses the forward momentum of the opponent to drive them towards the characters body, and then rolls on top of the trapped opponent. The character must move two squares forward or to the side when this move is performed. Optionally, the character may wish to attempt a sweeping attack against other opponents by rolling into them.

Trapped opponents are at the will of the character and initially take 2d6 damage on the first round. Beyond the first round, the character may attempt a variety of attacks, including: choking (each round reduces the opponent's constitution by 1 point until unconscious), crushing (1d6 damage/round automatically), pummeling (1d6/1d6 damage with successful hoof attacks).

Failed attacks result in +4 on the characters armor class on the next round, as the attacker is now dangerously close.

Flying Wall (Ratsig-sab'ra)

Dexterity/Balance

Groups: Any

Initial Rating: 7

Slots: 1

Character Points: 3

The character can make a great leap 15' into the air, attacking an opponent up to 4 squares away to the front or side. The 4 squares can be doubled to 8 squares with a 4 square running start, with the leaping distance doubled to 30'.

Successfully attacked creatures receive 3d6 points of damage. The character may attempt to stand during the next round or continue with another martial art technique with a +4 bonus. A failed attack means the character falls short of the distance desired, determined by the dice roll and receives a +4 to armor class on the next round.

Flank Swing (Payi-dab'yuga)

Dexterity/Balance

Groups: Any

Initial Rating: 5

Slots: 1

Character Points: 3

The character, leaning forward, braced with hands on the ground and front legs dug in, swings the rear of her body against an attacker at lightning speed. The attack itself is meant to propel the opponent away from the character, rather than inflict a crushing blow. The struck opponent is flung 1d4 feet per 100 pounds of the bariaur plus the attack die roll in feet. Damage inflicted is normal falling damage if the opponent strikes a wall or hard surface within the distance specified (1d6 damage per 10' thrown) or 1d4 damage per 10' if the opponent lands on the ground.

For example, Merissa the Mystic uses Payi-dab'yuga on a recalcitrant brigands. Her attack succeeds and her body propels her opponent 27 feet against a wall. The 27 feet is determined by a roll based on Merissa's weight, and her attack roll of 15 (6d4=12+15=27). Damage is 3d6 (27 feet would result in 3d6 of falling damage). If the brigand were to hit the ground instead, he would suffer 3d4 or 3-12 points of damage.

Falling Mountain (La-bunesa)

Strength/Muscle

Groups: Any

Initial Rating: 10

Slots: 2

Character Points: 10

Rising up on her hind legs, the character slams down her entire weight onto an opponent. This can be performed on an attacking opponent or a prone opponent following a previous attack form. It is a favorite attack form in close quarters. This is the most powerful and focused of Zhod'yo specialized attacks. Performing this move automatically allows an attack of opportunity on the character by her opponent, as the character raises her body off the ground. However, a better move on the opponent's part would be to flee, as a successful attack results in 4d6 damage. Additionally, because of the force involved in the blow, items on the opponent's body must make saves versus crushing blow or be destroyed. It is not unheard of for opponents to suffocate in their own armor after Falling Mountain has struck them to the ground.

Content Copyright ©1999 by Gary L. Ray

Coding Copyright ©1997-1999 by Brannon Hollingsworth

Image by **Stephen Cryan**

Food of the Bariaur

Bariaur eat a variety of foods, all of it vegetarian and most of it readily available along their nomadic paths. Occasionally, Bariaur will plant vegetables or grain in the hopes of returning to the area later in the year. Since there's no guarantee of the flock's return, most of these crops tend to be wild varieties of naturally occurring plant life.

I won't bore you with great grandma's sunflower doebread recipe -- especially because she would fight to the death before revealing it -- but I will spend some time with some of the more exotic and useful recipes.

The assumption here is that you're a Bariaur, away from home, away from those who can prepare your favorite foods. More importantly, if you're away from the flock, you're in terrible danger. It's the flock that offers us protection and support and no Bariaur can be truly happy away from it. To help you survive this dangerous situation, I'll provide you some recipes that will help you return safely to the flock. Most of these recipes will be directly applicable to your life roaming the planes. Happy foraging!

Bar Bar (War Bars)

A wholesome blend of wild oats and wild yams with a touch of honey.

- 4 medium sized wild yams (colic root)
- 3 cups crushed wild oats
- 1 cup fiddleheads (from the Barbazu Fern)
- 2 teaspoons dill seed
- 2 teaspoon honey (optional)
- 1/2 cup Bariaur milk

Preparation: Mash yams in a bowl. Mix in fiddleheads, dill, honey and milk. Roll hand sized pieces in wild oats. Cook until golden brown.

Makes 16 bars

Application: The wild yams contain properties that boost the Bariaur male sex drive and aggression. These bars are used before major battles and traditionally on wedding nights. The bars increase a male's stamina by 5-25%, depending on the freshness of the yams. This effect lasts for several hours (1-3) after eating a bar, but there is no effect if taken more than once a week.

Female Bariaur know that bar bar's are also useful for nausea related to pregnancy when mixed with ginger.

Witch's Pigweed Stew

A magical (literally) blend of pigweed, onions, and wild potatoes.

- 3 Cups Pigweed (lamb's quarters)
- 2 Cups onions
- 3 Tablespoons peanut oil
- 3 large wild potatoes cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 teaspoon thyme

- 1 cup water
- Salt and Ground Pepper to taste



Pigweed (Lamb's Quarters)

Preparation: In a large pot, sauté the onions in the peanut oil, stirring occasionally until the onions are translucent. Add the potatoes and specially prepared pigweed. Stir in the thyme and water. Cover and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Simmer, covered, for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are tender. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Makes 4-6 servings

Application: Pigweed is known to absorb magical energy in areas where it grows. Therefore, it's important to harvest the pigweed in the gardens or vicinities of powerful mages or in the area where major magical activity has taken place.

The stew should be prepared only by a mage, shaman or other individual with experience in the magical arts. Eating the stew increases ones spell points by approximately 5-100%, determined by the potency of the pigweed. These effects last for an 8-hour period. Eating the stew more than once each month can result in severe headaches.

The stew is usually prepared as part of the annual lunar "Nay" feast, a time when doe mages fast for a week, preparing themselves for intense emotional and intellectual tests administered by their teachers. The tests feature proscribed debate rituals regarding complex planar magic theories. After six days of debate and interrogation, the student is required on the seventh day to show her practical application of the theories through innovative spellcasting in artificially created planar environments. This is quite difficult, having spent six grueling days without nourishment under intense stress. Several Bariaur are lost each year, occasionally not returning from their planar test environment.

Bariaur surviving their tests are fed a special pigweed stew made from highly enriched weeds taken from the fields where the students were tested.

Mi-goka: The male Coming of Age Ritual

Guvner Faizel Bekley

Outland Anthropologist

BACKGROUND: Unlike other bariaur ritual, Mi-goka is performed by the flock's chief. This is highly unusual, since the flock's shaman or druid is solely responsible for matters of ritual. The reasoning, according to several interviewed bariaur chiefs, is that only bucks may determine when a male may be considered an adult. The chief is the ultimate in male authority for the flock, and the champion for male needs and demands when it comes to flock negotiations. Mi-goka is the last bastion of male cultural influence in the flock. Most other rituals and traditions are preserved and transmitted by does. This is just fine with the shaman, who usually finds the whole process of Mi-goka disorganized, spirituality lacking and embarrassingly barbaric. Thankfully, Ya'tra, the female coming of age ritual, is performed at roughly the same time as the male ritual, allowing for the shaman to be absent from the scene.

Unlike the ceremony of other bariaur rituals, involving burning of candles, erection of tents, or construction of a fighting ring, Mi-goka is informally performed by a group of the older bariaur, high off ceremonial herbs. Also, unlike the female ritual, in which the doe is kept hidden away by herself for nearly a month, the ritual of Mi-goka involves sending off a young buck far from home. The female ritual represents the inner personality of the bariaur as a race. For the female, her ritual reinforces the upholding of tradition, maintenance of flock beliefs and cultivation of order and tranquility within the flock. The male ritual, on the other hand, represents the outward personality of the bariaur. The male ritual reinforces the instinct inherent in nomadic movement, avoiding and confronting danger, and physically overcoming ones environment.

THE RITUAL: Mi-goka begins when a young male is abducted into the night by a gang of bucks. Surrounding the young one are the flock's chief and a half dozen elder bucks who roughly tie him with giant hair and drag him away into the night. The bucks are dressed in elaborate war garb, complete with armor, weapons, face paint, with frightening pelt dyes and shavings. The young one can tell that the gang has been smoking "medicinal" herbs, as can be discerned from their slurred speech and clumsy movement.

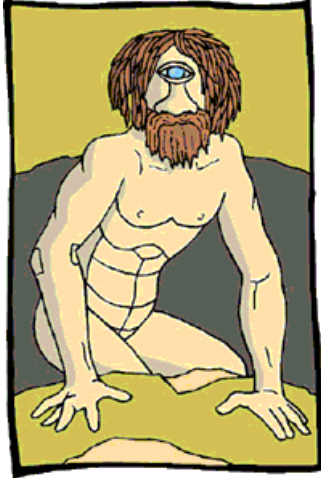
Once the party reaches a secluded spot, the bucks hold the young one down and shave his head with a sharpened stone knife, similar to the knife used in the Sheka ceremony. While other cultures and races have coming of age rituals involving painful circumcision and hunger induced vision quests, the Mi-goka ritual begins with the horrifying taking of a bucks hair. Appearance is vitally important to the bariaur. In fact, you might be surprised to find that some folks consider bariaur vain. It is not uncommon for a young buck, who the day before swaggered around his encampment like he owned the plane, to cry and wail like a baby while his hair is cut.

This humiliation represents cutting the ties to the buck's childhood and his entering into adulthood, but that's the shaman's interpretation. Participants tend not to care about things like "significance," as that's a woman's concern and of no interest to a buck. Instead, the adult males see this ritual as a way to harden the young buck for the tough life ahead.

At this point the ritual varies, depending on the tribe, the skills and aptitude of the young buck, and the current location of the flock. The buck is usually given a mission involving a dangerous and life-threatening task. The mission always involves a journey of at least a week from the flock's current camp, intense self-reliance, and the use of stealth and strategy. The most popular mission is retrieving the hair of a giant. If the buck survives, the hair is worn on his head in place of his lost hair, symbolizing his victory. Eventually the giant hair is braided into a belt when the buck's own hair returns. Even without a mission, the buck would likely make himself scarce until his hair grew back.

Bucks with no hope of accomplishing the giant mission may be paired with a buck of more skill. Also, there is no set way to obtain the giant's hair. Combat is an unlikely option, even for the most skilled young warrior. Trickery or persuasion is especially useful, although some giants have become wise to

this, especially in areas of low giant concentrations like The Outlands, where smarter giants have devised their own quests in which they redirect young bariaur in search of hair.



Rather than kill the bariaur outright, these giants use the bucks to accomplish difficult tasks that they would rather not perform. For a buck, this kind of mission is fraught with great danger. Many do not return, although the ones that do bring back epic stories that rival those of Loki and the gods. There are seasoned Planewalker bariaur to this day who are still questing for an item or information that a crafty giant has sent them to find. Some day they hope to return to the giant and win his hair so that they may be seen as an adult in the eyes of their flock.

It is the chief's responsibility to match the young buck to a task that he's capable of accomplishing. Alternative tasks are also available, although strongly disliked by the flock's elders, since they tend to strain the goodwill the bariaur have with other races. Alternative tasks include bringing back the pipe of a rival flock's chief, placing mock bariaur horns on statues in large towns or cities, booby-trapping portals with molasses and feathers,

and carving the flock's symbol onto flocks of sheep and goat owned by other races.

Post-Ritual Behavior: After the task is accomplished, the young buck returns victorious, his giant hair on his head or other proof of his completed mission. The buck is welcomed into the flock as a full fledged adult buck. He's given a stern speech by the adult bucks about his role and responsibilities. Finally, the buck is allowed to brag about his accomplishments to the entire flock. The flock celebrates this great accomplishment and encourages the buck to tell his story repeatedly. This is not only a great deed on behalf of the bariaur, but it represents strength within the flock and a sign that the flock will continue to prosper in the future.

The storytelling is very entertaining to the restless bariaur flock, who yearn to be begin their nomadic journey at the end of the season. These sagas also attract the attention of the young does, some of whom recently finished their own coming of age ritual. The does are now focused on the future, including finding the right buck, bearing children and other great accomplishments. Invariably, this combination is the beginning of the most complicated of bariaur rituals: mating.

Yat'ra: The Female Coming of Age Ritual

Guvner Faizel Bekley

Outland Anthropologist



When a doe experiences her "first moon", at around age twelve, she is subject to the ritual of *Yat'ra*. The timing of the ritual corresponds to the first rainy season after this blessed event, when bariaur spend several months camped in one location. *Yat'ra* is a pivotal event in every doe's life, one which transforms them physically, mentally and spiritually.

The ritual of *Yat'ra* is both dreaded and anticipated by young does, who, before this time, are raised much like their buck counterparts. It is *Yat'ra* that initiates does into the flock. The ritual is a formal acknowledgement of their new position in the flock as adults as well as a ritualized introduction to their new responsibilities.

It is the doe that acts as the torchbearer of bariaur culture. She is the moderator between nature and the warlike bariaur. If there will ever be true peace and harmony, it will be through the mediation of the does. Where a buck may be rebellious and carefree, a doe has dire responsibilities of raising offspring, preserving morals and culture and ensuring the survival of the flock. This ritual marks the beginning of these new rights and responsibilities.

The ritual begins with the erection of the *Gura*, a large tent made from the single skin of an Outland Baku (an intelligent elephant-like creature). This animal is believed to be sacred by the shamans, and the skin of the Baku, preferably one that has died of old age, is thought to contain many magical properties that assist in the ritual. Often *Gura* tents are not available to smaller flocks, in which case they may borrow or barter the use of a tent from a nearby flock. This is actually a big incentive for camping within the same area during the rainy season, as many young does require this ritual each year.

It is in this tent that the doe will spend an entire month of her life without ever leaving. Of all things, the most frightening part of the ritual is staying a month within what appears to be a smelly, musty tent. At no time do bariaur spend more than an evening without viewing the sky or a few hours without seeing ones family. In this ritual, the doe's movement and contact with her flock and nature are closely controlled. It's enough to make many does fear losing their minds.

However, the young doe is not left alone within the tent, for that would be cruelty at its worst for a bariaur. In fact, the doe is almost never left alone during this period.

When it is time for the ritual to begin, the flock's shaman escorts the young doe to the tent. The young one is wearing her best outfit, usually gold in color, and her pelt is beautifully shaved and dyed in patterns of animals and nature. Often, in large flocks, several *Gura* tents are pitched within the same area, to aid the shaman with the ritual. In smaller flocks, the *Yat'ra* ritual may be performed in monthly shifts, to allow for the use of the *Gura* tent for each participant. At no time does a doe make contact with other ritual participants. In fact, the *Gura* tent is quite soundproof, due to the extreme thickness of the Baku skin.

Once the doe is placed within the *Gura*, the shaman begins the ritual by acting as moderator. Over the next 30 days the shaman brings in all the adult does of the flock each of whom explains a vital portion of bariaur culture in the forms of song, dance and chant. Mythology, basic moral beliefs, important ritual, basic herbalism and counseling regarding what the young doe is likely to accomplish within her lifetime with the flock, are all transmitted in various forms to the doe. Although some of the presentations are straightforward, others are quite frightening and are meant to warn young does against dangerous behavior.

Between sessions with the flock's does, the young one participates in purification and journey rituals with the shaman, representing the transition to adulthood and the leaving behind of the selfish and childish motivations and values of the does past. The doe and shaman often smoke herbs and engage in visions to portend the future. The tent itself holds magical properties that enhance these visions and provide a safe spiritual and mental shelter from many of the dark and frightening aspects of these rituals.

These periods of time with the shaman are tests to the spirit and resolve of the doe. The doe is evaluated on a number of points, including her intelligence and wisdom and may later be counseled into an

important role with the flock, such as healer, priest, preserver (of a myth or ritual) or in more liberal flocks, mage. Although shamans are chosen from birth, these other important positions are considered a great honor for a doe.

Through this spiritual journey, the young doe becomes increasingly aware of her place in nature. She gains abilities normally associated with adult does, such as a demeanor that rarely finds her surprised by events, and a union with nature that makes her slightly resistant to the unnatural forces of magic. Most importantly, the young doe has a renewed purpose in life and a strengthened spirit in accomplishing her new goals.

Sagoma: Bariaur Spirit Meditation

This is an excerpt from *The Meditations of the Bariaur Masters (Rapochi-damagami magonapo sagoma)*, one of the twelve sacred books of the bariaur shaman. It is taught at Tale of the Bariaur to bariaur shaman initiates, and is never presented to non-bariaur or non-shamans. In most tribes, presentation of this material to the wrong parties is a grave crime, punishable by banishment. This particular excerpt has been reviewed by our visiting Outland shaman, Dagapa Ralagari, and found safe for use by initiate shamans. Although this text is presented here by itself, note that the practice of Sagoma is always accompanied by personal instruction.

I. PREREQUISITES FOR SAGOMA MEDITATION

To practice the bariaur meditation known as Sagoma, it is of the utmost importance that you have an authentic bariaur shaman as a teacher. The teacher must be trusted and obeyed with all your being, as she is your bridge to the spirit world. Sometimes your guide will be a spirit animal, but most often it will be a flock's bariaur shaman.

In Sagoma it is especially important to trust the shaman, as fear and doubt leave you vulnerable to the malevolent forces of the planes. Also, where the mystics may believe that logic and discursive thought can light the way, the path of the shaman and the teaching of Sagoma require intuition and faith in your true nature to accomplish your goals. As this is counter-intuitive for most bariaur, it is essential that you follow the instructions of the shaman, regardless of how absurd or dangerous their guidance may appear.

Remember that it is the shaman who has made her way through the spirit world through the help of her own teacher. The wisdom of the spirit world has been transmitted this way since the beginning of time, and it is available to you if you meticulously follow the shaman's instruction.

II. THE REASON TO PRACTICE SAGOMA MEDITATION

Everyone has a link to the spirit world and everyone will one day return to the world of the spirits. To recognize the spirit world around us, while still alive, is the ultimate goal of Sagoma meditation. It allows you to gain the wisdom of the past, the advice of departed elders, and insight into the spirit. The concept that there is a barrier between the world of the corporeal and the world of the spirit is an illusion perpetuated through the ignorance of those who deny the importance of their own spirit. Sagoma will tear down that barrier, and for those who are sincere, there is deep reward.

The spirit world knows no boundaries. Therefore, the shaman is the ultimate planewalker, as she must travel to remote planes to assist or fight spirits. Although creatures on the planes are physical manifestations of the spirit, the shaman's true calling is assisting the incorporeal spirits in need of help.

Sagoma is also useful when a bariaur senses her impending death. Practicing Sagoma for an advanced practitioner nearing death will ensure that they successfully travel to the spirit realm without hindrance.

Finally, Sagoma can be useful in escaping from spirit traps. Malevolent planar forces occasionally trap the spirit of their victims, usually in gems or inanimate objects. Sagoma meditation will allow a practitioner to escape these prisons, although there is no guarantee that a body will be readily available.

III. PRELIMINARY PRACTICES OF SAGOMA MEDITATION

Sagoma meditation involves dropping away the hindering side of our mind. This part of your mind deals with negative emotions and thoughts. It comes from the bariaur's more "human" side,

called the *groma*, rather than the animal side, the *samado*. When you leave this body at death, the human part of the mind is normally dropped away. There is no incidence of it in the spirit world, unless a spirit is in trouble, usually because of a violent death that did not allow the being to transition to its natural mind-state.

This loss of *groma* is the reason why spirits do not fight amongst themselves, argue doctrine or attempt to regain their mortal bodies. Of course, in intense situations, as noted above, the *groma* remains with the spirit, causing the spirit great harm and bringing disharmony to the multiverse. Certain creatures do not have a hindering *groma*.

Animals do not have a *groma*. Animals act in the moment, instinctually to every situation. When they die, animals go off into the spirit realm unhindered, without clinging to life or rushing to their afterlife.

For bariaur, and similar creatures, it is necessary to drop off the *groma* upon death. This is a natural process when life ceases, but a harrowing and dangerous process when one is still alive.

We are left with the *samado* (animal mind) when we drop off the *groma*. The spirits are not attracted to the *samado*, and therefore it is the essential state to achieve to avoid complications when visiting the spirit realm. To visit the spirit realm while still under the influences of the *groma* is dangerous, as the spirits are reminded of their own past lives and are attracted to the practitioner or the confused deceased. The good spirits wish to embrace the traveler, while the evil ones wish to enslave her spirit. In either case, it will hinder your progress and in some circumstances, doom your spirit to wander forever.

IV. THE PRELIMINARY PRACTICE

Some think *samado* is something that must be achieved or attained, but it really much simpler than that. *Samado* is always there, under the negativity of the *groma* mind. It is like grass being trampled by a thousand hooves. Once the hooves are stilled, the grass can spring back up. The *samado* is realized once the *groma* is quieted.

The first step in the preliminary practice is called dissolution, or *Jigepa*. In *Jigepa*, you will focus on the *groma*. The *groma* is concentrated in the *lat'ba*, the internal area, located behind where the fur and the skin meet at waist level. The breath is used to concentrate the energies of the *groma* into that region. Then the *groma* energy is released, transferring out through the hooves, into the ground, and throughout the multiverse.

The details of this practice are secret, of course, but the above example provides the necessary understanding to begin the *Jigepa* practice. Once the dissolution of the *groma* is complete, the *samado* is left to guide you. The dissolution process is a difficult task that takes many years to master. Only the shaman can judge when your *groma* is completely dissolved. At this point, you will be ready for the next stage of the meditation.

V. THE PRIMARY PRACTICE

Once *Jigepa* is full achieved, and there is the sign that there is no turning back, you may begin the primary practice of translocation, or *Groba*. To begin this practice without the guidance of the shaman or expertise in *Sagoma* will mean death to the practitioner, as they will not be able to return to their mortal form.

With *Jigepa* achieved, and only the pure *samado* left of consciousness, the practitioner begins the *Groba* practice. Again, the details are secret to protect the unwise, but generally the practitioner concentrates on focusing the *samado* on the top of the head, between the horns (or where horns would grow). This area is called the *todapa*. Once the *samado* is focused on the *todapa*, the

practitioner slowly ejects her spirit out the top of her head. The process is gradual, and any attempt to stop it while it occurs usually results in insanity or death to the practitioner.

Groba begins with the translocation of the five senses. The shaman may be chanting and you will cease to hear her voice. She may be holding your hand, and you cease feeling her touch. You see her standing over your straw bedding, and then your vision slowly fades. The smell of the barbazu fern incense, sweet and pungent, begins to lose its fragrance as your sense of smell diminishes and finally translocates.

Then you will feel as if you are falling down a deep hole. You will feel your body pick up speed and begin to crush, as if the force of a Baku were being exerted onto your chest. You will feel your flesh burn, as if you were on fire, your nose will run and your eyes will water and you will feel as if you are drowning in your own fluids. Finally, when you feel like you can take it no longer, you will emerge above your prostrate body, which, from every indication, is now a corpse.

At this point you will be in the spirit world, and you must leave your body to progress on your journey. Many bariaurs cannot do this. Some bariaur are very attached to their body, thinking it beautiful and worthy of adornment. These bariaurs simply hover over their bodies, afraid to leave in case the body is moved or destroyed while they are gone. Other bariaur, even advanced shamans, see their body as a worthless collection of blood and bones, and decide then and there to never return to their body, but instead live in the spirit world.

Both of these approaches are terribly wrong. The first approach is wrong, because the clinging to the body interferes with the practitioner's travel. If the travel is a visit to the spirit world, the visit will be unsuccessful. If the practitioner has indeed died, they will be stuck, requiring another shaman to guide them beyond that stage.

For the shaman who decides never to return, that decision is a grave error. The multiverse has a time and a place for your final dissolution and it is to deny everything that a shaman stands for to interrupt this process. It is a form of suicide to decide never to return to the body, and it must never be done.

VI. THE PRACTICE OF RETURN

The practice of return, or *Lanabey'dapa*, is the most difficult aspect of Sagoma meditation. Often the practitioner is weakened from her travels and experiences, and forgets the teachings. Other times, it will be necessary to practice *Lanabey'dapa* on the dead, who, the spirits have decided, has left the physical world too soon.

In any case, these final teachings are the most secret of the bariaur shaman, as they have the potential to be abused in returning deceased spirits to the physical world for unnatural purposes.

To summarize the teachings: the bariaur samado consciousness returns to the head of the body, undergoing a painful process of reintegration similar to the Groba process in reverse. The four forces of the multiverse pummel the practitioner and the senses return to the body. Several days of bed rest are usually required after the journey, although advanced practitioners sometimes rest for several hours or less upon their return. It is generally required that a practitioner report her findings and experiences to the council of shamans and the flock council upon return.

THE DARK OF BARIAUR SPIRIT MEDITATION

Non-Weapon Proficiency: Bariaur Spirit Meditation

Character Points: 3

Initial Rating: 5

Cost in Slots: 2

Check Modifier: -3

Relevant Ability: Wisdom/Intuition

Availability: Priests, Shaman Kits

Spirit Meditation allows the bariaur to practice Sagoma meditation for the purpose of interacting with the spirit world. This proficiency enhances regular priest spells that involve interaction with spirits, allowing the shaman to triple her effectiveness with the spirit world. For example, casting augury would allow a third level shaman to act as a ninth level shaman. The proficiency would allow nine questions rather than three when casting speak with dead, and it would raise a person who had been dead for 3 days per level of the shaman rather than 1 day per level.

One special ability gained with this proficiency is the chance to escape spirit entrapment. Once per week, the shaman may attempt to escape her spirit prison with a -9 modification to the proficiency check.

Successful use of this proficiency requires a proficiency check. If the check fails, the spell behaves normally, but the shaman must make a system shock roll or be lost or otherwise hindered in the spirit world until a successful proficiency check is made. If the practitioner is practicing with a shaman master, the master may attempt a proficiency check to assist the student. Trapped practitioners are allowed to make one check per day, with a -9 modification to the proficiency check. Bodies of trapped practitioners will begin to die if not provided sustenance while the practitioner is trapped.

The priest does not gain any spells with this proficiency, just enhancements to existing spells. Practicing the meditation requires 12 hours without interruption, minus 1 hour for each level of the shaman. A 12th level (or above) shaman can achieve the necessary meditative state in 3-12 minutes. The effects of the meditation last for 12 hours, plus 1 hour per level of the shaman.

The Deck of Shis

Jeb'ka sat in her tent, wringing her hands for fear that her love would not return from battle. Her warrior love had been gone from the Tradegate Region for nearly a month now, without any word. Each night Jeb'ka lay awake, unable to sleep. This was mostly due to worrying about her lover, but there was something else. Despite what everyone in the flock told her, Jeb'ka felt profound guilt for not joining the war party. It was true that her hoof was infected, and that normally this would require rest and light activity only, but the timing of her ailment caused her heavy pangs of guilt and bitterness that comes from shame.

After several weeks, Shel'pa the Shaman took note of Jeb'ka's worsening morale. Her hoof was not healing either, probably because of Jeb'ka's continual pacing. This young doe needed a dose of wisdom, and it was Shel'pa's job to prescribe it.

Shel'pa brought *The Deck of Shis*. This small deck of barkskin cards was said to hold the answers to the multiverse. If interpreted correctly, and the rituals followed, The Deck of Shis could bring about change and prosperity for Jeb'ka, her lover and her flock.

The shaman spread the cards out face down in a horizontal line in front of Jeb'ka. Shel'pa kept her eyes tightly closed and her mind blank while Jeb'ka drew the first card, as she did not want to influence Jeb'ka's choice by unintentionally projecting her thoughts into the deck.

This drawing of cards was both a sacred ritual and a deep-rooted tradition within the flock. Jeb'ka had sat by countless times, as a young kid, while her mother had drawn the cards, divining the future for her family and her flock. Jeb'ka, having recently finished her *Yat'ra*, coming of age ritual, was now ready to draw her own cards. She drew in a deep breath and picked the first card from the middle of the row.

Turning it over, Jeb'ka placed it in front of her. She let out an audible sigh which alerted Shel'pa that her interpretive skills were needed.

The card was water, the sign that all will be resolved, over time, with patience. Shel'pa offered this interpretation to Jeb'ka, letting her know that the gods and the multiverse had determined that she must be patient.

Then Jeb'ka drew the second card. It was "coming together"! Yes, assured Shel'pa, Jeb'ka would be united with her true love if she could simply show patience in difficult circumstances. Shel'pa was careful not to mention Jeb'ka's lover by name, for although the multiverse had spoken that she would be united with her love, it was never certain that her current lover was the one fighting hill giants on the battlefield.

The second card, like the others, had various symbols on it. This card had a picture of bariaur silk hose on it. To actualize her current draw, she would have to wear hose, the type of hose determined by the next card. The card could very well have shown any number of articles of clothing, jewelry, symbols, pelt markings, or even the card denoting nudity, an ancient bariaur custom to be sure, but one which was rarely practiced in Jeb'ka's flock. Although it wasn't discussed, Jeb'ka and many of her doe peers secretly feared the *Card of Doom*, with its crude drawing of exposed breasts in the top left corner.

Finally Jeb'ka drew the third card. The card was "keeping still". She was initially puzzled by this draw, but Shel'pa stepped in and offered an interpretation. This card, according to Shel'pa, meant that Jeb'ka should undergo calming meditations while she awaited her reunion with her true love. The modifier on the card was the color gray, noting that the hose Jeb'ka must wear, as shown on the second card, must be gray in color.

Jeb'ka will wear her gray hose until her true love returns, or in the case of her lover's death, until she finds another who she believes to be her true love. She will also engage in long periods of intense meditation, and if her lover fails to return, she may even become the flock's next shaman.

What Does It Mean?

Fashion and appearance are vital to bariaur culture, so it is not surprising that rituals exist to exploit these tendencies. The Deck of Shis has the effect of actualizing in the physical world something that has been discovered in the spiritual world. The wearing of an item is a reminder of the importance and relevance of bariaur spiritual life and also a method of instilling respect in bariaur. Because of the deck, and similar teachings that merge the physical with the spiritual, bariaur become rooted in a world where there is no

differentiation between the earth and the spirit. Spirituality becomes integrated with everyday life, with every action and every spoken word.

For example, bariaur seem to have a deeper feeling of respect towards others. A bariaur would never make fun of another's appearance, as the bariaur understand that the individual's appearance may be a result of a draw of the cards. Likewise, a bariaur is taught by the mystics not to judge the beliefs and thoughts of others, for they too may be a manifestation of the spirit.

These teachings are often misinterpreted by outsiders. Many think the bariaur to be vain and too concerned with their appearance. But in fact, the bariaur's vanity is really a deep expression of love and respect for their family and flock.

The Deck of Shis

Drawing Cards: Roll 4d10-3 for each of the three cards. The first card's oracle denotes the main point of the drawing. The second card's oracle modifies the event of the first card and denotes an article of clothing or jewelry that must be worn for the entire drawing to take effect. The third card's oracle further modifies the events of previous two cards and often gives a shaman or priest guidance on specific actions that the individual should perform. The third card also contains a modifier, such as a color or style, for the article mentioned in the second card. Occasionally, the article in a card will specify multiple items. Note that it is at the shaman or priest's discretion to also consult the oracle for the additional cards. Normally this is not done as it greatly confuses the drawing.

Card Number	Oracle	Article	Modifier
1	Pleasure	Cap, Hat	Red
2	Pain	Cloak, Silk	Orange
3	Smallness	Cloak, Fur	Olive
4	Largeness	Gloves	Green
5	Dispersion	Gown	Blue
6	Coming Together	Hose	Indigo
7	Stranger	Pin	Violet
8	Friend	Brooch	Black
9	Progress	Robe	White
10	Keeping Still	Sash	Grey
11	Regression	Scarf	Crimson
12	Revolution	Silk Jacket	Yellow
13	Accord	Surcoat	Purple
14	Breakthrough	Tunic	Brown
15	Increase	Turban	Checked
16	Decrease	Vest	Striped, horizontal
17	The flock	Holy Symbol	Striped, vertical
18	Advance	Anklet	Dotted
19	Retreat	Chador	Spiritual pattern
20	Strength	Fez	War pattern
21	Weakness	Kimono	Faction pattern
22	Tension	Blouse	Flock pattern
23	Fire	Necklace	Bariaur pattern
24	Water	Earring	Red

25	Earth	Nose Ring	Orange
26	Wind	Horn Ring or Horn Helm	Yellow
27	Restraint	Tiara	Green
28	Returning	Hair Clip	Blue
29	Beauty	Elaborate Pelt Shaving	Indigo
30	Contemplation	Hoof Painting	Violet
31	Following	New Hair Style	Black
32	Leading	Create Item	Worn differently
33	Doom	Nude	Grey
34	Waiting	Pick Two Items	White
35	Soldiers	Pick Three Items	Grey
36	Kicking through	Pick Four Items	Crimson
37	Charging	Pick Five Items	Olive

The Rena: Spirit Drum of the Outland bariaur



Bariaur are naturally carefree and gregarious, so it's no surprise that they relish the opportunity to create music and celebrate life. Almost every bariaur knows how to sing and some can play the flute and other lighter weight instruments suitable to their nomadic lifestyle. But the most popular instrument, by far, is the *Rena* Drum.

The Rena is a special drum made from the trunk of a small ash tree. Stretched across the hollowed-out ash trunk is a oiled piece of baku skin, scavenged from the baku dying grounds on The Outlands. The location of the baku dying grounds is a well kept secret, in case you were wondering where the bariaur obtained such priceless treasures. Trafficking in baku skin and tusks is a crime in most areas of The Outlands, although many turn a blind eye to the bariaur, who hold the animal with the deepest of respect and would never actually kill a baku for its skin.

Most Rena drums are small. If you were to place your two thumbs and forefingers together to make a circle, you would have a rough approximation of the head size. Despite its small size, the drum has a deep resonance that travels a surprisingly long distance. Some say this is because of the "holy" baku skin. The traditional belief is that the sound of a Rena can be heard the distance that the former baku could travel in a single day, roughly 20-25 miles. The sound of some drums, believed to be made from the skin of younger baku who died in battle, can travel much farther than this, some claim up to 50 miles.

Another opinion states that the drum's special properties come from the wood of the ash tree. The word for ash in bariaur is *goga*, and the root "go" in this word means power or spirit; *goga* literally means spirit wood. There is little else known of the ash legend, as most shamans tend to believe that the Rena's true power lies in its baku skin, rather than its ash body (The baku skin is also used by shamans in the making of special Yat'ra tents, for the female coming of age ritual).

Regardless of how the drum obtains its power, the bariaur hold the Rena in high regard and treat it with the utmost respect. There's a bariaur saying that more than one warrior repeated for me as I examined their drums: "You can touch a bariaur's weapon, maybe his sister, but laying a hand on his Rena will get you the axe."

Rena drums are used in a variety of settings. The **shaman** for example, use the instrument in ceremonies and rituals. It's not uncommon in a bariaur encampment to hear the deep thump of the Rena combined with the eerie whines of the *Pared'glin-Beya*, a flute made from the bone of giant ostrich. According to the shamans, The Rena plays a key role in summoning the spirits to action, or possibly banishing those that are evil or need to find their way in death.

Another important use of the Rena is in battle. It is thought that Shek himself carried a Rena when he and the entire bariaur race were herded into slavery by the giants of Jötunheim. Along The Long March, Shek and his compatriots sang songs of slavery and liberation, accompanied on the Rena drum. What the Jötunheim giants did not know is that the pattern played on the drum was a code to other bariaur up and down the line of slaves. In this way, it is thought that the bariaur were able to plan and execute their escape from the giants with uncanny precision.

The songs from The Long March are still sung today, an eerie reminder that the price to be paid for freedom is martial vigilance. As a reminder, one of the holy symbols among Shek's priests is the Rena. Each carries a small Rena around his neck or strapped to an arm. Many expert Rena players take up the worship of Shek in hopes of improving their playing. To this day, a small prayer to Shek is spoken before first playing the drum:

O hear me Lord Shek
The great liberator
May the patter of this feeble drum
bring you laughter and joy

In modern times, bariaur warriors strap the small drum to one of their arms as they leave for battle. The drum is later used to communicate instructions and orders over long distances. A message that would normally take a strong runner nearly many hours to deliver through hostile enemy territory, now takes only a few seconds to be heard.

Finally, the Rena is also used in casual campfire music sessions. As in everything spiritual with the bariaur, the Rena also has its mundane, everyday role to play. It may be a holy item with near divine origins, but it's not too good to be played for pure joy and relaxation. The Rena prayer to Shek is also meant for the benefit of the flock. As the shaman says, "may the patter of this feeble drum bring you laughter and joy."

Additional Bariaur Instruments

By David Joslyn

Aside from the Rena, or Spirit Drum, bariaur use a wide variety of musical instruments in their frequent celebrations. Ordinary drums, tambourines, bells (often worn while dancing), and other such noise-makers are extremely common. So too are flutes, whistles, and Pan-pipes of all shapes and sizes. In Ysgard, melodious horns can be heard echoing off the mountainsides, and many are played by bariaur. There are, however a few instruments worthy of special note:

ul'braka (br: *Ulaber'ka*) : This is a bariaur bagpipe, and is most frequently encountered in flock living near the Celtic Realms. Made from the bladder of a baku (the bariaur are nothing if not resourceful) it has roughly the same carrying range as the Rena Spirit Drum. Most have only three drones, but a few have as many as five or six. The chanter also varies depending on the piper, from short ones with only six holes to large affairs with as many as ten. Melodies played on the ul'braka tend to match and compliment the rhythms played on the Rena.

Longpipe: This instrument is made from a hollowed thupa gourd and resembles a dijeridoo in both sound and appearance. Too large to play while standing, the longpipe player kneels, steadying it with his forelegs, leaving his hands free to drum or scrape the ridge surface. To play it requires immense lung power, something the bariaur have in abundance. Skilled longpipe players can keep up a drumming drone for hours on end. Some bariaur attach two or three strings to provide a counterpoint to the instrument's base drone.

gwftaka (br: *gawef'teka*): This is a stringed instrument of the zither family, somewhere between a sitar and a dulcimer. Originally developed by a bariaur Cipher (whose name is, alas, lost to Time), it is renowned among mystics as a perfect aid to meditation. On a gwftaka there are 17 strings, one for each Outer Plane. Ten of these--the chord strings--are strung in five pairs with their tuning knobs at the top of the neck. The other seven--the tune strings--are strung individually with their tuning knobs at the base. The strings may be plucked by either or both hands; moving up and down the fretboard changes their tone, save for the bottom two, which are drones.



mediate Power, "The Liberator," "Freedom Bringer"



AoC: Liberty, Freedom, Self-determination

AL: CG

WAL: Any good

Symbol: A broken chain, Spirit Drum

Home P/L/R: Ysgard/Ysgard/The Sanctuary

Known Proxies: The Brotherhood of the Broken Chain (see below), Kren of Sanctuary (Px/male/B/P(SP)8/OS/CG)

Among the bariaur pantheon, no power is better known than Shek Threehoof. Enslaved with his flock by the giants of Jötunheim through the treachery of the Norse power Loki, every bariaur celebrates the bariaur escape to freedom with the monthly Ritual of Sheka.

The ritual is practiced throughout the planes wherever bariaur are present. It involves trimming of the hooves, a remembrance of how Shek severed his own hoof to escape the chains of the giants.

Priests of Shek are always crusaders, dedicated to ending slavery everywhere on the planes. While most are supporters of the bariaur flocks, rarely leaving their company, there is an elite order that travels extensively. Known as *The Brotherhood of the Broken Chain*, this order of crusader priests travels the planes, liberating slaves and punishing their captors. This is one of the few examples in bariaur society where bariaur actively work against other groups that do not directly threaten the flock. For more information on The Brotherhood, read about one of it's members, Kren of Sanctuary.

One of the top supporters of The Brotherhood of the Broken Chain is the githzerai. Haters of slavery,

having been enslaved by Mind Flayers for generations, the githzerai support The Brotherhood, whose organization resembles the popular and prestigious githzerai *Rrakkma* bands that hunt their former captors. Often Rrakkma and Brotherhood groups will trade information, relay messages and occasionally fight against common enemies. The philosophies of the two groups mesh in many areas, but the easy going nature of the bariaur prevent many githzerai from getting too involved with the religious organization, which they consider too frivolous and bureaucratic.

The Brotherhood is conservative and doesn't approve of bariaur becoming spellslingers, so they employ human and githzerai mages. These mages gather information via magical means and various contacts on the planes. They then assign brotherhood units to *liberation missions*. Units usually consist of 25 crusader priests (7th-12th level), trained in quickly subduing their enemies and liberating slaves. Freed slaves are usually returned to their societies when possible, but are sometimes brought back to Ysgard, to live, hopefully temporarily, in Shek's realm. If slaves cannot return to their homelands, they are sometimes relocated to liberated slave societies on other planes or prime worlds.

Although few githzerai actively worship Shek, the power enjoys a wide following from a variety of races who have been liberated by The Brotherhood. A small group of Baklunish tribesman on Oerth, elves liberated from beholders on The Outlands, and even a fair number of human tribesman from Mystra all worship Shek alongside their own gods. The hoof trimming ritual of Sheka has been modified to feet cleaning in these societies.

Shek is a dire enemy of the Norse power Loki. He holds great malice towards the entire Norse pantheon, although most Norse powers believe this to be a grave misunderstanding. Often Shek's followers find themselves fighting against various priests and followers of non-human powers who endorse slavery.

Bariaur Music: Interview with Berig Bakuraba, Rena Master

This interview took place at Tale of the Bariaur headquarters in Sigil. Interview by Saldrin Thanol.



Tale of the Bariaur: Berig Bakuraba is a master of the rena drum, an instrument at the core of Outland bariaur music. We're glad to have you here today Berig. Can you tell me a little more about Bariaur music, the various styles and what makes your style unique?

Berig Bakuraba: Thank you for having me Saldrin, and may I say that you're looking especially fertile today?

ToB: Ah, well, thank you Berig. Um, can you tell me a little more about your particular style?

Berig: I would be happy to. I am a Rena Master of the Payiirena tradition of The Outlands. We're unique in that our tradition sprang up without any outside influence. I hate to use the word purity, but there is a certain level of purity in our cultural art form that doesn't exist in other Rena traditions.

ToB: What would some examples of that be? I would think that Ysgard Rena music would be a more uncorrupted form, since Bariaur are originally from Ysgard.

Berig: Yes, some think that. Unfortunately, the Sak'larena tradition of Ysgard is heavily influenced by various horns used by humans on the Ysgard layer. These horns tend to slow down the music, interrupting the beat that many shamans consider sacred. The Beastland tradition, known as Dudagrena, uses flat stones of various densities as instruments. When struck, each emits a different tone. This again, although quite natural, is not a part of the original rena tradition.

ToB: So you're saying that The Outland Payiirena is the original tradition?

Berig: Not really, it's just that we've preserved the tradition from Ysgard better than anyone else. I think this is because we have so many constant influences on our culture. We are forced to analyze foreign ideas, throwing out those that aren't appropriate. Wherever did you get that beautiful silver vest Saldrin? It simply looks wonderful on you.

ToB: Well, thank you Berig, it's a Shis draw.

Berig: Oh, I apologize for prying.

ToB: It's not a problem, thank you for noticing. So where did you learn to play the rena?

Berig: Normally one's father or uncle teaches the rena, or possibly the flock shaman. We had no really good rena players in our flock, so I went in search of a teacher. I actually went to Sigil where I met the multiverse's best rena player, Jek Yadola. Jek was a bard in The Lower Ward who played the rena during pit fighting in some of the more seedy bars. His talents were clearly being wasted, but he had had a run-in with the Harmonium and needed work that kept him off the streets. So besides his pit fighting job, he taught me.

ToB: So this drummer who taps the beat in the pit fights was a world class rena master?

Berig: That shouldn't be so hard to believe, Sigil is full of powerful and interesting people who are on their way to something more important.

ToB: So did Jek Yadola teach you any special arts?

Berig: Are you referring to...some of the carnal arts known by bariaur bards? <winking> If so, I would be happy to...

ToB: Ah, no, I was just wondering if he taught you any traditional Sigil peels.

Berig: Oh, we were too busy with the rena for that. But he did teach me some of the social peels that bariaur use within flocks.

ToB: You mean the bariaur steal from each other?

Berig: Oh no, it's just that there are certain traditions that a bariaur bard has to understand when playing in a traditional village. First of all, the idea of a bard is alien to most bariaur, since music is an activity that every flock member is involved with. So you've got to have some flash as a bard, to get people interested in you. You have to have something interesting that the shaman isn't offering.

ToB: Like what?

Berig: Well, for instance, there are special songs that bard play called *onasa*. In the *onasa* songs, the bard plays along with members of the flock. The idea of sitting around listening to someone else playing is anathema to bariaur; it would be like watching a battle. They just can't *not* participate. So the bard, who plays the rena, leads the rest of the flock, who usually sing or stomp their feet. At a certain point in the song, there's a phrase that the bard uses to signify he's about to finish. If a flock member continues to sing or play after the bard finishes, there's kind of a social stigma, and he needs to make up for it.

ToB: How does he make up for it? Is there a battle or something?

Berig: Nooo, that would be a little extreme. The individual must recite a poem or sing a song. It's not a terrible penance, but some warriors are more bashful than others, especially in conservative flocks.

ToB: So where's the trick in that?

Berig: The trick is that sometimes a flock member will throw the song on purpose. She'll purposely continue beyond the end of the song so that she can dedicate a poem or song to a male member of the flock. This is not allowed normally in conservative flocks, so it's a big exception.

ToB: And that's a problem?

Berig: Yes. In conservative flocks, they're already uneasy about letting outsiders in. Now their does are singing songs to the bucks! How scandalous. As a bard, it usually means I don't get paid for my work, or they kick me out after the first few days. It takes time and money to visit flocks, and I need to spend at least a week to make up my costs.

ToB: That is interesting. So how come we don't see many bariaur bards?

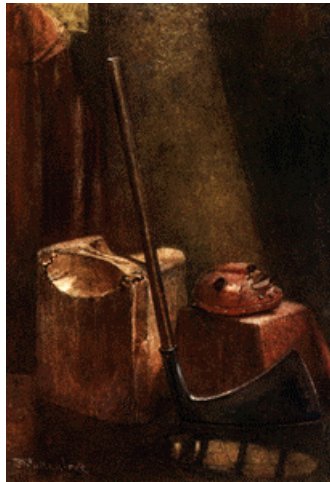
Berig: Like I mentioned, most flocks would never pay to have someone else play music for them. That there is an increase in bariaur bards is a sign that our culture is in trouble, that there is a need for someone to maintain the tradition. It's usually the job of the shaman to maintain tradition, but if shamans won't adjust fast enough, say, to the bariaur population in Sigil, then bariaur will learn the old ways from the bards.

ToB: Does this bother you?

Berig: It's nice having work and playing my music, but I never wanted to be a shaman. That's women's work. No offense. You know Saldrin, in the ancient flocks of Ysgard, does go topless.

ToB: It's funny that you mention that . My Shis draw said I would be meeting you, so I guess I don't need my top now. <smiling>

STARE (Sta-ray) TWO-HANDED FIGHTING



STYLE

We're standing in the forests outside Glorium, where a group of woodsmen cut down trees for the boat makers in town. This is no ordinary group of woodsmen, however, this group is led by the renowned bariaur warrior Jerek Roughhoof, known to his men as *Stare (star-ray)*, a term in bariaur meaning "The Axe." Roughhoof has worked these woods for nearly twenty years, but he's best known for his skill with the battle axe.

Roughhoof teaches his woodsmen the use of the axe both against wood and against more dangerous foes. Originally from Ysgard, roughhoof's skill in battle is known throughout the planes, and students flock to him for training. But Roughhoof has no desire to be a teacher, believing instead that honest work will bring the peace and harmony required to be a true warrior. Therefore, it's no surprise that students arriving from the planes for instruction are a bit disappointed when Roughhoof hands them an axe or a bucket.

Most students spend their first few months carrying water or maintaining the camp, which tends to move seasonally. This, according to Roughhoof, is necessary to build character and weed out the weak, impatient and insincere. Roughhoof believes that most axe wielders choose the axe for the wrong reasons, usually because of its mystique as a flashy weapon or the great legends of axe wielding warriors. Most students, according to Roughhoof, lack the strength to properly wield the battle axe. By carrying water and cutting trees, the student builds the proper strength necessary for axe work.

In addition to strength, Roughhoof is also concerned with technique. Students cut down trees with the same strokes they would use in battle. There are seventeen different strokes in all, and a student is expected to use each one in sequence on a tree, at which point it should fall to the ground. Use eighteen strokes to fell a tree or fell it in sixteen strokes and the tree doesn't count towards the number required to advance to the next stage of training. No one actually knows the number of trees required, or whether it's a fixed number, a different number for each student, or even if it's based on the number of trees required by the boat builders. Roughhoof informs tree counting students to focus on their work and have less attachment to the results. Roughhoof believes that this method perfects power, control, and axe technique, as well as instilling a proper work ethic in his students.

Occasionally Roughhoof will change the stroke order, skip strokes or even add repeating strokes to shake up the students routine by making them focus their efforts. Many student woodsmen quit before they've finished their tree training, claiming that there's no value in the work. Some quit after several years of tree work, after many of their peers had advanced in training years before. This is necessary, according to Roughhoof, who believes that technique is as important as attitude. Some cutters, he says, will just never foster the right ethic. What's even more bewildering are the expert axe warriors produced by Roughhoof's training who originally started as local woodsmen. These men originally started as woodsmen to feed their families, yet they advanced, according to Roughhoof, much quicker than his

regular students, impatient to learn new techniques or advance beyond their tree cutting. According to Roughhoof, this simply proves that the right attitude is more important than desire or skill.

After the tree cutting period is over, Roughhoof takes his advanced students into the forest for special training. Stories of this training range from the sublime to the bizarre. Some say that Roughhoof takes the students into the forest to perfect their footwork and battle skills against a variety of animate and inanimate opponents, some of which may be conjured by spirits of the woods. These combat techniques are thought to be ancient skills in axe parries, blows with the butt end of the axe and thrusts with the top spike of the axe. But this is all rumor.

Some say that Roughhoof takes the students through a portal, possibly to the lower planes where they fight abominations, creatures of the most intense evil. Other, more wild stories tell of a bariaur shaman in the forest who makes the students eat wild herbs and fight their worst enemy, themselves. Whatever occurs in the forest will probably be left unknown, as students take vows of secrecy not to reveal the details of their training.

So how does such devotion pay off? Roughly nine out of ten students never complete their tree cutting training, usually quitting in disgust when they realize Roughhoof has no intention of progressing them to the next level without a drastic change in attitude or beliefs. Those that make it past carrying water and cutting trees usually pass their advanced training, although some are known to have not returned from the tests deep in the forests.

Those that do pass the advanced test either stay with Roughhoof to become permanent woodsmen, or leave the region to work as warriors, sometimes in elite military units. Graduating axe men have been known to find positions with the *Black Guard* of the Planar Trade Consortium, *The Protectors* of the Payira Order, or even warrior guards within the halls of various upper planar powers. One thing is for sure, everyone who passes Roughhoof's final tests is changed forever, humbled, yet transformed by their experiences of hard labor and intense training. Jerek Roughhoof would have it no other way.

DM DETAILS: The *Stare* style is a two-handed weapon fighting style specialization similar to that specified in *Skills & Powers: Combat and Tactics* (p 77). The basic style requires 4 character points or 2 weapon slots to utilize. Characters may not skip levels of expertise specified on the table below. Only one level of expertise may be obtained per level.

Stare Advancement Table:

TITLE	CHARACTER POINTS	BATTLE AXE WEAPON SPEED	ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE BONUS	ATTACKS	PARRY AC BONUS	MIN LVL
Waterboy	2*	7	-	-	1	½ level	0
Woodsmen	4	4	-	-	1	½ level -1	1
Axeman	6	4	+1	-	1	½ level -1	2
Student	8	3	+1	-	3/2	½ level -2	3
Specialist	10	3	+2	+2**	3/2	½ level -2	5
Master	12	3	+5	+5**	2	½ level -3	7
High Master	14	2	+5	+5***	2	½ level -3	10
Grand Master	16	1	+5	+7***	3	½ level -4	12

* Represents basic battle-axe proficiency

** Critical hits on natural 18 or higher

*** Critical hits on natural 16 or higher

Axemaster Kit

AXEMASTER

A Axe master is a non-evil warrior who has chosen to devote most of his combat training to the *Stare* battle axe style. A Axemaster's goal is to blend weapon and self into one whirling, deadly union - one lethal entity.

Social rank: Axemasters come from all strata of society and all economic backgrounds.

2d6 Roll

2

3-5

6-10

11-12

Rank

Lower Class

Lower Middle Class

Upper Middle Class

Upper Class

Requirements: Any warrior of non-evil alignment may become Axemasters. Further, they must have minimum Strength/Stamina and Dexterity/Aim of 13. The kit is open to all races.

Weapon proficiencies: Weapon masters must choose the battle axe as a weapon proficiency. The character must choose the two-handed weapon fighting style at 1st level. Characters may not choose additional weapon abilities beyond the progression in the *Stare Advancement Table*. For example, a first level Axemaster would choose basic battle axe proficiency (woodsman level) and the two-handed weapon fighting style. He could not choose weapon expertise or two-handed weapon fighting specialization until subsequent advancement, restricted by class level.

Bonus proficiencies: Endurance, Mountaineering.

Recommended nonweapon proficiencies: Blind-fighting, Hunting, Weaponsmithing, Rope Use, Fire Building.

Equipment: A Axemaster cannot wear armor heavier than chain mail. The Axemaster begins play with a battle axe at no cost.

Recommended traits: keen eyesight, keen hearing, lucky.

Benefits: See the *Stare Advancement Table* above.

Hindrances: So total is the Axemaster's devotion to his weapon that he cannot become proficient with weapons other than the battle axe or weapons from the axes, picks and hammer category.

Wealth: Standard for the character's class.

WIND BLADE:

Two-Weapon Fighting Style Specialization



Anwar Al-Nisr was a tall man, standing nearly six feet. Al-Nisr, “the eagle” in his language, was known for his skill with the scimitar, or more precisely an ancient style utilizing two scimitars simultaneously. The *Wind Blade* style was known by farisan (holy warriors) of Shu, the god of one thousand and one winds. It is Shu who holds up the sky and subdues the earth and it is the many faces of Shu on which the Wind Blade style is based. Students must first understand wind before they are allowed to handle a weapon. They must know the names for each of the winds, how and at what time they emerge and how and at what time they dissipate. To know this is to begin to understand the Wind Blade style, for it is based on the faces of Shu, the thousand and one winds.

After a year of constant study of the wind, a student is finally allowed to handle a weapon. He is taught the Allahgara movement, the name given to a light wispy wind that often occurs right after sunrise. Performed by a trained master with two scimitars, the Allahgara is a graceful, simple movement. To a novice, it can be a dangerous, even deadly exercise requiring great concentration. The scimitar in the right hand moves up above the forehead in a blocking motion, while the scimitar in the left hand slices upwards horizontally in a deadly but graceful cut. These two movements must happen in perfect harmony to both properly defend against an attack and to avoid slicing the attacking left arm. This simple move often takes a year to master, but all other movements are built upon it. It is said that you can tell a Wind Blade master by the many scars on his left forearm, a constant reminder of the need to concentrate and practice the art.

There are one thousand more movements to the Wind Blade style, broken into twenty forms of fifty movements each. A true master can seamlessly demonstrate the entire Wind Blade system in a little under 15 minutes. Most observers are unaware that they've just witnessed one thousand and one distinct movements. A student of Wind Blade will take fifteen years to learn the entire style, another fifteen years to truly master them, and fifteen additional years before he will be capable of teaching.

The first year of Wind Blade training requires intense work with a teacher. The second year of Allahgara mastery requires regular meetings with a teacher at least once each week. Subsequent years of training require occasional meetings, usually once each month. A student who does not reach full mastery and ceases seeing a teacher will find his technique suffering (-1 to hit for each six months without supervised study, not to exceed -4).

Anwar Al-Nisr teaches his style only to the true of heart, preferably faris of Shu. But things have changed recently with the opening of the sacred doorway. New enemies have emerged and new allies have come about to fight them. No longer can Anwar Al-Nisr and the temple of Shu be so choosy with teachings, for the future of Shu's people depend on the skill of their allies as much as their own skill. It is said that Anwar Al-Nisr has even begun taking non-humans into his classes, including goat-creatures, bird men and even reformed creatures of evil! Such have the times changed.

Anyone who pledges to "uphold the sky" from the overwhelming forces of evil may learn the style, for a price of course. Young men who pledge to become farisan of Shu may train for free. Others may pay depending on their experience in the martial arts. The more experienced a combatant, the more he must pay, as there is much unlearning to be done before training can begin. Usually training begins at 1,000 pieces of gold and goes up dramatically from there. The money is used to free slaves, build temples, and arm holy warriors against the onslaught of the forces of evil. If you are to come upon Anwar Al-Nisr, the eagle, it would be an unparalleled honor if you were afforded the opportunity to train with him. To know the thousand and one faces of Shu is to not only become a great swordsman, it is to know true peace.

DM DETAILS: The Wind Blade style is a two-weapon fighting style specialization similar to that specified in *Skills & Powers: Combat and Tactics* (p 77). It is available to good-aligned male fighters, rangers and paladins. The basic style requires 4 character points or 2 weapon slots to utilize. Characters may not skip levels of expertise specified on the table below. Only one level of expertise may be obtained per level.

Basic mastery of the style allows a character to use two scimitar with a 0 and -2 attack penalty for each attack, with modifications allowed for dexterity (see chart below). No other weapon types may be substituted and no additional specializations may be used to increase scimitar skills except for those specified. It costs 1,000 gps per level to learn this style, 500gps per level for followers of Shu and the training is free for faris (holy warriors) of Shu. 1st level characters may defer payment until second level, if necessary.

In the Wind Blade style, over time the character's armor class will improve, as will his attack and damage adjustments. This takes into account the various proficiencies within *Skills & Powers* (Proficiency, Weapon of Choice, Specialization, Mastery, High Mastery, and Grand Mastery). Below is a table showing the necessary points and skill to achieve additional levels of mastery. Basic competency is considered the "adept" level. DM's may wish to start beginning characters at the novice level of mastery. Also note that advancement beyond the level of master requires specialized training from a grand-master.

Wind Blade Advancement Table:

TITLE	CHARACTER POINTS	WEAPON PENALTIES/HAND	DAMAGE BONUS	SCIMITAR ATTACKS/ROUND	AC BONUS	MIN LVL
Novice	2*	-2/-4	-	2	-	0
Adept	4	0/-2	-	2	-	1
Initiate	6	0/-2	-	3	-1	2
Student	8	0/0	-	3	-1	3
Specialist	10	+1/+1	+2**	3	-2	5
Master	12	+4/+4	+5**	4	-2	7
High Master	14	+4/+4	+5***	4	-3	10
Grand Master	16	+4/+4	+7***	5	-4	12

* Represents basic scimitar proficiency

** Critical hits on natural 18 or higher

*** Critical hits on natural 16 or higher

Wind Blade Kit

Some have expressed interest in a Wind Blade kit, considering the amount of time and dedication required to master this art. Below is a Wind Blade kit based on the Weapon Master kit in *Player's Option: Skills and Powers*.

WIND BLADE MASTER

A Wind Blade Master is a good-aligned male paladin, ranger or fighter who has chosen to devote most of his combat training to the Wind Blade dual scimitar style. A Wind Blade master's goal is to blend weapon and self into one whirling, deadly union - one lethal entity, for the purpose of upholding good and fighting evil. There is also a spiritual aspect to Wind Blade training that transcends belief and religion, allowing the master to devote himself to the Wind Blade art form without compromising convictions or religious responsibilities.

Social rank: Wind Blade masters come from families that can afford weapon instruction, or individuals willing to commit to the religion of Shu. Roll 2d6 to determine a Wind Blade master's social rank.

2d6 Roll

2-4

5-9

10-12

Rank

Lower Middle Class

Upper Middle Class

Upper Class

Requirements: Only male fighters, rangers and paladins of good-alignment may become Wind Blade masters. Further, they must have minimum Strength/Stamina and Dexterity/Aim of 13. The kit is open to all races.

Weapon proficiencies: Weapon masters must choose the scimitar as a weapon proficiency. The character must choose the two-weapon fighting style. Characters may not choose additional weapon abilities beyond the progression in the *Wind Blade Advancement Table*. For example, a first level Wind Blade Master would choose basic scimitar proficiency (novice level) and the two weapon fighting style. He could not choose weapon expertise or two weapon fighting specialization until subsequent advancement restricted by class level.

Bonus proficiencies: Religion, Weather Knowledge

Recommended nonweapon proficiencies: Blind-fighting, Display Weapon Prowess, juggling, weaponsmithing, endurance.

Equipment: A Wind Blade master cannot wear armor heavier than chain mail. The Wind Blade master begins play with two scimitars at no cost.

Recommended traits: Ambidexterity, double-jointed, keen eyesight, keen hearing, lucky.

Benefits: See the Wind Blade Advancement Table above.

Hindrances: So total is the Wind Blade master's devotion to his weapon that he cannot become proficient with weapons other than the scimitar or other swords.

Wealth: Standard for the character's class.

CR2 IMPORT

Most of the abilities in the Wind Blade Advancement Table can be purchased normally with CP's, although costs may vary by class. Armor class bonus is not a normal combat ability, so I recommend fudging this with a fake magical item, like modifying normal armor to make it appear magical. The important thing to remember when advancing on this table is to simply make sure you're spending the two CP's per level and getting all the abilities described. You may need to tweak the software a bit to make this happen.

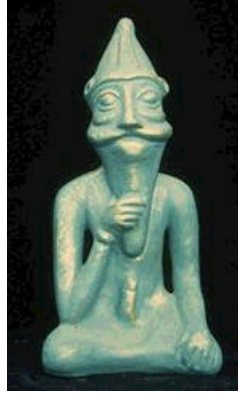
Unless you're really in love with the CR2 software, this is probably a character that will be easier managed with pen and paper. You can download a S&P character sheet in the [downloads](#) area.

Below is a table describing the abilities gained at each step and how they can be purchased. You will most likely need to tweak CP's along the way.

TITLE	SKILLS & POWERS ABILITY	CHARACTER POINT COST
Novice	Scimitar weapon proficiency	2
Adept	Two-weapon Fighting Style	2
Initiate	Weapon Expertise -1 AC Bonus	2
Student	Two-weapon Fighting Specialization	2
Specialist	Weapon Specialization -2 AC Bonus	2
Master	Weapon Mastery	2 (8)
High Master	Weapon High Mastery -3 AC Bonus	2 (8)
Grand Master	Weapon Grand Mastery -4 AC Bonus	2 (8)

The Bariaur Way to Knowledge (an Excerpt)

By Lin Fusan, two-legger of the Transcendent Order



Student: I want to have power. I want to defeat our greatest enemy. I want to be able to fight the giants and protect our tribes.

Master: That is what Kan Tala said to me.

Student: Tala?! You've seen her? How is she? Where has she been?

Master: It is one of my fatal flaws to feel sadness for her. She was a student of mine, like you.

Student: I know, master, I have followed in her hoof marks. She is the reason I came to you to learn.

Master: Then perhaps your attachment to Kan Tala is your fatal flaw also.

Student: I do not understand.

Master: Let me begin again with your request for power. What do you think is your greatest enemy?

Student: The giants, of course.

Master: Why do you think so?

Student: They hunt us. Kill our tribe. They destroy lives and our way of life.

Master: We hunt them also. We kill them, we destroy their lives, and their way of life.

Student: But only because they do so to us. If they left us alone, then we would leave them alone.

Master: What do you feel when you see a giant?

Student: Feel? Anger; righteousness against our enemy.

Master: Do you not feel fear?

Student: Fear? Of course not, what do we have to fear from giants?

Master: That is pride speaking, not bravery. We fight the giants because we fear them.

Student: Perhaps, but only because I fear death. I fear them killing my tribe.

Master: Ah, see, that fear, that fear is my fatal flaw. And that fear is your fatal flaw. Fear is our greatest enemy. It motivates us to fight giants. It motivates us to have concern for Kan Tala. It motivated her to pursue more power.

Student: What happened to her?

Master: I introduced her to power. Only the little power, not the big power, and her fear overcame her.

Student: Please tell me more.

Master: As I must instruct you to do, I introduced her to different powers. She needed to choose which power would be hers to understand.

Student: What is the power?

Master: It is the spirit among us. The spirit that lives in the ground, the earth, the trees, the grass. It is understanding this spirit that grants power. To understand the power, you must embrace it, swallow it.

Student: I do not understand.

Master: Here, see this bag? This is my power. The power lives within this powder that I have nurtured, grown, then harvested, ground, and mixed. I cannot show you the plant, for that would mean you would know where my power comes from, and only I can know my power, and only you can know yours.

Student: Then the power is a plant? Is it eaten?¹

Master: Some powers are eaten, others, like mine, are smoked. You are my student, so I can give you some of my power to use, but only until you have chosen your power.

Student: And did Kan Tala choose your power?

Master: No, she choose another. My power gives me dreams. It lets me fly, and peek into the lives of others, even the two-leggers. Tala did not like that power, so I introduced her to another. That is when she surrendered to herself, to her first enemy, fear.

Student: What happened?

Master: Her power gave her physical strength. To the bucks, it also gives them potency. It is why many young bucks enjoy that power the most. That is why some succumb to their fear of weakness or their fear of impotence. Kan Tala's fear of her own weakness drove her to use the power more and more often. It is when the spirit of the power possessed her.

Student: What?!

Master: The power is a living thing. You respect others of your tribe? It is because they are living things. You must respect your power, because it is also a living thing.

Student: ..

Master: I saw her, and he was not her. It was the body of Kan Tala, but not the spirit. She consumed the power without my guidance. She feared weakness and patience and ingested the power regularly. Abusing the different powers causes different effects. Kan Tala became angry and powerful, but she had no control. The spirit of her power possessed her. ²

Student: How do I prevent that?

Master: You must overcome your greatest enemies. The first is fear. You must trust the power, and not let it control you. You must not consume your power all the time in order to control it. You must respect its needs and its abilities, as well as your own. ³

Student: Can we save Kan Tala now?

Master: We can separate her from her power, but a little bit of her spirit has become part of her power. She will never be a whole bariaur again.

FOOTNOTES:

¹The shaman believes all plants to have a spirit, and that spirit accompanied the user when ingested or smoked. This spirit provides the power. Skeptics would simply say the herb provided an alchemical assistance to the body. Whether or not this is true is out of the scope of this article.

² Misuse of the herb results in a permanently damaged psyche. Again, whether it is from addiction, or from spiritual possession, is another article.

³ Respect in this sense has a very subtle meaning. It not only entails honoring the herb's existence, but also its ability to overcome the user. Accomplished shamans often speak of co-existence with the herb, a form of harmonious equality.

Author's Note

All names changed to protect their identities. My source was very reluctant in giving me this information, stating that hubris is another great enemy, i.e., that by giving me impartial and incomplete information, I would draw improper conclusions. My species and gender also proved to be an obstacle, and so, my source must have omitted some important information. To get this much, I promised to provide proper context, and to warn that a seeker of truth should only ingest herbs under the guidance of a bariaur shaman. Any less would disrespect the herb and the shaman, as well as cause untold spiritual, mental, and physical damage to oneself.

=====

Written by Monte Lin

This article was derived from Carlos Casteneda's *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way to Knowledge*.

This author intends no disrespect in altering Casteneda's words for the purposes of *Tale of the Bariaur*. *The Teachings of Don Juan*, and the sequels, is a wonderful inspiration for shamanism and herbalism.

Bariaur Myth & Legend

- ◆ The Story of Creation
- ◆ The Legend of the Tanar'riaur
- ◆ The Legend of the Bazru
- ◆ How the Bariaur Received their Spirit From the Gods
- ◆ Fen Korab the Tree of Seeing
- ◆ Shek: The Liberator!
- ◆ Samurai Bariaur
- ◆ Bariaur Tech: The Victory Saddle
- ◆ A Warning: The 5 Peels of the Sigil Tout
- ◆ Bariaur Portal Polo
- ◆ The Kayi Dog
- ◆ Inside an Acheron Cube
- ◆ Shrine of Nomolos
- ◆ The Realm of Pam'para
- ◆ Bursting the Bubble: Introducing Palanrs into Prime Campaigns
- ◆ Dadapa Means Belief: Bariaur Childeren's Book

The Story of Creation

In the beginning, before the formation of the planes and its denizens, there was a nest. In this nest were three small, blue eggs. One of these eggs, known as "Sagonana" (The Creator Egg), cracked open and there appeared a ball of light against the endless nothingness. The ball of light exploded into infinite energy, creating an infinite plane of green pastures and wide rolling hills. This was The Land. There was only this wide pasture, nothing more. There were no creatures, no belief or emotion, and all the elements were yet to be formed.

Then the energy created many creatures, among them were Bariaur. There was a buck named Jek and a doe named Shana. The buck and the doe were very shy and listless. They hid in a cave and refused to go out and meet the other creatures of The Land or to explore its many wonders. The other creatures were just as empty of spirit. They walked around, without emotion, laughter or joy. This went on for a very long time.

Then the second egg cracked, the one called "Sagosemasa" (The Spirit Egg). A huge explosion was heard. A ball of light appeared and exploded into infinite energy, giving each creature a spirit, emotion, and curiosity. The Bariaur as well as other creatures left their caves or boroughs and pranced in the fields. They met with the other creatures of The Land and shared with them their spirit, their joy and their inquisitiveness. There was happiness, but there was uneasiness, as if something were missing. The creatures of the planes lacked a sense of purpose.

The third egg cracked, the one called "Sagobalo" (The Reason Egg), and a huge explosion was heard. A ball of light appeared and exploded into infinite energy, giving each creature intellect and ideals, a sense of purpose and a way of life. Finally the beings of The Land were complete. Yet there were problems. Wars were waged over ideas, new languages emerged that others could not understand, creatures were murdered for sport or power, and belief became a way to separate oneself from others rather than grow closer. This was a terribly destructive period. The Land rejected its inhabitants and began The Sundering, to protect itself. Parts of the land began to break off and disappear, along with their inhabitants. The Land was throwing out those who would destroy it.

Those who believed in law and order found themselves separated into a land more appealing to their beliefs, a land ordered and regimented to meet their requirements. Those who believed that life was an individual struggle of power and strength found a land that fit their needs, where only the strong survived. In this way, the various planes were formed based on the beliefs of its inhabitants. Even now, The Land will reject those with strong beliefs, pushing them into other planes of existence. In the end, only a small area of The Land was available, dedicated to those who chose balance between the various beliefs, and also as a place for the other groups to one day return and reconcile their differences. To this day, The Land is called The Outlands, in reference to The Sundering, the throwing out of its creatures. The Bariaur were scattered in this way, like the other races. However, the Bariaur, having begun in the center of The Land, near the nest of the three eggs, received the most pure and uncorrupted energy of all the creatures. Therefore, the Bariaur tended towards purity and yearned to live in environments similar to The Land before The Sundering. Because of this, most Bariaur still live in The Outlands and in similar places of the Upper Planes. The Bariaur language is believed to be that spoken before The Sundering by all creatures, and is a holy language.

Bariaur show their thanks and respect for the forces represented in each egg by respecting their language. Most importantly, Bariaur show their respect through their form of worship. The shamans, highly attuned to nature and its forces, represent the energies of The Creator Egg. The priests, who worship the Bariaur powers -- those who give us our ideals and goals in life, represent the energies of the Spirit Egg. The mystics, devoted to discovering the core truth of each creature's beliefs, represent the energies of The Reason Egg.

When any of these three aspects of Bariaur belief are weak or lacking, the flock suffers, and the Bariaur resemble creatures before The Hatching. When the shamans are weak, the land suffers and the Bariaur grow sick. When the mystics are weak, the Bariaur become ignorant, and find themselves unprepared for the outside world. When the priests are weak, the Bariaur lack a sense of spirit and find themselves dispersed and unable to come together. All three groups believe that through balance, the Bariaur can find true happiness.

The Creation of the World

It is clear that the Bariaur see themselves as blessed. It's not quite the feeling of superiority that other races might have, but more a sense of being attuned to the original nature of the multiverse.

In the mainstream creation story, The Outlands, formally called "The Land" before The Sundering, is the origin of all life. Although most Bariaur are from the Upper Planes, especially Ysgard, it is Outland Bariaur culture that seems to flourish, despite their smaller numbers. There are several reasons for this. First, Outland Bariaur tend to have a fine balance between the three belief systems, like in the creation story. Bariaur societies with an equal mix of shamans, mystics and powers tend to excel in art, culture, language and even battle. The Beastlands may have the most powerful group of Bariaur shaman, but the priests of the powers are almost non-existent. Ysgardian Bariaur may have close ties to the powers and respect for their excellent shaman, but mystics are uncommon, thus creating an insular society. Elysium, "Zhoda" in Bariaur, is also a native word meaning "boring." Nothing new happens here, there's simply no motivating force. Arborea is a plane of extremes, where balance of belief is almost not a popular concept. This is not to say that Outland Bariaur are the cultural elite, or that nothing ever happens on the Outer Planes. On the contrary, wise Outland flocks send their mystics to the Outer Planes to pick up on the latest innovations in thought and culture. Unfortunately, far fewer mystics from the Outer Planes arrive to study the Outlanders.

Language is also important in defining the Bariaur relationship to creation. Bariaur believe that their language was THE language spoken before The Sundering. It's not a matter of pride, since it's not really the Bariaur language at all, but the language of all people before The Sundering. Since the Bariaur language is considered sacred, Bariaur from every plane work hard to preserve it. New words are never added to the existing lexicon. Instead, two or more words are combined for the new meaning. Also, there are no dialects of Bariaur, except for the Ysgardian Bariaur, which only speak with the feminine form. Ysgardian Bariaur also use a form of shorthand, where they drop vowels. For example, "Namata" becomes "Nam'ta." This occurs only when the second vowel is the same as the previous syllable. Language is the spiritual root of Bariaur society. Bariaur are taught never to forget or abandon their language. Names are meant to be kept in the original Bariaur, rather than translating them to Planar Common. These translations, common among Bariaur in Sigil, result in farcical names like Goldenflanks, Silverhoof, Ironshod, and many others. As there is no convention for these translations, it becomes impossible to trace a Bariaur back to her flock or family by name.

Scholars pay no credence to Bariaur claims of creation or language. Some Guvners, for example, have elaborate charts showing language development over the last several thousand years. These same Guvners have over a dozen theories about creation, ranging from great explosions to giant turtles.

Alternate Bariaur creation stories vary little from the one above. They usually focus on The Sundering as being a necessary and natural evolution, rather than nature's rejection of incompatible organisms. Some Bariaur, whose culture is weak, adopt the creation stories from their own planes or realms, such as those of Olympus in Arborea.

What you won't find in the Bariaur creation story is condemnation of particular races or groups. The prime dwarves tell of their oppression and hatred of the elves and humans. Elves have a "stewardship" view of humans, seeing them as inferior children, occasionally needing guidance. Bariaur views on other races are formed by their primary values, those of freedom, honor and independence. Those who honor these values and allow Bariaur to express them are Bariaur friends. Other than certain races of giants, who often compete with Bariaur for territory, the Bariaur tend to co-exist with most every race.

The Bariaur Powers

Bariaur powers were created from Sagobalo, The Reason Egg. Nomolos was created first. He spoke the first word of wisdom. Other powers sprang from his wisdom energy. The powers represent the highest ideals of Bariaur society: honor, fellowship, freedom and battle. As you will discover, Bariaur powers are personally close to their flock. A Bariaur power is accessible much like a celebrity, rather than a celestial almighty being.

Priests and paladins of Bariaur powers tend to emulate the actions of their gods. A paladin of Tirag Thunderhooves, the power of fair competitions, might be found in gambling halls, wrestling rings, or overseeing a game of dice in The Hive Ward. What would normally be considered inappropriate behavior for a paladin, might be exemplary to the quirky Bariaur powers. This capriciousness is in line

with the character of most Bariaur, although many does, brought up with more responsibilities than bucks, have a harder time accepting this fact. This may explain why few Bariaur priests are does.

Tanar'ri, Lesser - Tanar'riaur

© 1999 by Gary L. Ray © 1999 Layout by Brannon Hollingsworth



Climate/Terrain:	Any
Frequency:	Very rare
Organisation:	Solitary
Activity Cycle:	Any
Diet:	Carnivore
Intelligence:	Low (5-7)
Treasure:	R
No. Appearing:	1
Armour Class:	6
Movement:	15
Hit Dice:	7
THACO:	13
No. of Attacks:	3
Damage/Attack:	2-12, 1-6, 1-6
Special Attacks:	See below
Special Defences:	See below
Magic Resistance:	30%
Size:	L (9' Tall)
Morale:	Steady (11-12)
XP Value:	3,000

"The only good Tanar'riaur is a dead tanar'riaur"

-Mayor of Tradegate after recent tanar'riaur attack

Bachel the Balor, or "Render" as his friends called him, screeched in pain. He turned and saw a large creature with scimitar horns, kind of like a bariaur but more sinister and crafty. The creature had just impaled one of its horns in his left side. It would have been a mortal blow to any other creature, but was a mere scratch to Bachel.

Bachel waved his hand and a bolt of blue-green lightning shot from fingers and into the hideous creature, vaporizing it from the inside out.

"What in hell was that?!!" Bachel telepathed across the battlefield to his pit fiend rival Malignus.

"Bwa ha ha," Malignus laughed. "I see you've met my son."

The battle continued beneath them in the Outland valley. Lemures oozed and overwhelmed a legion of beleaguered cambions. A dozen beholders, brought here from some unholy alliance with the beholder god, zapped lemures into sticky paste with rays from their eyestalks.

"How can that thing be yours?" thought back Bachel, trying to comprehend the losing battle, the assassination attempt and his rival's intentions all at once.

"Yes, you didn't smell him did you?" Malignus chided, with no sense of regret or distress over the death of his son. "That's because he's an Outlander -- never even stepped foot in Baator."

"But when did YOU sire a son in The Outlands?" Bachel asked naively, playing on Malignus' ego to gain more information.

The cambions threw their last bit of strength against the lemures, pushing them back nearly twenty yards before the beholders flew in for the slaughter, their eyestalks shooting a rainbow of colors at the nearly spent cambions.

"It was that little bet of ours, about the bariaur, remember?" Malignus telepathed.

The battle was nearly over and the Baatoran forces had clearly claimed victory on the field. An army of dwarves waited to the north, ready to contain the battle if it spilled over into their territory. They started to advance on the defeated forces, looking to express their frustration and anger with their sharp axes and swords.

Bachel looked to the advancing dwarves and the beholders who were now focusing their deadly eyestalks on the Tanar'ri leadership.

"Next time maybe I'll have a little horned surprise of my own!" Bachel telepathed to Malignus, right before teleporting back to The Abyss.

His commanders and few surviving troops were left behind to be slaughtered by the beholders, and waiting dwarves. Such was the price of failure.

Tanar'riaur are the male offspring of a Tanar'ri and a female bariaur. It is believed that the pure chaos and evil of the Tanar'riaur, combined with its incessant desire to defile and desecrate all that is alive, cannot possibly be contained in a female form. Others believe that the female Tanar'riaur are easier to spot at birth and may simply be drowned, as some flocks do with horned does.

At birth the Tanar'riaur appears to be a normal male bariaur, although without horns. A member of the Payira Order appears shortly after the births to induct the newborn into the order. Most bariaur flocks are never aware of the true nature of the Tanar'riaur because of the short time they spend with the newborn. The payira master who raises the Tanar'riaur soon discovers the true nature of this creature. Within a few weeks from birth, the Tanar'riaur's skin changes color from brown to red. Its hair never grows, leaving it to look like a large rodent. The normal molars of the vegetarian bariaur grow into sharp fangs, designed for ripping flesh. The cloven hooves grow claws at the ends. Even the social activist payira could forgive these "deformities."

However, what they cannot forgive is the violent nature of the Tanar'riaur, which evolves quickly as soon as the young buck is capable of any form of action.

The young Tanar'riaur will harm, kill or defile everything within its power. As it grows older, so does its strength and likewise its destructive power.

The Payira master, torn between his love for the buck and his duty to the order, often gives the creature away to a loving tiefling family in hopes they might better be able to control and cultivate the youngster. Unfortunately, the Tanar'riaur is beyond anyone's control, as it only understands pain and suffering and thrives when inflicting these attributes on others. Only the strongest of creatures, both physical and mental, could possibly hope to control one.

Once the Tanar'riaur reaches its teenage years, it often attempts to find an outlet for its violence, usually by working as a mercenary or cutthroat.

It's in the teenage years that the Tanar'riaur's sex drive begins to play a role in its violent behavior, driving it to attempt to mate with any creature it can. These tendencies towards sex and violence continue throughout its lifetime, causing great fear and hatred from those who know of it. Luckily for most creatures, the actions of the Tanar'riaur are extreme enough to keep it away from populated areas which have a reasonable level of law and order.

Without order, such as in warring regions, the Tanar'riaur has free reign to spread its type of terror. More than one peasant in a war torn region has opened his door to find a Tanar'riaur.

Although it's a little known fact, many tieflings are born from Tanar'riaur rapes in regions of war.

Combat: The Tanar'riaur attacks with its two front claws and its vicious bite. They eschew weapons and any type of armor, as they think it interferes with their lust -- both for battle and sex.

Opponents of the Tanar'riaur must save versus fear or flee in panic of the horrible beast.

Tanar'riaur magic resistance is similar to that of their fiendish parent.

Tanar'riaur have the spell-like powers of other tanar'ri, including darkness 15' radius, infravision, and teleport without error. They rarely use these abilities in their "carnal" pursuits, as they greatly enjoy the fear and pain they cause by breaking down doors and using force.

Tanar'riaur receive the immunities of their fathers:

Full Damage: acid, iron weapon, magic missile, silver weapon.

Half Damage: cold, fire (magical), gas.

No Damage: electricity, fire (non-magical), poison.

Tanar'riaur have no ability to gate in other creatures.

Habitat/Society: Tanar'riaur are welcome in all places where violence and defilement rule the day. A Tanar'riaur would never wish to live within bariaur society, although it may occasionally prey on its does.

Although Tanar'riaur are welcome in The Abyss, they would rather live elsewhere, where there are more opportunities to satisfy their lust.

Tanar'riaur are not very intelligent but they understand the need to work within organized groups to satisfy their destructive urges. They are the literal embodiment of the monster terrorizing the countryside, and without a group of soldiers or cutthroats to back up its heinous actions, a Tanar'riaur would live a short, brutish life.

Tanar'riaur care little for money or payment of any type, beyond the opportunity to wreak havoc on civilian populations. Often they will patiently fight battles against organized armies, knowing that success will result in the town or city being sacked and pillaged.

Tanar'riaur would never fight in The Blood War, as there are not enough rewards or opportunities.

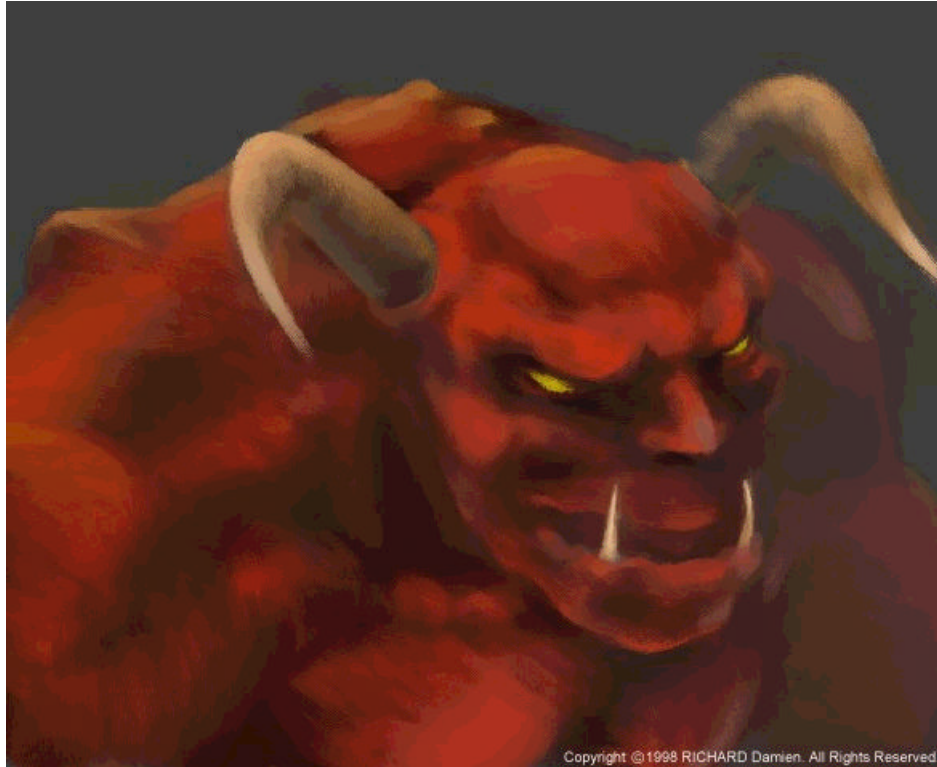
Ecology: Tanar'riaur live to satisfy their lusts for violence and sex. They are fully capable of reproduction and are thought to be extremely potent, as witnessed by the many Tanar'riaur offspring in occupied war zones.

Tanar'riaur have no allegiance to their Tanar'ri fathers or respect for their bariaur mothers. They also have no desire to visit or live in the Abyss, or associate with other Tanar'ri, unless it somehow fulfills their short-term goal of destruction and defilement.

Barzu

© 1999 by Gary L. Ray © 1999 Layout by Brannon Hollingsworth

Artwork © of RICHARD Damien.



Climate/Terrain:	Baator
Frequency:	Very rare
Organisation:	Solitary
Activity Cycle:	Any
Diet:	Omnivore
Intelligence:	Exceptional (9-16)
Treasure:	Nil
No. Appearing:	1
Armour Class:	6
Movement:	18
Hit Dice:	7
THACO:	13
No. of Attacks:	2
Damage/Attack:	1-12, or by weapon
Special Attacks:	See below
Special Defences:	See below
Magic Resistance:	30%
Size:	L (9' Tall)
Morale:	Elite (13-134)
XP Value:	3,000

"Damned if you do, damned if you don't ..."

-From a speech to the troops by a blood war commander

"Humans?" Malignus telepathed across the battlefield.

A legion of lemure, lined up in a slimy line of snot, oozed at the twenty or so thousand disorganized dretches who threw themselves haphazardly into the battle. The dretches died by the thousands, but their sheer numbers threatened to overwhelm the dull-witted blobs, who looked much the same whether dead or alive.

"Of course," Bachel thought back, "by the hundreds! It's my normal afternoon. How about elves?"

In a blind rage, an elite army of cambions, wielding glowing bastard swords in the dim light of the Abyss, sliced through the remaining lemures and eyed the grotesque nupperibo with a growing blood lust.

"Yes, elves too," thought Malignus, his fangs dripping green acid as he considered the various races he had defiled, "although I find them too passive. Maybe because they live so long – no spirit. Now a bariaur, that could be entertaining."

The cambions slashed into the vastly outnumbered nupperibo. Counter-attacking the cambions, several hundred barbazu waded into combat, their glaives clearing a path in front of them, leaving many a cambion without leg or arm.

"Ahh, a bariaur would be quite a treat, but their females would never go willingly. They won't even mate with centaur. I know, I tried to force them." Bachel thought as he cracked his whip enthusiastically at a nearby air wing of chasme, while flaming a group of lazy dretches that huddled terrified around his feet.

"You could force them, of course, but that's against our rules. And besides, they hurt oh so much more when they know they weren't forced."

The chaotic miasma of chasme descended from the commanding balor upon the distracted barbazu, who were busy hacking limbs from a frantically disintegrating legion of cambion.

"Oh yes?" thought Malignus, his bat wings stiffening with excitement, "I think I'm up for the challenge."

The sky momentarily grew black as the chasme bug creatures plunged their sharp pointed noses into the barbazu, who looked back fearfully to Malignus, their pit fiend leader, for further orders. But there were no further orders, this was the Blood War. You fight until you die, and if you survive today, rest assured, you'll live to die tomorrow.

Barzu are the offspring of a greater baatezu and a female bariaur. Only a baatezu with polymorph ability could ever hope to mate with a female bariaur, and only then in bariaur form. Barzu are always male. During the seventh month of pregnancy, the barzu rips through the mother in the middle of the night with its scimitar horns. The mother is killed and the Barzu usually steals away into the night, instinctively making its way to a portal to the lower planes. As these births are extremely rare, Bariaur flocks often believe this to be an animal attack on the mother, rather than a hellspawn birth.

Barzu are hideous creatures with a tough hairless hide, scimitar horns, fangs, and a physiology that requires a steady diet of fresh meat as well as plants.

The fiend who impregnates the doe is thought to appear as an irresistibly handsome stranger who promises excitement and intrigue. It is unclear whether this is actually true, or whether it's a folk story told to keep potentially promiscuous does in line.

Combat: The Barzu attacks viciously with its scimitar horns or by weapon. Most Barzu lack the discipline to learn weapon skills, and instead rely on their horns. Barzu who attack their opponent can do triple damage, but only receive one attack that round.

Opponents impaled should roll a save versus petrification or they remain stuck on the Barzu's horns, resulting in automatic hits the following round until a successful save is made.

Barzu magic resistance is similar to that of their fiendish parent.

Bariaur take half damage from cold, poison, and electrical attacks.

Barzu are never surprised.

Habitat/Society: Barzu, like many fiendish creatures such as cambion and alu-fiends, are considered freaks and outcasts. A Barzu is never accepted in Bariaur society and is considered a joke in baatezu circles.

Barzu are often killed young if they make it to Baator, which has no place for such an outcast in its rigidly ordered social structure. Those that aren't killed outright either flee back to The Outlands or are recruited and secretly held by greater baatezu for unauthorized missions and assassinations.

There is a stiff penalty for even the most powerful baatezu who harbors a barzu, but the risks are offset by the success rate of the barzu, who seem to possess a high degree of stubbornness inherited from their bariaur mothers.

Those barzu fleeing to The Outlands from Baator, or those on their way to Baator through The Outlands, may meet up with a wandering band of Barzu who live around Ribcage. This band, known to Outland bariaur as Spagon (spawn), hover around Ribcage basking in the Baatoran planar energies that emanate from the gate town. The flock is sometimes utilized by visiting fiends who wish to accomplish acts of revenge and murder in The Outlands without links back to themselves. Many of these acts are against competing fiends, or mortals who reneged on their agreements or "bargains."

Payment to Spagon is usually in the form of a promise. Sometimes this promise involves a homeland in Baator, something promised for centuries to the Spagon, but never fully delivered. The promise may also be revenge against a group that has wronged a barzu, such as the flock of the barzu's mother.

As with most bargains with fiends, the bargainer is never satisfied with the end result. For example, barzu returning to Baator are likely to find their homeland a concentration camp for hungry fiends.

Occasionally a Barzu is born that is not evil, although its environment surely drives it towards that end. Like other outcasts, they will remain doomed to a miserable existence.

Ecology: Barzu can reproduce, although the offspring will kill the mother, much like the Barzu. Most hybrid creatures would likely have little to do with a barzu.

How the Bariaur Gained Their Spirit from the Gods

Part 1

Loki stood, rubbing his sore lips before the Father of the Gods, Odin, and the great God of Thunder, Thor. Thor rocked back on his heels, stifling a laugh at Loki's strange predicament. After Brock the dwarf brought judgement upon Loki, it was declared that Loki should have his lips sealed for a time to prevent him from doing mischief. Now Odin had need of Loki and his slick tongue, so he ordered the leather thong removed from Loki's mouth.



"There is a task that I have meant to accomplish, which now requires your unique skills." Odin said to Loki. "The gods have given spirit to the men, the elves and even the twisted dwarves who live under the mountains. But when it was time to give spirit to the goat-men, the bariaur, they were nowhere to be found. This is our fault, I know, as we did not give the bariaur a home, as we did the elves, men and dwarves. Nowhere in Midgard were the bariaur to find a homeland, while the elves had the glens and forests, the dwarves the underground and the men most of the earth. When it was time to dispense this important gift, even the gods themselves were unable to locate the wandering flocks of bariaur."

"Now I have need of these mystic creatures. I sense the coming of Ragnarök, the Final Battle between the giants and the gods. I have made my pick of the men of Midgard and have trained the worthy ones to be great warriors and kings. The elves also, have been hand selected by Frey so as to cultivate their best leaders. Even amongst the dwarves, Tyr has succeeded in finding a just and compassionate leader amid that hard-headed race. Now it is time to bring the bariaur into the fold. I believe we shall find them invaluable in the Final Battle and I have chosen one to lead their kind when the giants attack from Jötunheim. You will find this one, named Shek, and bring him the gift that was brought the other races." During the talk, Loki, a master of manipulation, began to smile with his cracked red lips. He had perceived Odin's need for his service. And where there was need, there was reward and usually much fun and mischief to be had as well.

"Loki, do not think I am sending you down so that you may play amongst the goat-men." Odin said. "This is a very serious matter, one in which you may yet redeem yourself. I warn you, if you fail in this task, you will not again make your way back home over Bifröst, the Rainbow Bridge."



The smile fell from Loki's face and re-appeared on the face of Thor, who openly disliked the meddlesome god. Thor knew that a life outside of Asgard would be agony for the gregarious Loki. Gods who leave the realm of the gods tend to lead lonely, solitary lives in the wilderness. Loki would surely succeed in this task, with such a high price for failure.

Odin took a step forward towards Loki and removed a golden ring from his finger. "This is Jekthrudner, the spirit ring. It is forged from many fine strands of the spirits of the Æsar (gods) and the Asyniur (goddesses). It was first given to the elves, then the dwarves (who fought the elves upon receiving it) and finally to the men, who cannot seem to stop fighting each other. Now you will give it to the bariaur, who will stop the fighting by uniting all the creatures of Midgard together against the giants."

"I will do as you ask," spoke Loki.

Odin smiled and stood up straight with his eagle helm gleaming in the sunlight, glad that this task was to be done.

"But first, I will need something to help me accomplish this task."

Odin let out a sigh. Nothing was ever easy with Loki. There was always negotiation and clarification, as Loki's own mind worked in the most devious of ways. Thor sneered at Loki, his knuckles white on his hammer Mjöllnir.

"You have not been able to find these bariaur, am I correct?" Loki said.

"Yes, yes, that is what I said. Each time someone approaches, the stealthy bariaur slip away," Odin responded indignantly.

"Then I request the Falcon Dress of Frigga, that I might sneak up on the bariaur as if I were a bird," Said Loki.

Odin thought for a moment. His wife Frigga would be furious if he gave Loki her much loved dress. This was too important though. If Loki needs the dress for his sneaky plans, then Frigga would surely submit. Odin wanted to know no more about such activities though, as they were without honor, no matter how noble the intentions behind them.

"Very well, Loki," Odin said. "You will have the dress."

"I believe my wife may have some jewelry that would match such an outfit," Thor taunted.

"Yes, the magical golden choker named "Gerrhoggin" that Sif keeps in her jewelry box by the bed might be a good match," Loki calmly retorted.

Thor, confused and angry that Loki knew his wife's sleeping chamber, took a step towards the smaller god. Odin reached his arm out and stopped Thor's approach, not wanting to turn this already unpleasant matter into a battle scene.

Odin angrily pointed at Loki and said, "Go now and return on the morrow, when you will receive the dress. Fly to Midgard to bring the spirits of the gods to the worthy bariaur Shek. I warn you however, if you attempt to return without accomplishing your task, you shall burst into flames and be forever destroyed upon your first step onto Bifröst. Now be gone with you."

How the Bariaur Gained Their Spirit from the Gods

Part 2

Dressed in Frigga's Falcon Dress, Loki stood at the peak of Bifröst, The Rainbow Bridge. Looking away from Asgard, Loki peered out towards Midgard. He saw the elven glades, the city of men and the great mountains, under which lived the dwarves. Beyond Midgard lay the Realm of the Giants, Jötunheim. Before proceeding across The Rainbow Bridge, Loki took a final look back towards Asgard, The City of the Gods, his home. He wondered if he would ever see those fine palaces and feast halls again. Loki proceeded across the bridge, the only way in and out of Asgard. If he were to return across this bridge without fulfilling his mission, he would surely burst into flames, as Odin warned. Taking wing and flying across Midgard, Loki searched for the elusive bariaur flocks. He flew and flew, stopping to rest on occasion and then taking flight again. This went on for months, nearly a year. Then one day, in despair, Loki alighted atop a tall oak tree to rest and think about his predicament. Were the gods playing a trick on him? Were the bariaur real or was this a deceit to make him leave Asgard? Surely with all his trickery and lies it would be fair play for the gods to have the final laugh. It would have been a trick he would have been proud of. Yet, it was not their style. It was without honor.



"It is no trick," a little blue jay spoke.

Loki looked up, startled. "What? A talking bird?"

"You question talking birds, dress-wearing god?" the bird said, beginning to laugh in a high-pitched chirp.

"Yes, but I never spoke, you read my mind!" Loki said.

"Yes, yes, yes, so I am not an ordinary bird, and you are not an ordinary bird, so what of it? Do you want to find the bariaur or not?" the bird said.

"Please help me find the bariaur, little blue jay, I have a great gift to give them," Loki said, for once with complete honesty and sincerity.

"If you wish to find the bariaur, you must act like the bariaur," said the little bird, and the bird quickly flew away.

Loki was now alone with no idea how to find the bariaur, except for the little bird's advice. Loki flew down from the treetops and thought again about what the little bird said. He jumped around, ate a piece of grass and wandered around the glen, but it was no use. He felt no closer to finding the elusive bariaur. If he were to act like a bariaur, he would need to think like a bariaur. And to think like a bariaur would mean... becoming a bariaur.

Loki's body grew and stretched. His feet became hooves and a great set of horns emerged from his head. His skin grew a thick pelt and a bob tail appeared on his elongated back. Loki, sometimes called "Loki the Shapeshifter," had completely transformed himself into a bariaur.

"Now, to think like a bariaur," Loki thought, "but before that, I need nourishment. It is difficult being such a large creature, especially after spending so much time as a bird. Just moving about makes me hungry and all my stomachs are empty."

Loki knelt down and ate from the long grasses. He was famished from his transformation and he quickly cleared the entire forest glen. To the south lay a faint path, rich with tasty weeds. Loki followed the path, winding his way through the forest, feeding as he went.

Making his way through the forest, Loki found that the path eventually faded away and disappeared. Yet, the trail of nourishing weeds continued among the trees. Loki following the weeds for many hours, eating the succulent greens as he went along, until his hunger slowly faded. Satiated, Loki fell asleep against a tall mossy tree.

Loki awoke to the sound of a flute. It came from the distance, farther to the south. "Elves!" Loki thought, "Maybe they know the location of the bariaur!" He quickly jumped up and trotted through the forest.

Every time the music seemed to get closer, it faded away again. Loki, distressed, hung his head in misery.

That was when he noticed the ground. The weeds that he had been following were gone, eaten away down to an inch of the ground. Whoever he was following was following the weeds, eating them along the way. Loki raced through the forest, following the faint trail of eaten weeds. Eventually Loki burst into a clearing, where he found dozens of tents, a large camp fire, and hundreds of bariaur! Loki was elated. After over a year, he finally discovered the bariaur. A buck named Tirag walked up to Loki and welcomed him to the tribe. "I am looking for the bariaur known as Shek." Loki said. "Ah, Shek is my brother, and the leader of our flock. Why do you wish to see him?" Tirag said, quite suspicious of this stranger who knew his brother's name. "I am a leader of a distant flock of great warrior bariaur," Loki boasted, finally feeling a bit more comfortable in his new form. "I bring greetings to the bariaur of this region." Tirag, even more suspicious of this stranger, said "That may be so, but let me speak with my brother on your behalf. I'm sure he'll meet with you." Loki agreed to this and Tirag went off to speak with Shek. After a long discussion, the bariaur brothers, suspicious by nature, and even more so with Loki's strange behavior, decided they wanted nothing to do with this boastful outsider. They devised a plan to rid themselves of Loki by challenging him to a contest, one they were unlikely to lose. Tirag returned to Loki. "We have a tradition among our flock," Tirag said to Loki. "You may speak with our leader, Shek, if you can best him in a contest." Loki thought about this. Although he wasn't as physically strong as Thor or Odin, he was still a god, with god strength and god dexterity and god abilities that made him stand well above mortal creatures. "Very well," Loki said, his god-like mannerisms of superiority finally returning, "name the contest."



Tirag smiled and motioned for Loki to follow. They wound their way through the camp which, upon closer inspection, held many thousands of bariaur rather than the initial hundred or so that Loki had first noticed. Then Tirag led Loki away from the camp and into the forest, where a small clearing contained a tree with crushed berries forming a red target in its center. As Loki was taking in this sight, a noise whistled overhead and a spear plunged itself into the tree, directly in the center of the target. The spear emerged from the other side of the tree, obviously thrown with great force. It was an amazing feat. The spear was thrown from the camp, hundreds of yards away. Loki could barely make out the camp in the distance. A speck in the distance looked like it may be a bariaur, but Loki could not be sure. The bariaur who threw this spear was surely a warrior of great prowess. "If you can beat Shek in a contest of spear throwing, you may have an audience with him," Tirag said. Loki knew right away he had no chance. There was no way he could best this bariaur champion at such a contest. He was doomed to spend eternity among the trees and hills, never to see the magnificent palaces and halls of Asgard again. Loki bowed his head in defeat.

"There's no shame in turning down this contest, stranger," Tirag said. "No one has yet beaten my brother in the spear toss."

Tirag's words grated on Loki, who saw them as an insult and an affront.

"I will return in one week's time and shall beat Shek in the spear toss," Loki said.

"Very well, stranger, we shall see you in one week's time," Tirag said, thinking that this was the last of the arrogant stranger. Tirag began walking back towards the camp, leaving Loki to find his way back to whence he came.

Loki sat and wondered for a while. He could not return to Asgard to retain the help of the gods for this task. In other circumstances, he might enlist Thor in this contest, possibly changing him into his bariaur form so that he would win the contest. Or Loki might use Freya's magic to guide a spear to its target. No, this time Loki was on his own. But how would he beat this bariaur at his own game?

Then the thought struck him. The dwarves! They must have a magic spear that could allow him to win this contest. They made Thor's hammer. They must have a magic spear.

Turning back into his true form, Loki donned the magic dress and flew towards the mountains.

"Surely not every dwarf is still angry with me," Loki thought.

Shek Drawn by Stephen Cryan

How the Bariaur Gained Their Spirit from the Gods

Part 3

Loki flew for many miles until he could see the orange glow of the forges and volcanoes among a range of tall mountains. The pungent smell of sulfur assaulted his senses and the heat brought a sweat to his body, even from many miles away. This was the dwarven realm of Svarheim.



Loki landed among the mountains, near an open forge. A cave could be seen hidden among the brush. Loki entered the cave and made his way down through the mountain, into the dwarven realm of Svarheim.

The cavern twisted and turned with many tunnels branching off the main corridor. Any creature entering this cavern would surely become lost, ending up as an evening meal for the dark creatures lurking around these corners. Loki had the advantage, as he had traveled these corridors before, many years ago. He headed for the one person in all this dark realm that could make him a spear that would win him the contest with Shek the bariaur. Loki owed this dwarf repayment for past deeds, although repayment may be too kind a word for the hostility that Loki felt for the twisted little creature.

Loki entered a side cavern and found the dwarf he was looking for, hard at work, concentrating as he worked the bellows of a great forge while another dwarf pounded a hammer against a newly formed broad sword.

"Ah, Brock my old friend," Loki spoke to the gnarled dwarf. "I am in need of your services."

Brock looked up suddenly with a start, momentarily stopping his work on the bellows. The dwarf pounding with the hammer threw the malformed sword into the forge with disgust and began screaming at Brock, who had apparently done something very wrong.

"You accursed Æser snake!" Brock angrily screamed at Loki. "What brings you here to again cause my brother and I pain and suffering?"

Brock knew Loki from long ago, when Loki boasted to the gods in Asgard that only the dwarves that he knew could make fine magical wonders. All other dwarves, according to Loki, were simpletons incapable of making the most basic creations. Brock caught Loki in his boasting and, with his brother Sindri, was able to best Loki at his own game, bringing to Asgard creations much finer than Loki could produce. Brock called for Loki's head in Asgard when Loki lost the contest. However, Odin would not allow a god to be slain within Asgard, so Brock suggested that Loki's lying mouth be stitched with a piece of leather.

This was several decades ago, and although Brock was still suspicious of Loki, he hoped he had learned his lesson.

"Please Brock, my friend, do not be angry with me," Loki said. "I am on a mission from Odin himself. I am in need of a great magic spear, like Gungnir, the spear the Northern Dwarves made for Odin. I know from our last meeting that you and your brother make superior craft, surely not as fine as the Northern Dwarves, but you show good effort nonetheless. I'm sure... "

"The Northern Dwarves know nothing of metallurgical processes and proper runic incantations. Their craft is nothing in comparison to ours. I would think you would have had time to think about this with your mouth stitched up for these past three decades," Brock angrily blurted.

"So you would fashion a spear for the gods as I have mentioned?" Loki smiled, knowing he had found a way to manipulate Brock.

"Our skill is indeed as you remember it and we are always interested in impressing the gods," Brock said.

"But such work does not come without a price, especially to one such as yourself."

"Do you mean that you would charge the gods themselves for your work?" Loki asked incredulously.

"For the gods, I would be honored to make such a spear. But for you, it will cost dearly." Brock said.

Loki looked at Brock and saw that he was serious. He had indeed treated Brock poorly those many years ago and he was not surprised that Brock required payment for his services.

"Very well," Loki said. "What is your price?"

Brock put his hand to his chin and scrunched his forehead as he thought long and hard about the price for this magic spear. He wanted to make this difficult for Loki, maybe impossible. Brock tilted his head back and a smile ran across his old, cragged face. He had thought of his recompense.

"Bring me the magic Horn of Draught of the giants," Brock said, "So that we no longer must trade with the men for mead and ale."

Loki thought of this for a moment, pretending that the request was a surprise to him. In fact, Loki had dealt with the dwarves many times, and the conversation inevitably made its way to the Horn of Draught, the "Holy Grail" of all dwarfdom.

It was also the dwarves who brewed the Magic Mead which, upon drinking, brought wisdom both to giants and to men. But this was another matter, as the mead was created from the blood of wise men and was becoming a rare commodity as the dwarves began entering the world of light on the earth's surface. In any case, drink was the vice of all dwarves, one which always threatened to undo them.

In addition to their own Magic Mead, the dwarves had a nearly insatiable thirst for the fermented drink made by men. They would often trade powerful magic weapons and armor for a few barrels of ale or mead. If not for the trade in drink and weapons, the dwarves would surely spend their time making war with the elves or scheming with the giants. Loki also knew that the magic Horn of Draught might destroy the dwarves, who already had a terrible weakness for alcohol. When shipments of ale arrived from human settlements, entire dwarven cities would spend weeks drinking until the alcohol was gone, the streets littered with unconscious dwarven bodies. The magic Horn of Draught, which poured fermented drink continuously, without ever stopping, would likely be the end of the dwarves.

The smile on Loki's face widened as he realized the destruction the magic drinking horn would bring to the twisted dwarves, the nasty creatures who were responsible for his mouth being sealed shut for nearly thirty years! Loki's only pang of regret was that he hadn't thought up the scheme on his own.

"It is a small price to pay, dwarf," Loki said. "You shall have the magic drinking horn of the giants and forever more you shall have your heart's content of fermented drink."

"Very well, Brock said. "Return when you have the magic Horn of Draught."

Dwarven Kingdoms of Krynn by Larry Elmore

How the Bariaur Gained Their Spirit from the Gods

Part 4

Loki left the dwarven realm of Svartheim and flew away with Frigga's Falcon Dress. He flew over the fiery mountains, past the fields and houses of Midgard and onward towards the icy mountain ranges of Jötunheim. Here the giants lived, plotting their attacks against the Æser and their eventual takeover of Asgard.

Loki flew down towards a distant house that he recognized from a previous journey. Here lived a giant named Thrym. Thrym was a cunning giant, although not too bright. Loki had fond memories of Thrym. Once when in Jötunheim, Thrym secretly stole Thor's hammer Miölnir. To get the hammer back, Loki devised a humorous plan in which Thor dressed in a bridal gown, pretending to be Freya, Thrym's new wife.



"Ah, happy memories," Loki thought. Now it was he who wore a dress and came in need of an important item. Loki landed in front of the house and knocked on the huge door. The door opened, and there stood a ten foot tall, muscular giant. An old hag rocked in a chair, inside the house. Loki knew the hag to be Thrym's mother.

"What's this?!!!" Thrym said, "The snake Loki returns to steal something else from me?!!!"

"Now be calm Thrym, old friend," Loki said tentatively, "I'm sure we can come to some sort of arrangement over your past losses. I see you rebuilt the house."

"Yes, after you and Thor destroyed it! There is nothing you have that I want, and I certainly don't want you as my wife, you snake." Thrym said, pointing to Loki's flowing falcon dress. "Do all the Aser wear the clothes of women now, or just the deceitful and unjust?"

"I do not wish to bring up our troubled past with you, Thrym. As you know you took Miölnir through your own deceit and cunning. Can you blame me for getting it back through the same means?" Loki asked.

"Very well, Loki," Thrym said, closing the door behind him so as not to disturb his mother. "What is it that you want from me? I am very poor and have barely enough to eat."

"I wish you to get me the magical Horn of Draught." Loki said, ignoring Thrym's disingenuous claims of poverty. Thrym was a favorite among the giants, especially the king, Skymir.

"Ho, ho, ho," Thrym laughed, "And how am I to get thee the pride of all Jötunheim?"

"It is simple Thrym," Loki said, "We shall negotiate. There must be something that you and the giants want that I can give you?"

Thrym raised his hand and scratched his head. Several buzzing insects hiding in Thrym's hair, disturbed by his gesture of thought, flew away, narrowly missing the dodging Loki.

"I cannot think of anything that you have that I want." Thrym said. "I still want Freya though."

"I am sorry Thrym," Loki said sadly, "but I cannot return to Asgard to honor your request. I have been forbidden entrance until I fulfill an important mission."
"And what mission is that?" Thrym said, growing curious over anything that brought Loki unhappiness.
"I am to bring the bariaur the gift of self-awareness." Loki said.
"You mean those huge, stupid goat creatures?" Thrym asked incredulously.
"Yes, you know the ones." Loki said.
"What will you do with these barriers once they have this gift?" Thrym asked.
"Bariaur, not barrier, although they're not good for much else." Loki joked. "Odin will enlist the creatures in the battle of Ragnarök."
"Ohhh reallly," Thrym said, with a dim spark of an idea in his eye. "I think I may know what you can offer us in exchange for the magical Horn of Draught. Come inside my friend and we shall talk."
Thrym opened the door, holding it open for Loki to enter his home. They sat down at Thrym's giant table and Thrym laid out his plan. There was much head shaking and negotiating but Loki and Thrym eventually came upon a plan. In the morning, they made their way to Utgard, where the two described their scheming to the King of the Giants, Skrymir.
Skrymir agreed with Thrym's and Loki's deal, except that Skrymir also demanded the Falcon Dress in addition to the arrangement made with Loki. Although Skrymir and none of the giants could use the dress, he was certain of one thing. If Loki negotiated a deal, there was bound to be hidden costs somewhere in the details that would be taken out on the giants. The dress would surely cover these hidden costs, Skrymir reasoned.



It was with much regret that the giants allowed Loki to leave with their magical Horn of Draught. The horn produced a never-ending stream of mead or wine, depending on the wishes of the holder of the horn. It was the pride of all the giants, the envy of all the dwarves, and probably the only thing that kept Ragnarök at bay. The loss of the Horn of Draught did not bode well for any of the races. With the giant horn around his neck, Loki made his way through the mountains, to the border of Jötunheim. The journey took several months, and the temperature thankfully grew warmer as Loki left the frozen lands of Jötunheim and returned to the fiery dwarven realm of Svartheim. He made his way back into the mountains to the deepest of forges.
Upon seeing Loki again, Brock gaped in shock, pausing from his work at the bellows. Brock's brother screamed at him angrily in that strange dwarven tongue, tossing a nearly completed battle axe blade into the roaring fire. It was no matter, as the brothers now had a much more important item to craft. And after that, many, many, drunken evenings.

Loki by Uli Schäfer

Giant by Kaaz

How the Bariaur Gained Their Spirit from the Gods

Part 5

Brock patiently worked the bellows. He pumped rhythmically in an unconscious pattern that all dwarves know since birth. Maybe it is the heartbeat of a dwarf's mother that he knows so instinctively. Maybe there's a mystical link with the fire. In any case, all dwarves instinctively know their way around the forge.

In the past, Brock and his brother Sindri crafted amazing creations, fit for the gods themselves. In fact, it was these amazing creations that muzzled Loki for nearly three decades when his bragging finally caught up with him.

Today the brother's amazing creation would be Hodjur, a spear enchanted with the most powerful of dwarven magic.

As Brock worked the bellows, Sindri pulled a bar of iron from the fire. With his special hammer, the same that formed so many wondrous creations, Sindri began pounding the bar of iron into the shape of a spearhead. They chanted as they worked:

*"Work with zeal as hammers peal!
Melt, anneal, and pound the steel!"*

The brothers both knew that their rhythm was critical at this point. Brock grabbed a hammer, similar in appearance to his brother's. In perfect unison, like wings of the same bird, the brothers took turns pounding the iron. The connection between the brothers was strong, since only minds in complete sync could shape such a creation together.

Meanwhile, Loki sat atop a mountain, not wanting to spend another idle day beneath the earth. The brothers had worked for nearly a month on Hodjur. Each time they neared completion, some minor imperfection or error in the magic incantation ruined the spear.



Each one of the ruined spears was fit for a king. Such was the talent and skill of the dwarves. But each of the spears was not fit for a god, and the brothers were intent on making a god's spear, as the payment for the spear rivaled anything their own talents could create. Loki had brought the dwarves the giant's Horn of Draught.

Next to gold and beautiful gemstones, dwarves loved alcohol more than anything. No longer would they have to trade with the gangly men for their barrels of mead and ale. No longer would they need to trade their treasures for spirits that dried up in a matter of days. Now they could hoard their riches, drink their fill and live a contented life. In fact, with so much gold and so many workers idled from the lack of trade, a large standing army might be in the plans. Armies, of course, need enemies to fight, and those men had been robbing the dwarves blind for ages. Dwarves weren't stupid. They knew they paid ten times the going rate for those oak barrels of mead and ale.

Back at the forge, Brock and Sindri finished pounding the spearhead. With a pair of tongs, Brock placed the spearhead back into the fire. Sindri waved his hands over the spearhead and mumbled a magic incantation:

*"The spear named Hodjur
By the dwarves is made,
Shall it strike from afar,
those who murder and betray.
For the gods was it crafted
and even they shall it slay."*

Upon uttering the final words of the incantation, the fire surged upwards in brilliant blue display. It was this final event that marked the perfect completion of Hodjur. The spearhead was affixed upon a pole of mithril, perfectly weighted and balanced for throwing or hand-to-hand combat. The pole was forged first, which took but a day. The real work, as any dwarf will tell you, was in the forging of the head.

The incantation spoken by Sindri was especially powerful, and accounted for nearly half of the past failures in creating the spear. Not knowing what the spear would be used for, only that Loki would possess it, Sindri made a point of enchanting it to destroy those who plot to deceive and murder. Moreover, Hodjur was also capable of killing a god.

"Maybe Loki himself would someday be slain by the spear," thought Sindri.

Later that day, Loki returned to the forge to check on the progress of the Hodjur. Satisfied with the weapon, Loki removed the Horn of Draught from his neck and gave it to the dwarves, completing their deal. The two brothers immediately began to squabble over the horn. Loki left as the brothers grabbed their hammers, apparently intent on killing each other for possession of the magic horn. Although the supply of drink was limitless from the horn, its power created the desire to possess the horn in those who drunk from it.



With spear in hand, Loki transformed himself again into a bariaur buck and proceeded back to where he last saw the bariaur flock. There was one more task yet unfulfilled. Stopping for a moment, Loki picked a large bag full of mulberry leaves. Then he proceeded to search for the bariaur, so he could present them the magic ring from the gods. The bariaur race would receive its spirit soon enough.

Later that week, Loki picked up the trail of the bariaur. He followed the trail until it led to a forest clearing, similar to the one where he met Tirag and the bariaur flock.

Indeed, it turned out that the flock was the same, and Tirag, upon seeing Loki return, came out to greet him.

"So stranger," Tirag said, "I see that you have returned, and with a shiny spear no less."

"I have come to challenge Shek," Loki said. "I apologize for taking so long, but I returned to my flock for my spear."

"Why you weren't carrying your weapon when we first met is beyond my understanding," Tirag said. Normally this would have been a great insult to the average bariaur, but Loki went on as if he had said nothing.

"Shall we begin?" said Loki. Loki wanted nothing more than to finish this business so that he could make his way back home. He had spent too many cold nights on the stone floor of the dwarven stronghold or in the coarse company of the giants.

Tirag, still suspicious but willing to let Loki lose against his great brother, turned and galloped farther into the forest. Again, like before, there was a tree with a target crudely painted with crushed berries. Tirag galloped back towards the camp, with Loki following behind. Soon the sight of the target was lost in the distance. Tirag stopped by a tent where several spears lay against a tree.

Tirag poked his head into the tent and said a few whispered words that Loki could not make out. A large, muscular bariaur emerged from the tent. His muscles were large and his skin well tanned. His pelt was of pure white, unlike the mixed colors of his flock.

"Surely this great buck is Shek," Loki thought.

"Welcome stranger," the buck spoke. "I am Shek, leader of the bariaur. I apologize if we inconvenienced you. Generally we do not allow visitors."

"That's alright," Loki said. "Shall we finish this contest so that we may discuss more important matters?" Shek scrunched his eyebrows in consternation at this strange bariaur. Most bariaur take contests deadly seriously, especially those that may mean banishment from the flock, as this one did if Loki were to lose.

"Very well, stranger," Shek said. "You do understand that you may never return if you lose this contest?"

"Of course," Loki said. "Such is your custom. So would you like to go first?" Loki showed no sign of anxiety or fear, as he had perfect confidence in the abilities of the dwarves.

"Alright," said Shek. "From here you must hit the target on the tree. He who comes closest to the center wins the contest. Do you understand?"

"Yes, yes," Loki said impatiently, "Target, spear, center, the usual."

Shek was taken aback a bit by Loki's impatience and he started to suspect trickery. His brother Tirag had gone down towards the tree to ensure that the contest remain fair. Shek himself could see the tree; such was his vision, although no one else in the camp could see so far.

Shek took a spear lying against the tree. He balanced the spear in his left hand, seeing that it was straight and not damaged from previous tosses. Aiming towards the forest, Shek took a single step and hurled the spear. It sailed straight and true and dug itself deep into the center of the target on the tree.

Shek exhaled and rubbed his hands together. "Alright stranger, now it's your turn."

Loki gave a half smile and grabbed his spear. With the motion of his arm alone, he hurled the spear in the direction of the forest, as he could not see the tree or the target. At first it seemed like the spear was wildly off course, but halfway along its trajectory, the wind must have taken it, as it corrected itself back towards the forest. Loki's spear, Hodjur, shattered Shek's spear as it also entered the target. Shek's spear disintegrated into an explosion of smoking wood, a sliver of which embedded itself in the Tirag's left arm.

Shek was amazed at such prowess, yet confused by the mannerisms of such a strange bariaur. He bowed to Loki, accepting him into the flock and dismissing his feelings about the strange buck, as he had proven himself in a sacred contest.

As evening approached, the bariaur built a fire so as to keep the night creatures at bay. They smoked herbs and recounted the day's events, including the defeat of Shek by Loki. Loki laughed and joked with the bariaur flock. Then he pulled out his bag of mulberry leaves.

"In my flock," Loki said, "it is customary to celebrate by inhaling the fragrant scent of the mulberry." Loki emptied the bag of leaves onto the fire. The leaves smoked and sizzled in the fire, creating a fragrant cloud that enveloped those around the fire. Some of the bariaur coughed, but most of them smiled, accepting the strange customs of this visiting bariaur.

"I would like to present your great leader Shek with a golden ring that my father gave me," Loki said.

"Please consider this a token of the friendship and honorable relations between our flocks."

Loki took the ring that Odin gave him from his finger and offered it to Shek. Shek smiled and took the ring from Loki, placing it upon his middle finger of his left hand.

"Thank you, my friend," Shek said.

Shek felt a strange feeling overcome him. A great fire within him had been lit, and his mind and heart were racing. He felt energy, power, desire, and freedom. His spirit was upraised and he broke out into song over his newfound joy and happiness.

The bariaur sang around the fire all that evening. The sun slowly set and the moon emerged from the horizon. The bariaur were truly happy, as if they discovered an entirely new world, a new way of being, in fact, maybe true being itself.

It was in that spirit of joy and happiness and limitless possibilities that they drifted off to sleep. It was a sound, contented sleep, and no one was awake to see hundreds giants from Jötunheim surround the camp, no one except Loki.

Dancing Dwarves, by Johan S. Carlsson

How the Bariaur Gained Their Spirit from the Gods

Part 6

Odin sat atop Hlidskjalf, his watchtower that looked over all creation. Each day since Loki left, many months ago, Odin came here and looked out. Odin wondering where Loki had gone to and whether he was able to find the elusive bariaur. Where in Midgard could they be? He had faith in Loki, as he knew the god would never choose to live away from his home.

As Odin sat on his throne, looking out over the world, his heart skipped a beat, as if a part of his spirit were being drawn out of his chest. He smiled at this, for this feeling had only occurred to him three times before. It was a sign that Loki had met with success. The bariaur had received their spirits, comprised of threads of the spirits of all the great gods of Asgard.

These were dark times, yet Odin allowed himself a brief smile. In a short while, maybe a few decades, he would receive word that the bariaur were approaching the rainbow bridge. They, like the other creatures of the world who were gifted with a spirit, would seek the goodwill of the gods and seek their support and understanding. Like a good father, Odin would be there to correct and guide the bariaur, as the gods had done for elves, men and even the dwarves. Odin's smile was that of a father, who just received word that a son had been born.

The bariaur would worship the Æser, paying their respects like good children. Soon they would meet their brothers, the men and also their cousins, the elves. Soon they would know the dwarves and grow to fear and despise the giants. Eventually, during the time of Ragnarök, the bariaur would fight and die alongside the Æser.

Meanwhile, in the bariaur camp, the giants had surrounded and subdued the sleeping bariaur. The giants bound the bariaur together with iron chains, attaching them all in a long row, their right legs shackled to a larger chain. The chain itself was magical, so that only an enchanted weapon could sever the links of chain.

The giants roused the bariaur from their sleep, all except Loki, who was already making his way back to Asgard. The fact of the missing guest was not lost on the bariaur, especially Shek and his brother Tirag. In fact, the giants made a point of bragging of Loki's betrayal, as it took quite a coordinated effort between Loki and the giants to capture the bariaur.

The final signal had been the mulberry leaves that Loki had tossed onto the fire. It alerted the giants to the location of the bariaur camp. It was an ingenious signal that Loki himself deserved credit for. Before this day, the bariaur had no reason to know fear from predators. Now their innocence would be forever lost, replaced by a sense of vigilance and caution.

The giants began marching the bariaur towards Jötunheim, their chains clinking as they walked. Those that resisted were killed or beaten. For the most part, the bariaur were still docile creatures. Shek and those who had sat around him the night before were dealing with the mixed emotions and newfound sense of purpose that they were feeling for the first time in their lives. The spirit ring worked much like a disease. A show of bariaur spirit was infectious; a game, a cry, even a laugh would transmit the spirit energy to others of the flock. However, there was little to celebrate now, and most of the bariaur remained quiet, content to be herded along.

For Shek and his brother, there was much to think about during that long walk to Jötunheim. The gods had betrayed them. The giants had enslaved them. The men and elves and dwarves were nowhere to be seen, as they likely had no interest in helping the bariaur. For Shek, the long journey to Jötunheim formed the basis of his spirit, the spirit that eventually spread to all bariaur.

Freedom, fierce independence – even from the gods, enjoyment of life, the virtues of a nomadic existence, and a deep hatred for the giants were all branded onto the bariaur spirit from that long march to Jötunheim. Later, some bariaur would question these heartfelt desires, not knowing from whence they came. Time and again, the flock's shamans would point to that march to Jötunheim and all that occurred during the march as an explanation.

Many bariaur, maybe half, did not finish the march. They died along the way, either unable to keep up or killed by the giants because they became too unruly. The bariaur spirit grew and spread during the march. They sang songs of freedom and liberation, they stomped their feet together as they walked, they even stopped fighting back against the giants – as they recognized that their spirits could not be broken, even if their bodies could. They would get their chance to escape. They were certain of this.

The temperature started to change as the enslaved bariaur were herded up the mountains towards Jötunheim. They had been marching for nearly two days without stopping. Some of the bariaur were lame from walking and from disease. They stumbled along, wondering if their next step would be their last. Often bariaur were forced to drag their fallen companions until the next rest stop. Then, suddenly they stopped in a clearing.

The giants came around, double checking the chains that held the bariaur. They spat insults at any bariaur who looked them in the eye or in the slightest bit resisted. Once the chains were checked, the giants walked away from the bariaur, and they set up camp nearby. The giants continually complained about the smell of the bariaur, calling them vile animals. Each night they would make a point of sleeping upwind of the bariaur.

Shek had decided that this night would be different. He would die tonight, for he had decided that he would no longer be a slave to the giants. Shek spotted a rock nearby where he slept. With the breeze blowing away from the giants, he figured he may have a chance to break his bonds and escape. In the middle of the night, as the giants fire grew low, Shek stretched his body until he had the rock in his hand. He crouched over his trapped leg, so as to absorb as much sound as possible. Then he began to strike the rock against the iron chain.

Shek was shocked to find that the chain was never even scratched from the rock strikes. He knew that only enchanted metal held such properties. A great fear welled in Shek's heart. He had to escape, his entire being screamed out for freedom. Nothing, not a chain, not a giant, not even a god would ever come between him and freedom.

Shek's fear transformed to anger, a blind rage that knew one purpose: freedom. He yanked against the chain frantically, his body no longer under the control of his mind. The chain dug deeper into his leg, but he was still trapped.

Then Shek did the unspeakable. With his sharp scimitar horns, he attacked his own leg, ripping it to shreds. By this time his companions along the chain line were watching him in horror as Shek dismembered his own body in his lust for freedom.

Finally Shek's hoof lay on the ground, separate from his leg. He was free! His anger and rage subsided and he began to think about the rest of the flock. They too would be free, he vowed. Already, his freedom spirit was spiritually echoing down the line of enslaved bariaur. If Shek were not able to free the bariaur soon, they would surely die in their chains.

Shek, bleeding and limping, quietly made his way to the giant's camp. He searched around and finally found the giant he was looking for, Hrymer, a brutal giant in charge of discipline and order. This giant often released bariaur from their chains, either because they were dead or, according to Hrymer, because they needed a lesson in discipline.

Careful not to disturb the sleeping giants, Shek searched Hrymer's belt for the keys to release the bariaur. He found them, then returned to the bariaur, who by now were beginning to work themselves up into a frenzy in their attempt to gain their freedom. Shek quickly released the chains of the inflamed bariaur.

Once released, the "freedom lust," as it would later be called in legend, subsided. The freed bariaur were able to assist the others, and soon all the bariaur were released from their chains.

The sun was beginning to creep over the horizon so the bariaur quickly made their way back towards where they came, careful not to make any noise that may wake the giants. Shek remained behind, releasing the last of the younger bariaur, who scampered off into the brush.

At about this time, Hrymer began to wake. He gazed out in disbelief. On the ground were the chains, but the bariaur were gone! Well, all but one bariaur was missing. Shek, the bariaur who often caused trouble in line with his songs and cheers, had just released a young bariaur from his chains.

The details of that final battle are known only to Shek and his high priests, as the god does not like to boast of his great deeds. Needless to say, Shek died upon the slopes of Jötunheim, an immortal reminder of the meaning of sacrifice and freedom. Even today, Ysgard bariaur, feeling their freedom impinged upon, use the expression, "Shek did not die on the slopes of Jötunheim so that we would have to..."

Shek's brother Tirag Thunderhooves also came to be known as a great hero and bariaur power.

Shek Threehoof, freedom bringer, spirit martyr, and intermediate bariaur power, is worshipped by all bariaur of the planes. His spirit is commemorated monthly in the Ritual of Sheka. His emanation chooses to live in Midgard, among his people, rather than in Asgard, which all bariaur vow never to enter because of Loki's betrayal. To this day, Shek limps through the plains and forests of Midgard, bringing freedom to the oppressed who call out to him.

Fen Korab and the Tree of Seeing

There's a cutter by the name of Fen Korab who most think is just a figment, a urban legend, or at best a long stretch of an exaggeration. Fen is an ancient bariaur, with probably close to 70 years of planes having passed under his hooves. His head is shaved completely bald, his pelt and general appearance are disheveled to such a degree that the average bariaur, always concerned with looks, would gasp if they saw him walking the street.

Fen may be a fashion disaster, from a bariaur viewpoint, but he's an experienced Planewalker unsurpassed by anyone in Sigil or the Planewalkers Guild. Yet there's a simplicity about Fen that shows him to be without ego, without pride, without any sense of the power and status that his experience and wisdom should command. Some younger cutters, impressed by the bariaur, have tried to follow Fen on his quest through the planes. Most have died or, if lucky, were discouraged early when faced with the insurmountable odds that Fen seems to attract, like razor vine to a trellis.

What makes Fen so unusual is his legendary quest. While most cutters have short-term goals, such as the sensate searching for new experiences or the mage seeking a lost tome, Fen's quest is more long term. In fact, it has driven him throughout the planes for nearly 50 years.

Fen grew up in Ysgard as a member of the Sacred River Flock. As a boy, he showed promise as a warrior and was quite adept with the k'ton and broad sword. When Fen was fifteen he was sent on the usual Migoka coming of age ritual, in which he was to return with the hair of a giant.

Giants in Ysgard are a lot more common and much less hostile than those in The Outlands or other areas where bariaur act out this ritual, so the risks of such a quest, as determined by the flock, were minimal.

This was especially true for such an accomplished youth as Fen.

Unfortunately, Fen met up with one of the more crafty giants, by the name of Jörmun (not to be confused with the legendary giant son of Loki named Jörmungand).

Jörmun lived in a small house in Jötunheim, placed on a mountainside in a secluded region. While eating dinner one evening Jörmun heard the telltale sound of hooves clicking on rock, a sure sign that a beast of some sort was climbing the rocky mountainside.

This really annoyed Jörmun, as several bariaur had recently made their way to his house in search of his hair, of all things. It seems that his name sounds a little too much like that of the son of Loki, and next to giants, bariaur hate nothing one more than Loki and his minions. It seems that Loki betrayed the bariaur into slavery to the giants eons ago. It's often surprising, Jörmun thought, how long those goat creatures can hold a grudge. So now, because of his almost infamous name, several bariaur flocks of Ysgard had singled him out for their childish pranks.

The last two bariaur were too gristly for Jörmun's tastes, with way too much muscle, so he would need to find another way of disposing of this one's body. Jörmun, like most giants, was lazy, so had no desire to carry the bariaur carcass down the mountain. He would have to find a way for this bariaur to leave on his own power without returning in the night to cut his throat. Simply tossing the carcass off the mountainside attracted too many wolves and predators –and that was no good, as they would keep him up all night fighting over the carcass. This whole thing made little sense to Jörmun, since his hair was quite filthy and filled with lice.

Jörmun hid in the kitchen with his battle axe. On his bed he made an effigy of himself with various items, such as pillows, sacks of potatoes, and a mop hanging out where the head would be, looking like hair.

Granted, the mop was much cleaner than his own hair, but this should fool a bariaur in the dark.

Fen entered the house, snuck into the bedroom and starting cutting what he thought was giant hair with his stone ceremonial knife.

The giant jumped into the room with the axe and smacked Fen on the head with the side of the blade. Fen spun with the knife, but the giant easily disarmed him, smacking him again and knocking him to the ground.

Fen stood up, dizzy and blinded as blood flooded his eyes from a wound on his stubby scalp.

"I can't see! I can't see!" Fen yelled, startled and thrashing about with his horns and hooves.

This reminded Jörmun of a conversation he had with his brother Gazug the night before. His brother, a court mage, recently spoke of a magic tree, The Tree of Sight, that bloomed in the far reaches of Muspelheim. The tree produced enchanted fruit that provided "true seeing" for those lucky enough to eat it. It cured blindness, allowed those who ate it to see through lies and falsehood and made life forever

easier by allowing one to see the correct action in any given decision. It was a bunch of hooey as far as Jörmun was concerned, and besides, why take all the fun out of life?

Gazug spoke of his desire to find the tree, which apparently bloomed infrequently but was due to produce fruit this season. However, Gazug's duties at the court would not allow his quest. When Jörmun first learned of his brother's problem the night before, he had wished he could retrieve the fruit. Of course this was more to spite his brother and win back favor in the court than it was to help him out of a sense of altruism or love. Maybe this bariaur could bring him back that fruit of the tree in exchange for his mangy, lice-infested hair. He could always eat the bariaur later, even if he did return.

"Okay goat boy," Jörmun said to Fen, shaking him by the neck, "here's the plan..."

Jörmun told Fen where to find the Tree of Sight, based on his brother's ramblings, and arranged to trade his hair in return for two pieces of fruit from this enchanted tree. Two sounded like a good number, since he could always sell one and give the other to his brother.

Fen was happy to be alive but was even happier to have his quest extended. His hair was coming in slowly and he dreaded returning to the flock without his hallmark blond locks. What would the does think? Fen agreed to the deal: two of the fruit for the giant's hair. He bandaged the bleeding wound on his head with pieces of mop and headed back down the mountain, thankful for his life and the time to let his hair grow. Although he didn't know it at the time, this would be the last time Fen concerned himself with his appearance.

Fen traveled for several weeks, sleeping during the day to avoid the hostile giants and moving through the mountains and hillsides at night. Finally he came to the hill where the tree was supposed to be. The location matched the description, with a telltale rock outcropping shaped like a turtle halfway up the hill. The Tree of Seeing sat by itself on the green hillside, which was alive with a large flock of sheep.

Fen made his way up to the tree, the sheep parting as he made his way by, but he noticed that the tree was barren. It was a large tree, maybe a hundred feet tall, covered with pinkish red five-edged leaves. But there was no fruit left, or maybe it had yet to bloom. Fen was determined to bring back the fruit of the tree, no matter how long it took, so he unrolled his blanket and camped under the tree.

The next day, the tree was still barren, as it was the next week and the following month. Fen figured that he probably missed the tree's fruit bearing season. It could be an entire year before the Tree of Seeing would again bear fruit! The sheep milled about Fen, baying at him, standing like an idiot under a barren tree on a deserted hillside in the middle of the realm of the giants. His supplies grew low, so eventually Fen left his blanket and gear and went down the hill to find some fresh roughage to eat.

It took nearly a day in that barren region to find enough food to satisfy his hunger. This was sheep country and they tended to eat everything green they could find, unlike the more discerning cattle and deer.

Fen walked up the hill the next day with a pack full of fresh food. But he couldn't find the tree! Besides the distinctive leaves on the ground, there was no sign that the tree had been there. There was no hole in the ground, no exposed roots, no exposed earth.

Right before panic set in, Fen thought of what the lost tree meant for him: no fruit, no giant hair, no adulthood, no mate, no honor, in fact, he thought he would most likely be shunned from the flock as a disgrace and disappointment. Fen let out a deep anguished yell that echoed through the valley. His front legs buckled and he rested his head on the ground, where he sobbed for what he thought were many hours.

"Strange you are acting, young buck," a deep voice boomed next to Fen.

Fen looked up to see a tall giant, with staff in hand.

"The tree! It was right here and now it's gone!" Fen cried. "My entire life is ruined. There is nothing left for me. I will climb the nearest mountain and throw myself off."

"Necessary not are such extreme actions, young buck," the giant shepherd replied. "Fruit was bore from The Tree of Seeing while you were away, and to another plane the tree has passed. Another plane it will move to once again in one years time, after it bears fruit once more for but a single day. This gift will all beings of the multiverse receive. Such has it always been and will always be."

"How do you know of this?" Fen said.

"Ate of the fruit I did when the gift the tree bore," the giant said. "Mine is the gift of true seeing."

"So how do I find the tree now?" Fen asked, hopeful that his quest was not completely lost.

"For you to know is not important or desired," the giant said. "To protect itself and the multiverse, the tree moves as it does. To give up your quest would be wise young buck, as those who seek surely do not

know and surely are not worthy. To have eaten the fruit is the only way to know of where the tree may be. And to eat of the fruit is to know that its secret must be protected for all eternity."

The giant began walking down the hill, apparently deciding that the conversation was over. Fen sighed and started placing his gear into his pack. The Tree of Seeing was out there somewhere on the planes, that was for sure. That barmy giant would be no use, so it was up to him to find it.

Thus began the many adventures of Fen Korab, in which he consulted The Mimir, traveled to the City of Doors, negotiated with the Archduke of Maladomini, defeated the One Eyed Wurm of Chronias, navigated the Chaz Maze of Cocytus, brought warmth to the cold Gehenna hell of the Orcish Night Lord, fought for independence with the Soul Forge dwarves of Celestia, sailed the Sea of Flame fighting the Razgul Mephit pirates on the Elemental Plane of Fire, and many more adventures, none of which yet includes returning with the fruit of the Tree of Seeing.

There were several times when Fen found the Tree of Seeing out on the planes and one time when he actually acquired two pieces of the fruit and nearly made his way back to Ysgard. But as of yet, Fen has not brought the fruit from the Tree of Seeing to the giant Jörmun or returned with the giant's hair to his flock. Although it would not matter much, as the bucks of his flock who sent him on his quest are long since dead. Yet Fen has vowed never to return to the flock without completing his quest. Until that time, Fen will never be a true bariaur.

Shek

Intermediate Power, "The Liberator," "Freedom Bringer"



AoC: Liberty, Freedom, Self-determination

AL: CG

WAL: Any good

Symbol: A broken chain, Spirit Drum

Home P/L/R: Ysgard/Ysgard/The Sanctuary

Known Proxies: The Brotherhood of the Broken Chain (see below), Kren of Sanctuary (Px/male/B/P(SP)8/OS/CG)

Among the bariaur pantheon, no power is better known than Shek Threehoof. Enslaved with his flock by the giants of Jötunheim through the treachery of the Norse power Loki, every bariaur celebrates the bariaur escape to freedom with the monthly Ritual of Sheka.

The ritual is practiced throughout the planes wherever bariaur are present. It involves trimming of the hooves, a remembrance of how Shek severed his own hoof to escape the chains of the giants.

Priests of Shek are always crusaders, dedicated to ending slavery everywhere on the planes. While most are supporters of the bariaur flocks, rarely leaving their company, there is an elite order that travels extensively. Known as *The Brotherhood of the Broken Chain*, this order of crusader priests travels the planes, liberating slaves and punishing their captors. This is one of the few examples in bariaur society where bariaur actively work against other groups that do not directly threaten the flock. For more information on The Brotherhood, read about one of it's members, Kren of Sanctuary.

One of the top supporters of The Brotherhood of the Broken Chain is the githzerai. Haters of slavery, having been enslaved by Mind Flayers for generations, the githzerai support The Brotherhood, whose



organization resembles the popular and prestigious githzerai *Rrakkma* bands that hunt their former captors. Often *Rrakkma* and Brotherhood groups will trade information, relay messages and occasionally fight against common enemies. The philosophies of the two groups mesh in many areas, but the easy going nature of the bariaur prevent many githzerai from getting too involved with the religious organization, which they consider too frivolous and bureaucratic.

The Brotherhood is conservative and doesn't approve of bariaur becoming spellslingers, so they employ human and githzerai mages. These mages gather information via magical means and various contacts on the planes. They then assign brotherhood units to *liberation missions*. Units usually consist of 25 crusader priests (7th-12th level), trained in quickly subduing their enemies and liberating slaves. Freed slaves are usually returned to their societies when possible, but are sometimes brought back to Ysgard, to live, hopefully temporarily, in Shek's realm. If slaves cannot return to their homelands, they are sometimes relocated to liberated slave societies on other planes or prime worlds.

Although few githzerai actively worship Shek, the power enjoys a wide following from a variety of races who have been liberated by The Brotherhood. A small group of Baklunish tribesman on Oerth, elves liberated from beholders on The Outlands, and even a fair number of human tribesman from Mystra all worship Shek alongside their own gods. The hoof trimming ritual of Sheka has been modified to feet cleaning in these societies.

Shek is a dire enemy of the Norse power Loki. He holds great malice towards the entire Norse pantheon, although most Norse powers believe this to be a grave misunderstanding. Often Shek's followers find themselves fighting against various priests and followers of non-human powers who endorse slavery.

Samurai Bariaur

Part 1

Jokoro's k'ton-a sliced down horizontally at the trollish creature, cutting deep into its shoulder and rendering the fiend's tightly muscled right arm useless. The blade instantly retreated upward from the carnage as the second blade on the long pole sliced horizontally upward, severing the fiend's left hand, which began flopping around on the dusty gray soil.



The nabassu, its powerful claws now useless, lurched with its open mouth at Jokoro Yojimbo. The fiend's teeth were yellow and long, all incisors meant for tearing and rending the flesh of its victims. Unfortunately for the fiend, its latest victim was Lord Tokunaga, a daimyo of Hachiman, the God of War, the power that rules The Island Realm of Izumo on Ysgard. Even more unfortunate for the fiend was the late Lord Tokunaga's selection of samurai bodyguards, which included the bariaur warrior Jokoro who had chased it down across two planes.

The fiend, with lightning speed, attempted to bite deep into the side of Jokoro, but Jokoro's enchanted Do-maru, one of several magical pieces of armor, prevented the yellow teeth from penetrating his vital organs. The elaborate, overlapping metal plates absorbed the force of the blow but it was the armor's enchantment that kept the teeth of the fiend from piercing Jokoro's side. Jokoro was chief of his bariaur flock.



The flock served Lord Tokunaga in Hachiman's realm of Izumo. They were fierce warriors and proud people with a strong sense of honor. What they lacked in discipline they made up for in fighting prowess. Lord Tokunaga knew how to use these noble, yet undisciplined creatures. The bariaur played the role of scouts, shock troops, and front line attack forces. They also acted as security in wilderness locations in which they were familiar. The bariaur's undisciplined fighting style threw their enemy off balance.

Enemy forces were often unprepared for the chaotic attacks, as the bariaur were unique from other warriors in that they valued individual combat and accomplishments. Other warriors acted precisely, in groups, under a strong command structure. This unpredictability, punished in the average bushi, was harnessed by Lord Tokunaga, who saw the bariaur as a great advantage.

The fiend was too close for another slice of the k'ton-a, a polearm more useful on the battlefield than in close personal combat. Jokoro centered himself in his hara, his spiritual center and focused his energy. His ki energy focused, Jokoro released it instantaneously with a deep shout, a kiai, as his people called it. While releasing his ki onto the nabassu, Jokoro began raising himself up on his hind legs, his front hooves raising nearly ten feet into the air. The nabassu, immune to many forms of weapons and spells, was unprepared for this attack of spiritual energy from the bariaur. It froze, stunned momentarily from the shock. Meanwhile, the bariaur lifted itself into the air, towering over the fiend.

Jokoro ended the La-Bunesa maneuver, a martial arts move from the Zhod-yo school, by slamming his weight down onto the stunned Tanar'ri. The hideous skull of the creature cracked under the weight, its brain oozing from its wide ears, blood dripping from its nose, its teeth shattered in its mouth. The scene would have been grizzly anywhere else, but in Oinos, a layer of The Gray Waste, everything loses color and significance. Meaning becomes as gray and lifeless as the black and white environment. This was in sharp contrast to the luscious vegetation and lively environment of the island Realm of Izumo.



It was Jokoro Yojimbo's responsibility to protect his lord while he retreated to the mountain hermitage back in Izumo. It was under Jokoro's watch that the fiend slowly killed his liege lord, stealing in during the night like a cursed ninja and slowly sucking away Tokunaga's ki. No one knew what to think, as the lord was still quite young. The monks of the hermitage did not know what to do, and the bariaur shaman could only say that the power of the illness was beyond his experience. Eventually his lord transformed into a hideous creature of the night. The transformation completed one evening and the wraith form rushed from the hermitage down the mountain, directly at Jokoro, who, shocked by this evil visage, slayed the creature on the spot.

Lord Tokunaga had left his body many night before, but in the eyes of the samurai, Jokoro had killed his liege lord in cold blood. For this act, Jokoro's flock was to lose their lives, committing ritual suicide with their tanto knives. Not just the warrior, but all the kids and does would also die for his supposed mistake. This was considered an honor, one that many argued was not befitting the cowardly bariaur who slew their lord. Jokoro would also die, but first he would track down the beast who assassinated his lord, and then he would find the rival who brought the foul creature to Hachiman's pure land. This delay in his death would bring great shame on his flock and family. However, honor and pride demanded revenge for this terrible wrong. Even if it meant a bad rebirth or oblivion on a foreign plane.

Jokoro examined the corpse of the hideous beast. It once stood roughly seven feet tall, looking like an oni demon with its snake-like skin. The bariaur fought endless battles against the oni, who wished to enslave and torture them. This creature was different though, it had a muscular body and small wings. It was these wings that allowed it to elude Jokoro's tracking for the last several days as it flew to higher ground, playfully observing the samurai and waiting for its time to swoop in and kill the bariaur. That time came as the warrior began to slow in his progress through the wasteland. Short on food and drink, Jokoro began to tire, especially under the influence of the ki draining effects of the plane. The beast saw its chance to finish off Jokoro, attacking it from behind as it swept out of the sky. If it hadn't been for the enchanted armor, given to Jokoro's grandfather by Hachiman himself, Jokoro would be the crushed figure on the ground, rather than the fiend.

The tanar'ri dead, Jokoro took a moment to look around. He stood at a crossroads, dusty gray paths leading off in three directions. Surely this fiend was heading back to its master when he killed it. And surely its master will seek Jokoro when it finds its servant dead. To ensure this discovery, Jokoro sliced down with his k'ton-a and severed the head from the fiend. He placed it into his pack. Later on, when he reached a town, he would parade the trophy in hopes of attracting the attention of the fiend's master. Wondering which way to go, Jokoro again surveyed the landscape. The severed hand pointed off to the left. Jokoro let his intuition guide him as he headed down the left hand road.

Jokoro Yojimbo

Artwork: Smoking Tanar'ri, By Tony Di'Terlizzi, Copyright 1999 TSR
Hachiman, God of War

Samurai Bariaur

Part 2



Jokoro Yojimbo's hooves clattered on the brick alleys of the deserted town. This was the first town he had encountered since entering the Gray Waste and slaying the nabassu assassin. In his right hand he held his k'ton-a, the double bladed naginata weapon of the Izumo bariaur. In his left hand he held a round bundle, containing the head of the assassin, a demon called a nabassu, wrapped in his silk happi. Jokoro stopped to survey his surroundings. The Gray Landscape gave way to gray storefronts on gray streets, under a gray sky. It was an oppressive environment, one which almost seemed to whisper to him to use his tanto knife to lay his entrails on the dusty gray ground. The desolation and hopelessness of the place lay upon Jokoro. He smiled. The slumber of death would come soon enough, but first he would savor the sweetness of his vengeance.

His stomachs grumbled for food and his throat burned with thirst. There was no vegetation or fresh water in this cursed realm. Jokoro eyed what appeared to be a restaurant or bar half a block down the street. He could hear the sound of laughter and talking, the only sound other than the squeaking rats, fighting over scraps of pink flesh. Jokoro dropped the bundle to the ground to free a hand to check for silver or gold. His pockets contained nothing but dust and fine sand. He walked down the street, eyeing the well-fed rats. There was the stench of death and decay about this town. Up ahead he could make out the crumpled bodies of several creatures, both Tanar'ri and Baatezu. This place would surely answer some of his questions about the Tanar'ri assassin, that is if the inhabitants live long enough to answer his questions.

Jokoro made his way down the street and into the bar. A wooden sign, hanging precariously on the front of the building, read *On The Battlefield*. The bar was filled with baatezu of various sorts, as well as the traders and suppliers of The Blood War, yugoloths and tieflings mostly. The atmosphere was jovial. The Baatezu must have won their battles today, or maybe they were just celebrating another day of slaughter and mayhem. The bar was constructed from various pieces of wood, apparently scavenged from other buildings in the area. It gave the place even more of a ramshackle appearance. The bar smelled of urine and blood, whether from the clientele or their putrid beverages, Jokoro could not determine.

A small four-legged creature delivers drinks to the fiends. The young one reminded Jokoro of his own son, back home. He quickly pushed the thought from his mind. His son is dead, he reminded himself. His family is dead, his flock is dead, and everything he knows is dead. This is his world now, at least until he finds the one responsible for his lord's death. Besides, this strange youngster looked little like a bariaur, instead it looked part lion and part horse. It's an unnerving combination for Jokoro, which was not surprising since bariaur tend not to mate interracially.

Jokoro approached the bar where a wemic was serving a drink to a scaled creature with wings and a snake tail. The reddish brown drink with floating pieces of flesh appeared to be smoking, possibly from a mixture of acid.

"Water," Jokoro rasped to the wemic. The scaled creature snorted in disgust at Jokoro and walked away.

"Is that all?" The wemic said, looking a bit shocked. "How about a nice blood wine?"

"Bariaur do not drink fermented beverages." Jokoro said, as if it was obvious. "We are quite immune to their effects."

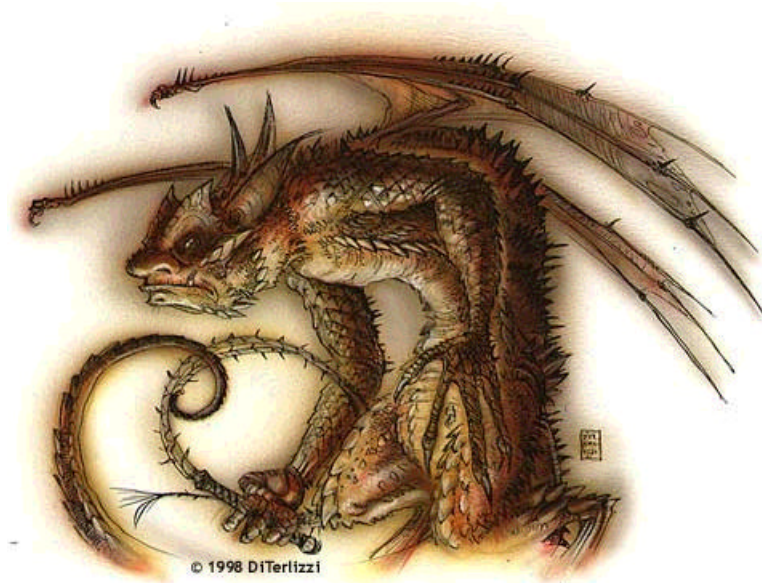
The wemic searched around under the bar for a few moments and produces a dusty wineskin. He poured the gray liquid into a gray mug and hands it to the bariaur, who himself looked quite gray with his covering of dust and grime. Jokoro drank the liquid. It had a faint bitter taste, but satisfied his thirst.

"I cannot pay you now, as I do not have any currency," Jokoro said, "but I would be happy to barter with you, possibly taking care of any problems you might have in the bar." Jokoro fingered his k'ton-a as he said this, giving a clear sign of his willingness to act as bouncer or worse.

"No, enough of this death and destruction," the wemic replied, "I've had about all I can take of the killing and this infernal war. Just drink your water and leave."

Jokoro gave a slight nod to the bartender, as if to say that the wemic was turning down a golden opportunity. Jokoro walked out of the bar and into the dusty street, his thoughts wandering to where he could rest for the night that would be safe from rats and rabble like that in the bar.

As Jokoro walked a few steps down the street, half a dozen humanoid creatures emerge from the bar behind him. They all staggered his way, as if they were drunk. It was a bit too organized a stagger for Jokoro's taste.



Most of the creatures were humanoid, with scaly reptilian skin, clawed hands and feet, long tails, and slimy beards that dripped perspiration. They each carried rusty glaives, a weapon quite rare in Izumo but more common elsewhere on the planes.

The leader of the group, obvious by his size and overbearing attitude, was a nine foot tall lizard creature with wings and a slithering prehensile tail. He carried a whip that the others are careful to stay away from. These were clearly Baatezu, the humanoids were barbazu and their leader, a much more powerful creature, was a cornugon. The baatezu are the mortal enemies of the Tanar'ri who, if Jokoro's hunch was right, were responsible for his lord's death. The races have been locked in battle for eons in what was known as *The Blood War*. In Jokoro's mind, the baatezu are Oni, demons deserving of death; pure and simple. Oni were without honor, although this group was known to keep a promise if it served them. Jokoro contemplated the first dozen moves he would perform to destroy the creatures, but then he remembered a saying from his k'ton-a master: "The enemy of your enemy is your friend."

The barbazu thinned out and surrounded the samurai as he walked down the street. Jokoro stopped in his tracks, ready for trouble.

"You don' look so tough, sheep boy," The cornugon rasped. There was an aura to the creature that would have left most warriors terrified, but Jokoro had accepted his death and was well beyond fear.

"Oh, look at that girlie weapon he carries." a barbazu taunted, "He must be a doooe-sheep."

The barbazu started laughing and began moving closer to Jokoro. Jokoro stood his ground, but dropped the end of his happi coat that was serving as a bloody sack. The head of the slain nabassu dropped to the ground. The head, eyes still open in shock, rolled to the feet of the surprised cornugon.

"I am hungry and require food, as well as a place to sleep." Jokoro says to the cornugon, ignoring the look of shock on the gangs faces. "You will provide this, as well as payment." The bariaur was taking a chance with this move. He was not sure how powerful these creatures were, but hoped he could take them in their drunken state.

The gang regained their composure. The cornugon demanded, "And why should we do this thing for you?"

"That is the price of my services as bodyguard," Jokoro said, "That, and fifty gold pieces."

"And how do I know you didn't get this head from a battlefield?" The cornugon replied, a sly grin on his face. "There are bodies all over this town."

The k'ton-a whirled once and then twice, the first slice cutting half way through the scaly neck of the grinning cornugon, the second slicing upwards, cutting a foot long gash that slowly opened, exposing the smoking guts of the dying creature. The barbazu stared, shocked by the quickness of the attack, but not too concerned about their dying leader, Gre'zek, who they hated almost as much as the tanar'ri.

Gre'zek had been a little too fervent in his battle tactics to suit the tastes of the barbazu. He often volunteered for suicide missions and rarely worked to get them the best weapons or proper spoils. They had blamed Gre'zek for their being stranded away from their battalion, in the Gray Waste, a result of their leader's poor tactics. Gre'zek had ordered the group to charge into the battle early one morning, during a dust storm, when it had been impossible to see even a few inches in front of their faces. By bad luck or stupidity, the platoon had charged right past the tanar'ri. They never did fight in the battle, and while they groped around in the dust, tens of thousands of tanar'ri and baatezu died in the most intense fighting on the plane in decades. Death would have been preferable to missing such an event. So there would be no mourning for the baatezu leader, nor a funeral. The rats would handle that.

"You will have what you need, bodyguard." one said, "but only Rentar can agree to payment."

Jokoro gave a slight bow, and began walking down the street. Several barbazu joined him while others looted the body of their comrade. Rats, already smelling the stench of the dead cornugon, waited patiently for the other creatures to leave. Jokoro thought; maybe this Rentar knew of the assassin's master.

To be continued...

The Gray Waste, By Derrick Schommer , Derrick's Planescape Artwork

Cornugon, by Tony DiTerlizzi, Copyright TSR

The Victory Saddle:

The Legend of the Bariaur saddle

By Seymour Casshuz

Guvner Senior Assistant Researcher to the Adjunct Second Tier Field Scientist

According to all historical records, up until millennia ago, there were no recorded cases of individuals riding bariaur. The prevailing theory states that in ancient times, there was little mobility advantage in riding a bariaur. This is believed to be because of the crude fashioning of the ancient bariaur saddle, unlike the sophisticated gear used today. This essay attempts to elucidate the historical use of the bariaur saddle, including its great historical contributions, from prehistory to modern times.

The historical record of bariaur riding deviates dramatically with the well known historical text *Heimsenjörmungandurfargenufel*. In the *Heimsenjörmungandurfargenufel*, bariaur are shown with human riders during the decade long Jötunweil War. The strategy of transporting humans on the backs of bariaur is credited for turning that war around in favor of the human and bariaur forces.

So what events shaped this dramatic change of almost a millennia ago? Why do historical records indicate no riding of bariaur for many thousands of years followed by widespread riding of bariaur following the Jötunweil War? The answers lies in design advancements of the bariaur saddle.

The first bariaur saddle resembled a simple seat of leather with two thin straps that strapped the saddle to the bariaur. This simple saddle was the only option for many thousands of years, during which time, very few people thought it useful to ride a bariaur. Riders often fell from their bariaur mounts, were incapable of fighting while mounted, and found it impossible to launch arrows or other missile weapons while on "bariaurback." The mounted rider also hindered the bariaur from making an effective attack. Later, during the Jötunweil War, an enterprising bariaur by the name of Sven Quiethooves created a modified saddle, based somewhat on newer innovations used for horses. The modified saddle, known as the *Bes'ted-regal*, uses stirrups to support the rider and a belt placed around the bariaur's waist for added support. This new innovation in bariaur saddles allowed bariaur to move with a rider without significant losses in speed. The stirrups allowed the rider, especially those with less experience, to better grasp the bariaur's body and avoid the common problem of riders falling from their bariaur mounts. The stirrups also played a role in mounted combat, but we will get to that momentarily.

Before the introduction of the new saddle, riders often had a difficult time on the backs of bariaur, and the practice was discontinued when it was determined that there was no mobility advantage. With the use of the *Bes'ted-regal* saddle, troops saw a drastic increase in their mobility. Although an unarmored person may notice only a 20% increase in mobility, a warrior in chain mail saw a 40% increase, while a warrior in plate mail, on the back of a strong buck capable of carrying his weight, often saw an astounding 60% increase in movement.

Although the saddle was designed to transport soldiers to the battlefield, soldiers experienced as mounted archers found that their ability to hit a target while on the back of a bariaur was little different than when mounted on horseback. The disadvantage however, was that the bariaur was often prevented from engaging in combat while an archer launched his arrows. The practice of mounted archers on bariaur was rarely used since an armed bariaur was significantly more effective than a mounted archer in most situations during the giant wars. Fighting hand to hand on the back of the bariaur was also inefficient, as the bariaur was not appreciative of playing the role of war horse.

The decisive moment in saddle history came during the *Battle of Breidablik Landing*. An entire battalion of heavy infantryman in plate mail were transported behind enemy lines for a surprise flank attack that won the battle, and eventually lead to the end of the war. The bariaur transported the heavily armored much faster than they could have possibly walked, and then fought alongside the men, a great advantage over the war horse. This battle is immortalized in the songs of bards. What child has grown up without

knowing the lyrics to "Bleidablik Bleidablik?" Few listeners of that classic ballad know that the "shiny men on bar-rer" refers to that decisive historical battle that was won by the great invention of the Bes'ted-regal.

There's also the story of Sven Quiethooves, often used to show the stubbornness and audacity of the bariaur. It is said that Odin sent a Valkyrie to summons Sven to Asgard, to congratulate him on his fine invention. According to legend, there was even a contingent of dwarves in the court who were interested in making improvements on Sven's design. Sven sent a message back with the astonished Valkyrie saying that he created the Bes'ted-regal for the bariaur flocks and that the powers and giants could freeze in Hel for all he cared. Luckily for Sven, the bariaur powers protected him from Odin's considerable wrath. But legend has it that no buck with horns was ever born from the Quiethooves family again.

Today, the Bes'ted-regal is the only saddle available for bariaur use. The name Bes'ted-regal literally means *victory saddle*, which somewhat removes the stigma associated with allowing a rider to mount the bariaur. To refer to the saddle as a "victory saddle" is the best way to discuss the saddle with a bariaur.

The Dark of Bariaur Riding

Bariaur can move at a normal rate of movement when carrying an individual no more than four times its strength. Exceeding this weight results in an incremental reduction in speed, or in the case of core rules, the bariaur is considered encumbered. Also, riding a bariaur without a specially designed saddle automatically reduces movement by one step. For example, a bariaur with a movement rate of 15, with a rider without a saddle, that's within his weight allowance, would move at 12. Also, only humanoid creatures with the correct body morphology can ride a bariaur. For example, a tiefling or githzerai may ride a bariaur, but a modron, thri-kreen or wemic could not.

AD&D Core Rules

Bariaur Strength	Maximum Weight (in pounds) of Rider (including armor and equipment)
1	4
2	4
3	20
4-5	40
6-7	80
8-9	140
10-11	160
12-13	180
14-15	220
16	280
17	340
18	440
18/01-50	540
18/51-75	640
18/76-90	740
18/91-99	940
18/00	1340
19	1940

For *AD&D Skills and Powers*, divide the weight of the rider by four and compare it to the Strength and Encumbrance chart (Table 54, page 125 of *Player's Option Skills and Powers*) and adjust accordingly for light, moderate, heavy or severe encumbrance. Then determine the actual speed of the bariaur by using Table 55 on the same page.

The 5 Peels of the Sigil Tout

By Gary L. Ray

Even the most clueless of primes has heard horror stories of berks being peeled in Sigil. With these stories fresh in their minds, new visitors often step through portals into The Cage with weapons drawn, creaky plate mail securely fastened, and spells loose on the tongue. Many a prime has lost his life in these first few moments, but most are simply stared at until they stand down from their "dungeon stances."

Other clueless, slightly more knowledgeable than the first type, stiffly walk in "marching order" through the wards. Yes, the dwarf and halfling in the front ranks can wield their axes and short swords, the elf and human archers can shoot their short bows over the dwarves, and the spellslinger and priest of Cuthbert are quite adept at casting magic missile and flame strike around the intricately timed prostrate archers, but they all fail when it comes to making a good impression in Sigil. With the help of this article, I will teach you how best to navigate Sigil and avoid getting peeled by touts.

Before getting into the five ways a tout can peel a prime, let me first elaborate on three important rules of thumb when arriving in Sigil.

The 3 Rules

1. Rule number one when arriving in Sigil is to relax! Although you may eventually end up in a pile in a back alley if you tend to flash your gold and shoot off your mouth, for the most part Sigilians want to take your money with a smile. There are enough services and goods to go around, so the folks figure that eventually you'll spend all your money somewhere in town. Cutting throats and dungeon-style combat are illegal, often lethal for one or both parties, and most importantly, it's bad for business. Expect to be hauled off by Harmonium patrols, regardless of whose fault it is.



Upon arrival in Sigil, the first person you will encounter is a tout, or more accurately, a group of touts. The first line of attack will be from the younger touts, eager to offer you the multiverse at discount prices. After breaching the first line of attackers, you will encounter the sly touts, those who pretend that they're the tout for the savvy cutter. Ignoring these touts you'll find yourself approaching the wise tout (they won't approach you). The veteran tout appears well dressed, relaxed and friendly. He manifests as a representative of comfort and manners, a stark contrast from the brash young touts. Which type of tout you choose will have a great effect on your experience in Sigil.

Expect harrowing experiences and tough negotiations with the youngsters. The sly tout will constantly scheme to get you to go places or do things you don't wish to do. Unlike the brash young touts, you will have to be on your guard so as not to be taken by the sly tout. The veteran tout will offer a soft sell. The veteran knows everyone, has business relationships with many vendors, and generally is so smooth in his sell that you rarely know you've been had. Be certain that you *will* be had by the veteran tout, but it's a much more enjoyable reaming over than from a brash youngster. Also expect the veteran tout to follow his own code of respect and service, while expecting a certain level of consideration and manners from you. This is the mutual dance that one must perform to keep the tout experience civil.

So why do you need a tout? If you don't know where you're going, a tout is essential. The tout plays the role of tour guide, transportation coordinator, government or temple intermediary, money changer, and

pimp. Touts appear, seemingly through magic, with the arrival of new primes. If you're new, they can spot you blocks away. They have a uncanny intuitiveness that allows them to seemingly read your mind, sometimes offering services that you didn't even know you needed. Even if you pretend you know where you're going or what you need, the tout can usually sense that it's your first time in Sigil, much like sharks can smell blood in the water. This is why we have rule number two.

2. Arrange to meet someone before arriving in Sigil. Residents of Sigil can provide you accommodations without the stress and expense of hiring a tout. It's true that touts will find you bedding, suggest restaurants and taverns, provide entertainment of all varieties and generally act as guide, but probably not in ways or directions you wanted. You may find yourself in restaurants and inns that you had no intention of going to. This is because most people have no clue as to the intricate economic arrangement they have initiated with the tout.

You see, clueless who hire touts mistakenly believe that they are the customer. Sigil is ripe with belief, and with enough conviction, all but one may someday come true. That one lost and worthless belief is that the tout works for the berk who hired him. In reality the tout's customer is the innkeeper, the barkeep, the bribed guard in government buildings, money changers, prostitutes, and all those other people you pay money to. The jink you pay the tout is but a small fraction of the real compensation earned by this enterprising fellow. A good tout is simply one who has enough connections that he can satisfy your wishes unobtrusively, which of course brings him more money in the form of a tip (at least 15% is customary). Some touts have arrangements with every inn in the city. Some can make up arrangements on the spot, demanding a small finders fee from an innkeeper or barkeep. This leads us to rule number three:



3. If you must hire a tout, always arrange your destination and payment in advance. You may wish to stay at The Golden Bariaur Inn, and might even be shocked to find yourself taken there directly. However, the tout is more likely to tell you that the inn is under renovation, that it is out of business, or that it is full. Often these excuses are lies. If one follows rule number three, the tout knows that you mean business and is less likely to peel you. For if he can't scam you, the tout is likely to attempt to charge you a hefty fee for his services. These lies and travel changes lead us to the first peel of the Sigil tout, called redirection.

The 5 Peels

REDIRECTION: When it comes to payment, you may pay the tout a silver piece for his efforts, while the innkeeper pays the tout a gold piece for promoting his business. Who do you think the tout is really working for? With such an incentive to bring you places you don't want to go, the tout is likely to use a number of strategies to get you to the new location. First, he may talk down the place.



For example, on a recent trip to Sigil I heard my tout exclaim, "Ahh yes, The Golden Bariaur Inn, I remember it when there were no rats roaming the halls and the bariaur were required to empty their chamber pots daily instead of weekly."

Other touts may take the previously mentioned strategy of lying about the inn, possibly claiming it's full or out of business. The most base of touts, who lack the smallest amount of creativity but not greed, may simply take you to the inn of his choice and demand payment, claiming that this is indeed the inn you requested.

"No, don't worry about that sign," he'll say, "it's from a previous tenant." The innkeeper is more than willing to go along with this ruse, as he gains nothing from seeing you leave. Expect the most inane of explanations and excuses, since they'll believe that your head is reeling from your recent arrival.

THE 80/20 RULE: This peel operates under the theory that the last 20% of a job takes 80% of the effort. This is the favored peel for the thwarted tout. For example, you want to be taken to The Golden Bariaur Inn, the tout makes his attempt at redirection, since he has no contacts there, but he fails to convince you to go elsewhere after many attempts. The tout is forced to take you to your chosen inn, but will only receive a measly silver from you for his efforts. Solution? Dump you near enough to the location without going through the actual effort of taking you the whole way. He may drop you off at a sign that says "Golden Bariaur Inn" with an arrow pointing down an alleyway. The peeler will make up some excuse, such as explaining that touts are not allowed to continue beyond this point and that you are on your own from there. What you don't know, is that the inn is still a mile down the street, and that the mile may contain all kinds of dangers for the unwary traveler, such as ooze puddles, cutthroats, or worse, another tout wanting to peel you on the 20/80 rule. The 20/80 rule is a 80/20 rule variation that states that you can often make 80% of your money on another touts lost 20%.



THE RELATIVE: All long-term encounters with a tout eventually end up with the relative peel. The friendly tout, who up to this point has been honest and kind, wishes to introduce you to his family. No, not his wife and kids, but his uncle perhaps. This uncle just happens to own a carpet shop. This carpet shop just happens to sell rare Bytopian Shagwells. The shop is immaculate and upscale, the happy uncle greets his "nephew" with a hug and you're promptly served with a cool glass of Dothion Grey Tea. You are obliged to sit and watch as uncle unfurls his many Shagwells, launching them with precision from across the room to where they unroll within inches of your feet. You nod politely, but the 10,000 gp price tag is a little steep, and besides, where will you store a 10-foot long carpet that weighs nearly 200 pounds? Uncle has thought of that, as delivery is included in the price. If you decline, you're lead out of the shop, but not before being charged 5gp for that friendly cup of what is now described as "rare" tea.



THE CRAFT SHOP: This peel is a soft sell disguised as a local attraction. The uncle who owns the carpet shop employs twenty Bytopian religious refugees that just happen to be expert carpet weavers. These poor folks, who simply wanted to express their religious beliefs, have fled to Sigil for safety from their oppressors. Now they make carpet for uncle, who pays them a handsome salary, although he can rarely sell their carpets. It's charity uncle whispers to you. Maybe you, out of the deer kindness of your heart, would be willing to buy one of these fine works of art, at only a fraction of their normal prices. Uncle will unfurl one of their carpets right after he serves you a cup of tea... .

THE HARD SELL: You will simply be taken to a place and given no opportunity to leave until you perform a certain action, such as looking at jewelry. This is most often used when hiring horses or palanquins, as the tout has more control of your movement. The kickback to the tout in these cases is so high, that they can afford to trick you or lie to you to get you in the shop. They are often paid by customer, not a cut of the purchase, so attempts at convincing them that you will never, as long as you live and the cleric can cast resurrection, even if the gods and The Lady conspire to make it so, and if all the factions were to come together as one loving group and beg you -- even then you will not purchase Baatorian lingerie with the built in girdle of femininity and inverted breast spikes. Never will you ever be interested in this item you will tell the tout. But it is no use, because his uncle owns this store and you will offend his entire family if you refuse, and besides, this lingerie is hand woven by Erinyes who have recently converted to Odinism and who, for no fee, will model this product especially for you. And besides, it will only take a moment of your time. You may always leave the tout behind, but the way he described this area as "The Hive" gives you chills down your spine.

Bariaur Portal Polo

Ok, all you hoof cutters, line up along that gutter, careful of that ooze puddle.

Good.

Welcome to the fourth annual Sigil Portal Polo Camp, where bariaur bucks, and a few centaur <nodding>, from across the planes come to learn advanced Portal Polo skills. My name is Striker, Jerek Sap'ne, of the Mennankor flock of Ysgard, the best Portal Polo players in the Multiverse, as you all know. I have been chosen by the Grand Council of Ysgard to teach you hoofers how to properly play this sacred game. I know some of you are from The Outlands, Arborea, or other places that *claim* to play Portal Polo, but let me tell ya stink-hoof, this is the *real* thing.

Over the next several weeks, you will learn the proper way to play this important game. But most importantly, you will learn to play well. Portal Polo is the most demanding physical game that we have, involving strict rules that requires players with impeccable honor. To prepare for Portal Polo is to prepare for life itself.

Portal Polo is more
than a game.
It's a way of life.

You, berk, grab that burlap sack behind you. Ok, now look inside. What do you see? Alright, no need to be squeamish here. Someone help him clean himself up. That, berk, is a standard Portal Polo "ball." As you see, in that sack is your common hill giant head. Never knew that, didja? Probably thought it was some twine or somethin'. They aren't all as ripe as that one though; you gotta cut 'em pretty soon after you fell the brutes, otherwise they start to decay and rot, like this one here. Normally we don't play with ones this, uh, aged, but we can't be too choosy – we're gonna be smackin' quite a few balls this week. Any older and it won't go in.

You, tiny, smiling goat, grab that head by the hair. Ok, now open the mouth. You see? There's a leaf of razorvine sitting on its tongue. This is a key to a portal across the street to The Abyss. Now before you start wetting yourselves, remember, it's the ball that's going to The Abyss, not you. As long as you make sure you put the key on the giant's tongue and don't carry one with you, you're perfectly safe. I've heard plenty of stories of clueless hoofers who followed the ball into the portal. Bad idea. When you've got a portal to the EPF, we've got a roast on our hands, and burnin' flesh does nothin' for my appetite <he winks at the centaur>.

So why the head? My wife asks me this, so I had to find out, or she'll never shut up. It turns out that the shamans had a difficult time leading the spirits of these dead brutes to the right plane. It seems there's a natural hostility between the spirit of the shaman and the giants, and when you slay a few dozen giants in one day, that's a lot of spirit guidin' with some real piked off spirits, or so I'm told.

The solution to this problem was to remove the heads from the brutes and place them on other planes. This is a real drag, and not much fun, and it tends to take away from the joy of battle. So the early hoofers who had to deal with this started makin' a game out of it, you know, like how we tend to make games out of our chores to make them bearable. They figured out how to kick them through the portals with gate keys. Apparently, if the head is fresh enough, the portal thinks a real cutter is going through. So they figured the spirit must be in the head. Some fiends actually eat the brains to prevent the spirit from haunting them. We think this is more civilized and *much* more fun.

So after a while it got kind of boring as one team kept kicking heads into the portal. They had to make rules to keep it interestin'. The first thing they did was find a use for those "sacred" *gada* clubs that our ancestors kept. I mean, who wants to go into battle with a club? Give me a k'ton or broad sword any day. Anyway, they ruled that the club was the only way to move the ball around. You can't kick it, head butt it, or pick it up, and magic is totally inconceivable. You can only use the club. Oh yeah, and you can

smack your opponents with the club if you like, but you can't raise the club above your waist. After all, that's another game. We want to play Portal Polo! <Cheers from the line of bariaur>

Ok, pipe down. So they've got these sacred clubs that are called *semas' koraba*, or spirit chasers. This brings me to a funny story: a group of barmy Guvners from Sigil once came to Ysgard to study the game. We told them the spirit chaser clubs were named after the fiends that we hunt in The Abyss! That really set them off! One wrote a huge book on the subject. Yeah, my wife uses this huge tome to crush barbazu fern. Big heavy thing.

Oh yeah, so the offense gets five shots at the portal before it's the other side's turn. This means five actual shots that come within, oh ten feet or so, of the portal. After the first five shots, the other side gets their chance to "send the spirit onward" as the shaman likes to say. Now some of you Sigil hoofers have this strange rule about goals. You say the first one to ten wins. What a stupid idea! Why in Muspelheim would you want to stop at ten?!! The game ends when you're out of balls. Simple. No excuses, no "time-outs" for injuries, no herb tea breaks, no "my wife is callin' me." The game ends when the heads are gone. Do you want to sleep next to some stinky, foul mouthed, cross-eyed, slope headed, no good, lice infested berk of a giant?!! <cries of no!>

I didn't think so. Well that's what'll happen in this camp if you don't score enough. Where are your horns? Let's see who here is a doe and who is a buck? You there, the one pickin' the puke from your beard. Where ya from? Arborea?

Only two things come from Arborea, the hornless and hollyphants, and I sure don't see no trunk on your ugly snout. Now grab that ball and smack it through the doorway of that there pub and show us you ain't a doe. Yeah, I see the ugly cornugon; don't miss or we'll have to make one more ball for tonight's practice.

Yeah! Nice shot. There's nothin' like Lower Ward training to bring out the best in a berk.

Dog, Kayi

© 1999 by Gary L. Ray © 1999 Layout by Brannon Hollingsworth

Climate/Terrain:

Frequency:	Ysgard
Organization:	Solitary or small pack (see below)
Activity Cycle:	Rare
Diet:	Carnivore
Intelligence:	Semi (2-4)
Treasure:	Nil
Alignment:	Chaotic good
No. Appearing:	1 or 2 - 8
Armor Class:	5
Movement:	18
Hit Dice:	4+1
THAC0:	17
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	2-8 or special
Special Attacks:	See below
Special Defenses:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	10%
Size:	S (3' Long)
Morale:	Steady (11-12)
XP Value:	200

"Ahh, How sweet, Watch little Thumper trip that Cambion ..."

-Bariaur Doe admiring A Kayi

Native to Ysgard, the Kayi Dog lives for chaos and mischief. Scorned by the men and elves of Ysgard, the Kayi have been adopted by the bariaur, who enjoy their spirited behavior and wild antics. The Kayi are often used for herding sheep and other livestock, although they tend to be unreliable at this task unless the job is somehow made into a game.

Kayi are especially adept at navigating around larger, hoofed creatures, and often play by running between these larger creature's legs. In combat, the Kayi Dog can use this skill to its advantage. While it may be clever to dance between the legs of a baku, bariaur or hollyphant, in combat the Kayi Dog has the ability to trip its opponent, regardless of size, with remarkable skill.

Unfortunately, in the heat of battle, the Kayi Dog gets a little rambunctious, and isn't very particular about who it trips. Many a proud bariaur warrior has found himself picking the mud from his horns after a Kayi Dog darted between his legs at the wrong moment. But the bariaur love these creatures who live to play and romp.

Kayi make excellent watchdogs, although they tend to bark at anything out of the ordinary. This may include a flock member's new clothes, the wind, or an unfamiliar scent. For this reason, bariaur tend to let the Kayi Dogs roam their camps, rather than tying them down to a particular tent or area. And it's a good thing too, since attempting to tie up, muzzle or otherwise impede a Kayi Dog's freedom will set it into a wild rage!

Kayi Dogs do not bind themselves to a particular person or family, they tend to adopt the entire herd, an instinct that redeems them somewhat when dealing with livestock and young kids. Despite their sub par performance as watch dogs, the Kayi Dog has an almost sixth sense for finding trouble, either within its camp or that which lurks nearby.

Appearance: Kayi Dogs are skinny, medium sized dogs of about 50 pounds, with a light brown, short hair coat. During the winter months, the Kayi's coat grows several inches long and tends to darken in color. During those frigid Ysgard months, the Kayi is perfectly happy to lie about in the snow, without the need for shelter. However, a Kayi taken from Ysgard to a more temperate climate may find itself at risk of overheating during their long hair season.

Over the rest of the year, the Kayi shed tremendously, much to the dismay of the fashion conscious bariaur who often find themselves covered in hair with the slightest contact with the dogs.

Kayi Dogs speak telepathically with their own race up to a distance of a quarter mile, but otherwise understand only the most basic of bariaur (or common) commands. A Kayi Dog will follow commands it understands only 25% of the time, unless the command suits its current interests.

Despite their telepathic link with their own race, the Kayi Dog, because of its chaotic nature and low intelligence, is unlikely to work concertedly with other of its kind towards a goal.



(A Kayi Dog, thinking, "did you have a nice fall?)

Combat: Kayi Dogs love nothing more than a good battle. Battle is play to the Kayi, and the moment one starts, the Kayi are sure to rush into the fray with fangs glistening and deep throated growls and howls emanating from their skinny bodies.

As the saying goes, this is all bark and no bite, as the real combat tactic of the Kayi is to distract its enemy with its fierce countenance while it runs between its opponent's legs. The Kayi will trip the creature upon a successful combat attack, unless the creature successfully saves versus death. Creatures knocked to the ground suffer 1d3 points of damage and forfeit unused attacks (or ruin spells in progress) for that round. Downed opponents also must spend a full round standing up when they wish to do so. Creatures armed with crossbows or firearms must save versus paralyzation or accidentally discharge their weapon.

Occasionally a Kayi Dog will fight alongside its mate. Through their innate telepathy, the two dogs are able to coordinate their attack on the same opponent in the same round. This is one of the few examples of Kayi Dogs working together.

Although bariaur never strike opponents when they are down, the effect of a dozen Kayi Dogs on an attacking force can be quite devastating. It often provides the needed time to grab an extra weapon or roust a sleeping mate from the tent.

Occasionally, the flock shaman will work to train Kayi Dogs to attack creatures who possess the scent of common spell components, usually herbs and animal specimens. Although this is intended to be a boon in combat since the Kayi Dog favors attacking spellslingers, it can also have a chilling effect on more conservative flocks that ban does from practicing magic. For a doe mage practicing magic in secret, what was once a friendly furry flock member is now a menacing enforcer of conservative bariaur culture.

Kayi Dogs have the innate ability to travel from layer to layer in Ysgard.

Kayi Dogs have infravision to 120' and an unusually keen sense of smell and hearing. Bariaur does, while still young, are trained alongside Kayi Dogs to heighten their senses. Kayi Dogs are never surprised and cause opponents to subtract 3 from their surprise rolls.

Habitat/Society: Kayi Dogs are native to the plane of Ysgard. They live to play and frolic, and most of all to cause mischief and havoc in battle. They tend to bind themselves to a particular flock or lone individual.

Ecology: Kayi Dogs are despised by men and elves but appreciated by the bariaur for their keen senses, playfulness and high level of energy. It's thought that the only creature with enough energy to keep up with a young bariaur buck is a Kayi Dog. If treated well, the Kayi Dogs will extend their "pack" to include the bariaur flock. This is a mixed blessing for all but the most tolerant of bariaur, but the Kayi almost always shows its worth over time.

Kayi Dogs occasionally befriend individual bariaur if met outside the flock. They will likely follow this individual wherever it goes, even to another plane.

Kayi Dogs are carnivores, which sometimes poses a dilemma for the bariaur. The shaman teaches that "each must canter according to his hooves," and many take this as an acceptable justification for the Kayi Dog's horrific habit of meat eating.

The Internal Operation of Acheron Cubes, A Brief Survey

By Jek Flathoof

Bariaur Guvner

This award winning article appeared in *Acheron Annual*, a Sigilian Guvner publication detailing new discoveries on the plane of Acheron (there are three to four journals for each plane). Jek Flathoof is a noted bariaur scholar, in fact, he's one of the only known bariaur scholars. Tale of the Bariaur celebrates Jek's recent acceptance of *The Hashkar Award for Excellence in Research* with the re-publication of this article.

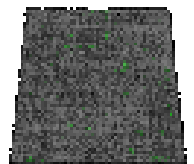
Acheron is composed of cubes, and cubes within cubes. The people of Acheron are concerned with order, but not like the smooth running gears of Mechanus. Instead, Acheron order is similar to the behavior of the cubes, which smash into each other quite frequently, killing those who live on the surface. Therefore, it is not surprising that an extensive living space exists within the cubes to avoid such calamity. It is believed that only the privileged of Acheron society are authorized to live in this internal world, but little else is known of the social ramifications of internal cube life.

We have learned a great deal about Acheron cubes from the modron who marched across the multiverse, starting with Acheron. Several modron who have gone rogue have volunteered this information, and it has been corroborated by Acheron sources, notably several priests of Lei Kung who have defected to the Athar. As a bariaur, it is quite impossible for me to visit the internal cubes of Acheron because of my size, but every source I have interviewed has confirmed the information in this study.

CUBE DESIGNATION

In a society as ordered as Acheron, it is vital to have designations, ranks, and various schemes outlining the place of people and things. The key to this system is cube designations.

All cubes have a designation. The designation is a binary number. For example, a cube may be 123.4.0.0.0.0.0.0. Note that the cube is one of a possible 65,000 cubes (possibly why Acheron is at war, to reclaim cube numbers?). The face of each cube is not important within the numbering scheme, although it is designated by color (see below). Those living on the cubes designate themselves by name, but also hold personal identification numbers.



Personal Designation

All organized social units, such as various workers or military units, identify themselves by cube number, cube face, social division, rank, squad, and personal alphanumeric number (although more commonly by name instead of personal ID). For example, a soldier may identify himself as: Cube one-twenty-three dot four, red face, rubick fusiliers, lieutenant first class, griffon squadron, 123-4-R-984512323 (or Afrin Mogslop).

Internal Cube Designation

Within each cube are additional "internal" 40'x40' cubes with their own numbers. For example, 123.4.232.1.43.100.222.34 is a cube within a cube. This number represents the home cube (123.4) and the six sides of the internal cube. Each internal cube has six portals, one on each side. Since the cubes can move around within the main cube, there is no designation for the actual location of the "internal" cube.

Also, there is no formal up or down in a cube. The portals are noted by color, which become visible only when the portal is activated. For example:

- Octet 1: Cube Address (123)
- Octet 2: Cube Address (4)
- Octet 3: Black (232)
- Octet 4: White (1)
- Octet 5: Red (43)
- Octet 6: Green (100)
- Octet 7: Yellow (222)
- Octet 8: Blue (34)

Each internal cube has the cube number listed somewhere within it. To open a portal, align the eight spell crystals to form the proper binary number. Once you've aligned all crystals from all the portals, the room is "owned" by the occupants and the cube will move at will through the larger cube, provided the owners know where they wish to go.

The problem with accessing this system is that you must know two facing colors to master the cube. For example, if you enter through the black portal, octet 3, you know the number for its corresponding white portal, octet 4 by checking the cube address, since it's the octets are always in the same order. However you do not know if the next portal over is the red/green or yellow/blue combination, as these are not assigned. This is thought to be a security design, to slow down the progress of invaders, while allowing inhabitants to traverse the cubes relatively safely.

THE PORTALS

Each portal is a square opening 3 feet by 3 feet. This is the exact dimensions needed for a modron to enter a cube. However, this only works for modron servants on Acheron, who have their arms attached on the top of their box. Modrons from Mechanus may not enter without being "un-armed." Invading modrons adapted by re-attaching their arms to the tops or bottoms of their boxes.

Portals are activated by sliding the relevant crystals into place. Normally, all crystals are in the "zero position," meaning they're facing downward toward the portal. The "full up" position represents the number 255 (a total of 256 combinations, including zero). Crystals are manipulated to open a portal based on the portals binary address. For example, 231 would look like:

128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
UP	UP	UP	DOWN	DOWN	UP	UP	UP
128+	64+	32+	-	-	4+	2+	1

Improperly entering the binary address usually results in the activation of a trap or movement of the cube to a "safe" location.

Future Research

Like most research, this work raises as many questions as it answers. For example, who controls the numbering scheme of the cubes? Mathematically, there is only the possibility of 65,025 cubes. What happens when this number reaches capacity? After all, the layers of Acheron are infinite. Does this not mean there are an infinite number of cubes? Could this limited numbering scheme have something to do with the wars that continually rage on Acheron? It has been suggested by several interviewed modron, who invaded a set of Acheron cubes at one time, that the power Lei Kung controls the cube numbers, denying new numbers to cubes that do not meet his criteria, or not allowing new numbers until another cube has been destroyed. If funds permit, I intend to answer these questions and many more.

The Shrine of Nomolos

The party cut their way through the dense brush, moving uphill in hopes of finding a better vantage point. They had spotted a strange rock formation at the top of the hill, really a mountain, and hoped to see what they could find up there. The ranger, Sir Jerlea Mednick the Third of Furyondy led the way. Fizbit the halfling thief was at his side, puffing along, nearly exhausted from the long climb. Cloaked in all black, Slanon the Illusionist, Master of Mystery, stood wheezing behind Jerlea, next to Schwepahn, a High Priest of Cuthbert.

They had started their travels from Greyhawk several weeks earlier, having destroyed all the evil and met all the challenges their world had to offer. They were big shots. Knight, high priest, master illusionist – even Fizbit was guildmaster of the Chendl Thieves Guild. They were unstoppable, at least until they found that magic portal in *The Temple of Pure Hatred*.

The portal led them to a realm, a city that, with their years of training, the best their world had to offer, left them completely unprepared for what they next encountered. Tombs with liches, vast underground complexes of giants, even an evil demon queen of spiders in a mechanical arachnid were no preparation for Sigil.

It was a horrifying place that was more than their minds could handle. Their concepts of good and evil, right and wrong, even up and down, were twisted and perverted in that abominable city. Demons and Angels walked the streets in casual conversation. Devils, like those they had fought on the *Black Rose Mountain Peaks* worked as barbers and seamstresses. It was as if all their accomplishments in life meant nothing if a world like this existed.

Angels, held in awe all his life by High Priest Schwepahn, performed in lewd street carnivals to amuse children and offspring of races and combinations of races that they couldn't even begin to fathom. Simply looking up at the tops of the buildings on the other side of the donut shaped city made poor Fizbit physically sick. Yet, being a halfling, he couldn't help but look up every few minutes, much to the annoyance of priest Schwepahn. Slanon the Master Illusionist kept pinching himself, yelling "I disbelieve! I disbelieve!" Although the residents of Sigil found this amusing, they refused to fade out of existence for old Slanon. Nothing had prepared the party for such a mind twisting place and they wanted nothing more than to go home.

That's why they slipped through the first portal they found in an attempt to get back home. What they failed to realize, however, was that not all portals led back to their world. The idea that there were multiple planes of infinite size and infinite worlds similar to their own would have crushed their reeling minds like dry leaves if they could have possibly comprehended it all at once. They were conditioned for concepts like good and evil, home and away, sky side up, ground side down, not the limitless shades of variety that allowed for fiendish barbers and infinite planes of existence.

Luckily their misstep took them to an Upper Plane, rather than, say, the Elemental Plane of Fire or the Tunnels of Insanity in Pandemonium. This new place was not much different from their home back on Greyhawk, except everything was much bigger and more intense. The mountains were higher, the rivers wider and faster, and the giants, well, even after slaying three underground complexes of evil giants back home, they were still unprepared for these huge, cunning brutes.

It was during a battle with the giants, soon after entering the plane, that they were aided by a group of local warriors. These fierce warriors wielded great swords and axes. They flew into insane rages of blood lust when fighting, cutting down every living enemy without quarter or pause. Fizbit cowered on the ground, afraid of being mowed down by these crazy warriors of death with their flailing axes and broad swords. Over a dozen warriors fell in battle that afternoon, and nearly thirty giants, but it hardly made a difference to these men, who congratulated themselves on their victory and never glanced twice at their fallen comrades. They were surely insane, Schwepahn thought.

When the battle was over, the warriors stalked away, leaving the bodies of their dead lying on the ground among the corpses of the giants. And this is where the party ran into difficulty.

Schwepahn, being the head of his holy order, as well as a respected holy man, thought it best to bury the dead. How was he to know that the warriors would rise again the next morning? When their fallen comrades did not join the surviving warriors the next day, they were quite displeased. In fact, they were a bit frantic and out of their minds.

The warriors searched for two days trying to find the battle site, when a young berserker discovered a hand sticking out of the ground. It was the hand of his slain comrade who had tried to dig himself out of his shallow grave upon awakening the morning after the battle. To the Ysgard warriors, the party could not have performed a more evil and tortuous act, and the countryside was mobilized to hunt down the offenders.

While in prayer, Schwepahn received a vision from his god of the angry warriors that were on their way to end their lives. The party left the main road and headed through the brush, into the deep wilderness. Jealea was a skilled ranger, and he worked meticulously to hide their tracks for the first few miles. After that, his skill and strength were needed at the front of the party, to cut through the dense underbrush with his razor sharp enchanted sword.

Now they were approaching the top of a hill, hoping to get a better vantage point. As they reached the peak they entered a clearing. The party faced a strange monument, a shrine of sorts. Made from carefully stacked rocks with clay mortar holding the stone in place, was a giant horn.

From the base, the horn curled around into the sky, nearly thirty feet high! This was the strange rock formation they saw from down below. At the bottom of the statue were piles of horns, obviously from some large creature, like a giant goat or sheep. All the horns were well developed, probably from older animals, whatever they were.

Around the area were many hoof prints, trampling the ground into a solid surface as hard as rock. Trails headed off to the north and south of the shrine, also well worn, from what Jerlea claimed was centuries of use. Using his skill as a ranger, Jerlea could determine that the paths were clearly migratory routes. Yet, with such a shrine, the creatures were obviously of superior intelligence.

Approaching the towering horn monument, Schwepahn discovered that each stone making up the giant horn had strange runes carved on them. As a servant of Saint Cuthbert, Schwepahn called upon his god's power to understand the words on the rocks.

The rocks were dedications to fallen warriors. Each represented a brave soul that had died in battle. Each rock had the name of the slain foe, more often than not a giant. The souls of the slain creature were being entrusted to some being or god called Nom'los, or Nomolos. Cuthbert would have been an appropriate caretaker of the dead warriors, thought Schwepahn.

As there were no rocks in the area, Slanon surmised that each stone must have been carried afar by friends or relatives of the dead.

Jerlea, closely examining the construction of the monument, noticed from his experience growing up on a farm, that the clay holding the stones together was strengthened with a mixture of hoof trimmings.

The puzzle was starting to come together. The knight of Furyondy thought about what magnificent creatures these beings must be, with powerful horns, hooved feet, and respect and honor for their warriors. He hoped to meet one someday.

Before the others noticed, Fizbit the halfling had climbed up the back of the giant horn and was straddling the spiked end at the top.

"Fizbit!" Schwepahn yelled, "get down from there! That's holy!" Schwepahn was hoping to instill some piety in the curious halfling, a task he found rarely successful.

"This don't look like no temple," Fizbit yelled down. The halfling had a definite idea of what a holy place looked like, unlike the more spiritual interpretations of his priest friend Schwepahn.

"What can you see from up there?!" Jerlea yelled, always trying to expand his mental map of the terrain. Fizbit had remarkable vision. "The trails go on for miles up and down hills and across the grassy planes!" Fizbit yelled down. "And I can see another one of these here horns about a mile away, and another, and another, and... well, about as many as there are rocks piled up here."

Schwepahn stood stunned, overwhelmed by the scope of faith represented by such a large number of monuments. Slanon was busy performing mathematical calculations in his head, tallying the likely dead among the brave horned warriors, based on his guess of the number of stones making up the horn in front of him. Jerlea bowed his head in honor of the brave warriors, and their culture that held them in such high respect. Fizbit saw something shiny.

"Hey guys!" Fizbit yelled. "There's a bunch of funny looking centaur things coming this way!"

The Realm of Pam'para

Jerek threw back the tent flap and stormed into his new quarters, the large tent of the bariaur flocks chief. He was still dizzy from that last head butt, the one that knocked Chief Fegal unconscious and had won Jerek the flock's chief position. Jerek smiled from ear to ear and fantasized about all the great things that would come his way now; the beautiful does, the ceremonial magic club, and most importantly, his say in how the flock was run.

It was this last prize that led Jerek to challenge Fegal, even against the advice of both Feg Dalaba, the flock's shaman, and his own mother, who only wanted Jerek to live a long, peaceful life, producing plenty of grandchildren. Such sedentary thoughts are what lost Fegal his leadership role. Bariaur are supposed to be warriors, not farmers. After the most recent attack, it was time for a raid against the giants. No whining about troop strengths or food supplies mattered where this issue was concerned. The younger bucks agreed with Jerek, while the older set, complacent and conservative in their ways, denied the flock, denied *him*, that battle. Jerek had seen a little over 30 migration seasons, enough time to intuitively understand the ground he walked, literally and figuratively. It was time for a change for the Midnight River Bariaur, and Jerek was happy to usher it in, even if it meant stepping over the prone body of the flock's chief.

The tent flap opened suddenly and Dalaba, the shaman, stormed into Jerek's new quarters.

"I hope you know what you're doing!" Dalaba said, "You may have just doomed every buck, doe and kid in this flock."

"I'll tell you what would spell the doom for this flock," Jerek responded angrily, "Complacency. The kind of complacency that rots the spirit and dilutes our proud traditions. I thought you would understand that."

"There is a time for everything, young one, including a time for rest." Dalaba said with a sigh.

"But there is also a time for war, and that time is now!" Jerek blurted angrily.

"Very well, you are chief now so... "

"That's right, I *am* chief now, so you will do what I say." Jerek interrupted.

Dalaba looked at Jerek with a dark frown. "No, not exactly, but I will support you in whatever decision you make. The council will do likewise. But before you take on the forces of Jötunheim all by yourself, there is something that I must tell you."

"Yes, yes, old Fegal can return the club whenever he gets around to it. I might be stronger than that old goat, but I'm not petty. I'll leave the spite and bitterness to you females. I always thought clubs to be inferior to swords and k'ton anyway."

Dalaba ignored the insults, both to the sacred club and to all bariaur does, just as she did the evening young Fegal had become chief. Only now Dalaba was twenty years older, an old woman of sixty migration seasons, yet she still had patience for these young bucks. She had no idea where it came from.

"No, it's something else, it's something told only to chiefs, some valuable knowledge that you need to have." Dalaba said.

"Yeah, yeah, I don't need to know who is sleeping with whom, just match up the ones you think should be together. And I don't give a flying foo dog what the spirits thought of my latest victory." Jerek said.

"Sorry, nothing so lewd or esoteric as that. There's something I'm required to tell you upon your victory, about a place, where only chiefs may go." Dalaba said.

Jerek smiled and winked at Dalaba. "You mean like my own private rutting ground?"

Dalaba sighed. "Oh no, quite the opposite. It's a place called Pam'para."

"Hey, I don't like the sound of that. Pam'para means... "

"Yes," Dalaba interrupted, "the word means defeat, a word as vile and foul to our kind as the most loathsome utterances from The Abyss. But you will know Pam'para. You will know of the place, and you will know of the concept. Every great leader must have death and defeat on his mind all the time. It keeps him sober and careful with the lives of his people."

Jerek's smile disappeared and, for the first time in years, he listened intently to what someone else was saying.

"I see I have your attention, young one." Dalaba said. "Now let me tell you of the realm where defeated chiefs go. Let me tell you of the price of leadership, the price you will one day pay."

And so Dalaba told Chief Jerek Silverflank, son of Fegal Silverflank, of the Ysgard Midnight River Bariaur



Flock, where his father would be spending the rest of his days, and where he too would one day rest his head.

The Realm of Pam'para

It's a natural event for a warrior to challenge the authority of the flock's chief. It is how the bariaur system of male leadership operates. In fact, an entire ritual of ascension exists to preserve the dignity and integrity of both the chief and the challenger.

Yet, when a chief is defeated, there is little known about where he goes. Certainly he doesn't stay with the flock, living out his life as an elder. Some believe that he goes off to "fight the giants," euphemism for suicide by combat. Many older bariaur, who feel they've outlived their usefulness, take that long walk to Jötunheim. However, this is not an acceptable end when it comes to the chief. Bariaur value individuality too much to allow such an ignominious death for such a valuable person.

The truth to the where the old chiefs go after they've led their flocks is known only to the flock shaman, and standing chief. The information is secret, in fact it's considered sacred. However, there have been times when the wisdom of the chiefs has been so desperately needed that outsiders were told of Pam'para's secret location, or lead there by a flock's priest or shaman. Such a break with tradition and violation of sacred oath would need to be so grave, that the lives of the entire plane would be in jeopardy.

ABOUT PAM'PARA

Awaiting Ragnarök, the final battle between giants and gods (or their own personal "end of the world") retired bariaur chiefs live out their lives on this large temperate island. Pam'para itself is a remote island on Ysgard, accessible only through a secret branch of Yggdrasil, The World Ash or an ocean voyage of immense difficulty.

On Pam'para, the greatest heroes of bariaur culture live out their days telling stories, fighting in ritual combat, smoking herbs and awaiting the event that they know will someday come.

Old chiefs never die,
they go to Pam'para

Some say that Ragnarök is a myth known only to humans and their Norse powers, yet anyone who has spent time on Ysgard knows for certain the reality of this so-called myth. Every myth contains a core of truth, either about ones personal life or ones culture. The reality that the giants will someday attack in an attempt to destroy the world is a one that every bariaur knows in his heart to be true. That one day each warrior will meet his end is also a bariaur version of Ragnarök.

In the beginning, when the bariaur powers were yet to have ascended, the bariaur were betrayed by Loki and other two-legged powers. Since then, the bariaur have paid little heed to the demands or requests of the Norse powers. However, the bariaur know that when Ragnarök comes, they will not be given the chance to remain neutral. For as long as bariaur can remember, the giants have preyed on them, like wolves killing sheep. While the Norse powers can be forgiven, the giants have shown themselves to be the worst kind of enemy.

When Ragnarök comes, the true bariaur warriors will be called to defend their flock and the old chiefs of Pam'para will once again charge into battle one last time.



THE DARK OF PAM'PARA (DM's Only)

Pam'para is useful as a destination for characters in need of specialized information. For example, bariaur chiefs are the military historians of their people. They know of all the tactics, martial arts, weapons styles, and even knowledge regarding legendary Ysgardian weapons and artifacts, bariaur or otherwise.

It may be useful to have a party find Pam'para, either with the help of a bariaur shaman, or on their own (maybe via that perilous ocean voyage).

Remember, only Ragnarök itself is enough to motivate these bucks. They wish nothing but to prepare for Ragnarök, either their own personal version or the final culmination of the Plane of Ysgard.

Breaking the Bubble: How to Introduce Planar Races to a Prime Campaign

By Gary L. Ray

Introducing primes to the planes is easy. They have their first introduction to Sigil, possibly a romp through a sedate upper plane, or maybe a slow taste of the planes via Astral Projection or the infamous Cubic Gate. The slow approach is all well and good, since the planes can be an overwhelming environment, equivalent to the hayseed visiting the big city. But what happens when you want to introduce planar races to a prime campaign?

The wholesale arrival of planar races would be the modern equivalent of an invasion by saucer creatures. The Homlet villagers will surely panic and chase the invaders with farm equipment and The Kingdom of Furyondy will likely call out the local militia and the best mages in the valley.

The planar races would probably be misinterpreted as something far more sinister. Bariaur, for example, because of their horns, would be mistaken for evil demons from the Abyss. And what about Tieflings and their origins? Primes have a hard enough time dealing with half-orcs, how about half-fiends? Clearly this is a volatile situation that requires extreme care. Not since that legendary expedition to The Barrier Peaks has there been the possibility of introducing something so dangerous into a campaign. However, there is hope.

There are several safe strategies that will allow you to seamlessly introduce planar races into your campaign without radically altering your campaign setting. These examples are usually exceptions to the rule, so their value lies mostly in introducing individual planar creatures into prime settings as player characters. There will likely be prejudice and fear in store for these new races, much like the reaction to drow elves to surface folk, or even the castigation experienced by half orcs. However, with the right introduction, it's likely that attacks on planars by demon hunters and stick wielding villagers can be kept to a minimum. The categories developed for introducing planars to prime worlds can be characterized as: the summoned monster, the spawn, the exile, and the ugly duckling.

The Summoned Monster

The summoned monster is a fear known to all planar races. Mage monster summoning spells have the potential to "gate-in" planar creatures. As we all know, this is great if you're a mage in the heat of battle in need of some cheap reinforcements to help win the day, but it's very bad if you're a grass eating bariaur chomping down your lunch in the green fields of Ysgard and you're suddenly yanked from your home to some backward prime world. Rather than finishing your salad, you find yourself in the presence of some presumptuous mage who expects you to go up against a pit fiend on his behalf! Needless to say, the summoned planar creature will be mighty angry, if she survives. The nasty part of the monster summoning spells is that it's permanent. There is no way back to the plane of origin after the spell ends. The planar creature is trapped in the prime world until she can find a way back.

This is an excellent opportunity to introduce a new planar character into a prime campaign. The planar creature, trapped on the prime, is forced to survive until she can find her way back home. The mage who summoned her may even feel guilty, thus providing the necessary equipment and contacts to help the planar get on with her life, either by adventuring on missions that may result in discovering the means back to the plane of origin, or simply earning her keep by fighting the evils of the day with an adventuring party. Alternately, this mage may become the mortal enemy of the character, an enemy that re-emerges from time to time, possibly by using that very same monster-summoning spell!

The Spawn

The Spawn approach, AKA the Luke Skywalker approach, places a planar creature with prime parents. The best examples occurs with tieflings and aasimar. In areas infested with fiends, it's not unlikely, either through force or charm, that some powerful fiend has managed to impregnate one of the local women. The resulting tiefling child would be raised as a human, probably in fear of discovery, if the father is known, or in ignorance if the child is thought to be of a human parent. If the tiefling had no outward

physical traits of his fiendish father, he might not know his true origins, only that he has certain "powers" that he can manifest on occasion. For an example of this, check out [Jade](#) and [Alexander](#), two tieflings (sister and brother) born and raised on a prime world.

The same approach can be used with Aasimar. Hopefully the means of conception were a little more benign, such as an Aasimon falling in love with a prime woman. It seems to happen all the time with powers from the Greek pantheon, so why not lesser beings? Here again, the youngster may or may not know her origins, only that she has certain powers unlike her peers. For added intrigue, the DM may wish to start a prime campaign with several human characters who only later discover their true heritage.

The Exile

The exile approach involves all the various reasons why a planar race would end up in a backwater prime world. This could include exile from their original plane, possibly because of religious persecution or war, membership in an outlaw faction, banishment by a tribe or government, the result of an angry god or powerful being, or maybe even a voluntary pilgrimage to someplace new. Bariaur are nomadic by nature, and modrons march across the multiverse on occasion. Maybe a small group from these races decided to stay afterwards, or couldn't return.

In any case, this approach is the most direct, and thus most disruptive to a campaign. It's a case of the saucer people landing in the backyard and setting up camp. But this strategy has promise if you wish to introduce larger numbers of planars into the prime campaign, rather than the single individual. A cinematic example of this would be the movie and TV series *Alien Nation*.

The Ugly Duckling

The last approach is called The Ugly Duckling, or Tarzan approach. The planar creature has been discovered by a prime race similar to their own, and raised in their society. The planar creature most likely thinks that she is a member of this race. For example, a tribe of centaur may adopt a female bariaur. As centaur avoid contact with other races, it's likely that the bariaur has never been presented with the notion that she's not one of tribe. Over time, she would probably sense that she was different from her family and friends, maybe even persecuted or ridiculed because of her strange appearance. Only as she approached adulthood would her adoptive parents reveal her true nature. This would likely lead to a quest to find her parents or her origins, thus another great introduction of a planar character into a prime campaign.

Whatever approach you use to introduce planar races into a prime campaign, I recommend a gradual process, one in which the planar character is slowly introduced to their origins or situation. In the case of The Spawn approach, you may wish to keep the characters origin secret until his mentor, family member or the results of an adventure reveal his true identity. Or you may wish to gradually bestow powers or abilities of the planar race onto the character, until they seek answers to their own nature. In the case of the Ugly Duckling approach, the character may actually think she's a centaur, rather than a bariaur, and at the DM's option, the player may not even know his characters true origin. With some care and planning, introducing planar races into your prime campaign should be a rewarding and eye opening experience, one that the players will later appreciate.

Bariaur and the Factions

Overview

Bariaur are free to join any faction they want. Tell them otherwise and they'll likely try to join just to spite you. Nevertheless, there are some natural affinities that draw Bariaur to particular factions and repel them from others. Joining some factions, such as The Dustmen, would be unimaginable to most Bariaur. You would have a hard time finding arguments against joining other factions, such as the Indeps. Alignment with factions usually results from a Bariaur's belief system.

Faction and Belief

Bariaur without strong beliefs tend to rely on their cultural background as their motivation in life. Having fun, fighting hard, lots of sex and mating activity, partying all night and generally being social would characterize this lot. They would be happy in a variety of factions, especially those that tend to be impulsive and independent.

Those who believe in The Powers are just as social and active as the average Bariaur without a belief system, yet they respect their Power and their faith commitments. These Bariaur would obviously avoid the Athar for their anti-power stance, and would also avoid the fated for their denial of the powers role. In most other respects, those who believe in The Powers are attracted to the same factions as their non-believer flock-mates.

The shamans try to be just one of the bucks (usually does). When it comes to factions, they attempt to seek balance. So although they align themselves with factions that the average Bariaur would consider, there are some exceptions. For example, The Doomguard and Fated are too depressing for the average shaman. They tend to lack the necessary balance and harmony for a Bariaur spirit.

Mystics are the most complicated of the lot. Mystics are intent on understanding EVERY faction and belief system, so they generally avoid anyone who claims that there is no truth. If you claim to actually have the truth, then a Bariaur mystic will surely pay you a visit and may even join. The mystics are attracted to a few factions that most Bariaur would avoid. These include The Guvners and The Ciphers. The Guvners philosophy of learning the laws of the universe to understand it (usually control it), is consistent with the mystic's philosophy. The cipher's also have a philosophy of universal unity with truth that appeals to the mystics.

For the mystics, the one exception to joining factions are The Sensates. Sensates represent the antithesis of mystic philosophy. Mystics believe in experiencing the spiritual core of every belief, while Sensates believe in experiencing the physical core of every experience. A Mystic and a Sensate would make a great team, both wanting to explore the new and unusual, but just don't let them get started talking philosophy.

Here's a summary of the factions that most Bariaur would consider joining based on their belief system:

Faction/Belief	None	Powers	Shaman	Mystic
Athar	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Godsmen	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bleakers	No	No	No	No
Doomguard	Yes	No	No	No
Dustment	No	No	No	No
Fated	Yes	No	No	No
Guvners	No	No	No	Yes

Indeps	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harmonium	No	No	No	No
Mercykillers	No	No	No	No
Anarchists	No	No	No	No
Signers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sensates	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Ciphers	Yes	No	No	Yes
Chaosmen	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

DISCLAIMER: Let me emphasize that I am in no way endorsing a faction or denigrating a faction. I welcome debate in this area, and any faction that wishes to argue these points has my full support and attention. I am in no way responsible for the outcome of joining one of these factions nor am I responsible for the actions of Bariaur who decide not to join a faction. As a mystic myself, I feel all factions are worth exploring and I highly encourage such investigation.

INDEX

A

acheron2, 67, 113, 114
 air23, 27, 35, 75, 97
 ascension119

B

Baku41, 45
 balama-koga.....30
 Bar Bar36
 bariaur.....1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10,
 12, 14, 16, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32,
 33, 34, 36, 37, 43, 45, 49, 51, 52, 55, 65, 66, 67,
 68, 69, 75, 77, 78, 81, 83, 84, 85, 88, 96, 98, 99,
 101, 102, 105, 106, 108, 112, 113, 118, 119, 121,
 122, 123, 124
 Battle3, 16, 77, 101, 111
 Battle Bringer.....3
 Battlefleece16, 17, 20, 21, 24
 BattleGrim21, 24
 Bazru67
 Belief.....2, 3, 67, 123
 Believers of the Source.....19, 20
 Blessed Fury21, 22, 24
 Breaking2, 121
 Bubble2, 67, 121

C

Card.....47, 48
 Chaos.....1, 10, 12
 Combat39, 59, 62, 72, 75, 111
 Core.....1, 5, 13, 102
 Creation1, 67, 68, 69
 Cube67, 113, 114
 Cult.....3, 4

D

Death16, 17, 100
 Deck of Shis.....1, 25, 47, 48
 Dismus Torben.....17
 Dog.....2, 67, 110, 111, 112
 Draugnian Steelhoof.....17, 19
 Druid5
 Drum25, 51

E

Earth.....49
 Echoing Vale17, 21
 Elder17
 Evil.....1, 8, 12, 26

F

Faction.....2, 49, 123

Fair-Bringer.....19
 Falling Mountain35
 Fen Korab.....2, 67, 91, 93
 Fire.....17, 49, 60, 93, 116
 Flank Swing35
 Flock33, 49, 91, 119
 Flying Wall34
 Food.....1, 25, 36
 Free League.....12, 19

G

Garileba.....34
 Giant10, 11, 17, 85
 God3, 16, 19, 77, 96, 97
 Golden.....105, 106
 Good1, 7, 8, 12, 108
 Grizzled Horns17, 18

H

Honor-binder21
 Hoof.....1, 25, 26, 28, 50
 Hoof Trimming.....25, 26
 Hoof-Brother19
 Horn.....17, 49, 82, 83, 84, 86
 Horn of Nomolos17
 Hornless1, 7

I

Instrument9

J

Jötunheim.....51, 53, 77, 78,
 83, 84, 85, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 118, 119

K

Kayi2, 67, 110, 111, 112
 Kit.....1, 5, 8, 59, 63
 Klorn 'Foe Hammer' Warhorns.....16

L

La-bunesa.....35
 Law1, 12
 Legend1, 67, 101
 Loki.....40, 53, 54, 77, 78, 79,
 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94,
 95, 119
 Lyelian Dewhoof.....16, 19, 20

M

Magic5, 10, 11, 71, 74, 82, 110
 Majestic.....9
 Majestic Goodfellow.....9
 Manifesto1, 12

Martial Art..... 1, 25, 33
 Meditation1, 25, 43, 45
 Migoka25
 Mystic..... 1, 3, 5, 12, 35, 123
 Mysticism3, 4
 Myth..... 1, 67

N

Nomadic3
 Nomolos 2, 3, 16, 17, 21, 67, 69, 116, 117

O

Odin.....18, 22, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 84, 88, 102
 Old One17
 Order 1, 7, 8, 59, 65, 72
 Outland Powers..... 1, 16
 Outlands.....4, 16, 17, 19, 39, 51, 54, 55, 68, 69,
 71, 75, 91, 95, 108

P

Payira1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 59, 72
 Pepper.....37
 Polo2, 67, 108, 109
 Portal 2, 10, 67, 108, 109
 Power 10, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 53, 94, 123
 Prayer27
 Priest 5, 116
 Proxies..... 16, 17, 19, 21, 53, 94
 Proxy16

R

Religion 3, 9, 63
 Rena 1, 25, 51, 52, 55
 Ritual..... 1, 3, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 39, 41, 53, 90, 94
 Role8
 Rutting..... 19, 21

S

Sacred..... 1, 3, 14, 91
 Sagoma..... 1, 25, 43, 44, 45
 Salt37
 Samurai2, 67, 96, 98
 Seeing.....93
 Shaman 1, 3, 5, 14, 45, 47, 123
 Shamanism 1, 3, 4, 14
 Shek..... 1, 2, 25, 26, 51, 52, 53, 54,
 67, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 87, 88, 89, 90, 94, 95
 Shis..... 47, 55, 57
 Shrine 2, 67, 116

Sigil.....2, 17, 55, 56, 57, 67,
 69, 91, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 116, 121
 Skill16, 19, 31
 Society 25, 73, 75, 112
 Soran Fleethoof..... 16, 19
 Spirit 1,
 2, 25, 43, 45, 51, 52, 53, 67, 68, 77, 78, 81, 83, 85,
 88, 94
 Spirit Drum 1, 51, 52, 53, 94
 Spirituality..... 6, 48
 Staray25
 Stare..... 25, 58, 59, 60
 Survey 2, 113

T

Throndas Battlehorn16, 19, 20
 Tirag 16, 19, 21, 30, 69, 79, 80, 87, 88, 89, 90
 Tirag Thunderhooves 16, 19, 20, 30, 69, 90
 Tout.....2, 67, 104
 Tradegate..... 47, 71
 Trap-Roll..... 34
 Tree.....2, 14, 67, 91, 92, 93
 Tree of Seeing 2, 67, 91, 92, 93
 Trim 1, 28
 Trimming 26

U

Unity 17

V

Victory Saddle.....2, 67, 101

W

War 21, 36, 49, 73, 75, 96, 97, 98, 99, 101
 War Bars 36
 War Mother 21
 Wild Mage..... 5, 6, 9
 Wild Surge 7, 9
 Wild Yams 36
 Wind Blade 1, 25, 61, 62, 63
 Winner-of-Rings..... 19
 Wisdom..... 3, 16, 17, 22, 45

X

Xurdas Nightfleece16, 19, 20

Y

Ysgard.....3, 17, 19, 21,
 33, 52, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 69, 90, 91, 93, 94, 95,
 96, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 117, 119, 120, 121

Appendix A - Wild Surge

Neutral Aligned Planes

Including The Outlands and Sigil

Good Aligned Planes

Evil Aligned Planes

Limbo

Wild Surges

Ed Bonny

There's no doubt about it. Casting wild magic on the planes is downright riskier than on prime worlds. It just makes sense, berk. These planes are the embodiment of chaos. Of course, it's risky but that's part of the fun. You see, only on the planes of chaos are you going to get wild surges that are wilder than anywhere else. You see, when a wild surge occurs on a plane of chaos, the very nature of the plane asserts itself by influencing the wild surge. Only a barmy would think that a wild surge on the Abyss would produce a stream of butterflies. More likely, a surge on the plane of ultimate chaotic evil would spew out disease-infested maggots or turn a berk into larva.

And there's more. On the planes of chaos, a surge can be more than completely unpredictable. Sometimes the effects of a surge can last for weeks or years. Sometimes a surge doesn't affect the caster or her intended target. Sometimes, it's the poor sod standing next to the caster who gets blasted by the surge.

One thing though, sages of wild magic believe that the intensity of a wild surge is sometimes related to a wizard's ability. Mages of high level can produce surges of tremendous power, while lower level mages producing similar results will create a surge with less of an effect.

There's a reason why most githzerai cities ban spell casting by outsiders in their cities. Read on, berk to learn the dark of wild surges on the planes of chaos!

Making it Wilder

This section introduces new, optional tables for using wild magic. Each table can enhance the role-playing aspect of wild magic by introducing even more random events to the wild surge (as if an ordinary wild surge wasn't bad enough). DMs are free to use one, some, all, or none of these tables as suits their particular campaign. All of these tables can and should be customized to the DM's desires. Suggestions for modifying these tables appear frequently throughout the article.

Duration: The duration of the effects of wild surges normally are based on either the wizard's level or as detailed in the Wild Surge Results table in the Tome of Magic. This table allows for a random duration based on a die roll. Using this method, a wild surge could last just an instant, a few rounds, a few hours, or much, much longer.

2D10 Wild Surge Duration Table

2 Permanent

3 Surge effect ends when caster leaves the plane that surge occurred on.

4 Instantaneous

5 1 round

6 1d4 rounds

7 2d6 rounds

8 3d10 rounds

9-12 Standard duration as per Tome of Magic or as described in Surge Result tables

13 1 turn/caster's level

14 1d4 hours

15 4d6 hours

16 1 day/caster's level

17 1d12 weeks

18 1d6 days

19 1d12 months

20 1d4 years

Target: The subject of a wild surge can also be a random event. If using this table with wild surges, merely substitute the newly rolled target for the one listed in the wild surge effect tables. DMs are reminded that some surges do not have specified targets or a necessarily defined area of effect, and thus will not require a roll on this table.

d10 TABLE I: Surge Target

1 Surge affects character(s) as originally listed.

2 Caster affected.

3 Target of spell affected.

4 All within 1d10x10' of the caster.

5 All within 1d10x10' of the target.

6 1d4 random beings within 1d10x10' of the caster.

7 1d4 random beings within 1d10x10' of the target.

8 Both caster and target of spell affected.

9 Caster may select target of surge; range of 1d10x10' from caster.

10 Target of spell may select someone to be the target of the surge; range of 1d10x10' from target.

Overcoming resistance: This option allows wild surges to affect a character's saving throws and magic resistance when saving against a wild surge's effects. DMs may roll once for all characters within the area of effect. To make it even wilder, a separate roll may be made for each character to be affected.

D12 TABLE II: Magic Resistance Modifier Table

- 1 No change to save.
- 2 Character receives +1 to save
- 3 Character receives +2 to save
- 4 Character receives +4 to save
- 5 Character receives -1 to save
- 6 Character receives -2 to save
- 7 Character's MR is halved; -4 to save.
- 8 Character's MR is useless against surge but saves normally
- 9 If character has MR, it is improved by 1d2+10% against the surge; character's save is unchanged.
- 10 Only characters with MR have a chance to avoid surge, save automatically fails.
- 11 Character's MR is useless against surge; save automatically fails.
- 12 Character protected from surge as if affected by chaos shield.

Surge Variance: The wild surge tables provided with this article often have powerful effects. The planes offer unique and highly unusual environments for casting magic. Spell casting on the planes is often tricky. For wild surges, this becomes doubly true and too often a dangerous proposition. DMs are free to set the power level of wild surges occurring in their campaigns to reflect the casting level of their players. DMs seeking to tone down the power level of a surge can substitute less powerful versions of a spell effect for a more powerful one. For example, if chain lightning is rolled as a surge result, the DM could substitute shocking grasp for low-level characters or lightning bolt for mid-level characters. Conversely, when a high-level wizard causes a wild surge, the DM may wish to heighten the surge's intensity rather than impress the players with a less spectacular effect. In this instance, the DM could substitute a meteor swarm or delayed blast fireball for a fireball. Not all surges allow for this option. DMs may want to create a few of their own wild surge results to use should they roll a result that would be inappropriate for their campaign.

Notes for the DM:

The following information is designed to clarify

Surges that changed a PC's physical

forms or race: A PC who has his form changed by a wild surge merely has his external appearance altered. The character does not gain any new abilities or hit dice. A PC whose race is changed, however, loses all abilities from the old race and gains all the abilities of the new race (innate abilities, ability score changes). Except where noted, any creature polymorphed by a surge is treated the same as if affected by the polymorph other spell. Race changes and physical form changes are permanent until dispelled.

DM discretion: There will be circumstances when a wild surge may unbalance a game session or even an entire campaign. A permanent lightning bolt ricocheting around an Abyssal fortress could easily kill the party's demon enemies but would probably wipe out the party too. The sight of a caster and his target swapping places every round for hours on end might frustrate even the most experienced gamers. Worse still, what's a party to do when their mage, who is holding all the portal keys, is dispatched to a random plane leaving the party behind? Fortunately for adventurers, most effects of a wild surge can be dispelled with a dispel magic. However, if a party is not able to undo disastrous wild surges, DMs should consider the consequences of a wild surge before allowing one to occur. Asking questions like, "Will this wild surge add a sense of fun and wonder to their game?" or "Will this surge unfairly unbalance a game?" can save a lot of exasperation later on.

Oops! Bad surge! Some DMs may find that a wild surge which they thought was harmless is now beginning to unbalance their game. If the surge left behind a persistent spell effect such as changing appearance, inventive DMs can simply dispel the surge's effects with a little role-playing creativity.

The simplest way would be to have some concerned NPC involved with the party dispel the effect, either with or without the party's consent. This could take the form of a benefactor, faction high-up, or even a unknown sect that scours the multiverse seeking to undo the damages of wild surges. Many dungeons that once belonged to high-level wizards and priests have null magic zones that also could remove a surge's effect. DMs may even add debilitating side-effects to a wild surge to encourage a PC to rid himself of a wild surge's persistent effect. For example, each day that a surge's personal effect lingers, a character suffers a cumulative 1hp loss of life to sustain that effect. If the character does not rid himself of the surge's effect, he will eventually die.

Neutral Planes

including *The Outlands* and *Sigil*

Wild Surges

WILD SURGE RESULTS

Note: Summoning effects that take place in Sigil teleport a creature from within the city to the spellcaster's location.

D100 Roll	Result
01	Forest of tall oak trees sprout up in a 60' radius, encircling caster. Save vs. paralyzation to avoid being lifted up with the trees.
02	Caster smells like a skunk for spell duration
03	Caster grows beard that flows out onto ground, becoming sticky tar (5' per level)
04	Caster's pelt grows out several inches and stands on end
05	Five foot weeds grow up around caster in 60' radius
06	Spell causes spontaneous casting of another memorized spell of equal level
07	Caster breaks out into song, 2-7 musicians appear to accompany
08	Caster's pelt is dyed a rainbow pattern
09	Large "yurt" tent appears around caster (20' diameter with hole in top)
10	Caster's pelt catches fire
11	Caster's alignment becomes opposite for 2d20 turns
12	Caster's lower body become human for 2d20 turns
13	Caster's genitalia grow by 200% for 2d20 turns, movement is at 1/4 th
14	User has a poison touch for 2d20 turns
15	Spell becomes permanent
16	Temperature within 60' radius raised by 40% for 2d20 turns
17	Caster speaks in Dabus for 2d8 hours, spells take three times as long to cast
18	All creatures speak Bariaur for 2d20 turns
19	Elemental Plane of Ooze puddle appears in front of caster, hands try to grab anyone within range
20	Caster's hooves become webbed feet, movement is halved, +4 initiative, 2d20 turns
21	Caster suffers same spell effect as target
22	Thunderous horn blows, stunning all within 60' for 1d4 rounds
23	Cure light wounds occurs within a 60' radius to everyone except caster
24	All doors and portals within one mile open and close 1d4 rounds later
25	Caster's horns replaced by unicorn horn for 2d20 turns. May use teleport spell
26	Caster permanently gains 200 pounds. -2 on dexterity until weight is lost
27	Heat metal (as spell) in 60' radius for 2d4 rounds
28	Yawning chasm appears before caster (20' x 100'), permanent.

29	Caster thinks he's a goat for 2d20 turns
30	Leaves shoot from caster's fingertips
31	Spell rebounds on caster
32	Wood warp cast within 60' radius
33	Image of Thor appears: lightning strikes random person in front of caster
34	Gate opens to random plane in front of caster, a creature emerges
35	Caster sounds like a stampeding flock when walking (2d4 hours)
36	Burning pipe of caster's favorite herb appears in mouth of everyone in 60' radius
37	A potted plant falls from the sky and crashes within 60' of caster
38	<i>Spike growth</i> spell
39	Camp fire appears in front of caster
40	Metal within 60' radius magnetizes and flies at caster
41	One normal item within 60' of caster becomes permanently magical
42	All normal weapons within 60' become k'tons (permanent)
43	Creatures within 60' grow long beards, 10' long.
44	Stinking cloud
45	Creatures within 60' grow rams horns, lasts 2d20 turns, +2 on initiative
46	One item from each creature within 60' is transferred to another creature
47	Caster and target exchange places
48	Spell listed after spell in <i>Player's Handbook</i> is spontaneously cast
49	Spell listed before spell in <i>Player's Handbook</i> is spontaneously cast
50	Priest Spell listed in same position in <i>Player's Handbook</i> is spontaneously cast
51	Everyone pushed back 60' from caster (pushing lasts one round)
52	Grass grows in a 96' square before the caster, or grass existing there grows to 10 times its normal size
53	Caster diminished to 1/12 normal size, as per potion of diminution
54	800 small rubber balls (each 1 inch in diameter) rain down for 1-4 rounds within an 18' radius of the caster, causing all in the area to make a dexterity check or trip and fall. The balls remain in the area, causing further checks at the start of each round of combat, until they are carried or swept away
55	Caster breaths fire as per a randomly determined potion of fire breathing (only one breath is allowed)
56	All creatures (who hit) roll critical hits (or double damage) for next 2d5 rounds
57	Flock of 10d40 goats appears around caster
58	Caster's hands spew colorless slime in a cone 18' wide and 36' long, affecting the area as a grease spell
59	Target's nose grows 10 times its normal size for 2-6 rounds
60	Caster levitates uncontrollably, always heading upward until the spell duration is reached, then falls
61	All glass or crystal within 30' of the caster shatters. Magic items or glass containers holding magic items get a saving throw

62	All creatures in a 60' radius hostile to the caster are duplicated, including possessions
63	An enormous cyclone picks up the target and his/her/its friends and takes them to a flat, uninhabited area of The Outlands (or The Lady's Ward if in Sigil)
64	All creatures slain by the caster during the last day rise up as free willed undead and attempt to destroy him/her. The undead have all their original abilities and skills, and need no food or sleep. If the caster is slain, the undead created by the surge turn to ash.
65	Caster changes faction for 2d20 days
66	Caster chained to the ground
67	All spells cast by the caster during the next 24 hours will generate a wild surge
68	Caster's next spell is cast at 1d4 levels higher
69	Target <i>enlarged</i>
70	Caster grows wings, suitable for flying. They last 1d4 days
71	Caster casts a magic user spell of his choice from the 8th level or less, no components necessary, casting time 1. (Give the player 10 seconds to decide on the spell.)
72	3d20 Dretches (Least Tanar'ri) are gated in and attack the caster. They are unable to gate in others
73	Area within 60' radius of caster becomes dead magic region. Magical creatures become inert, and items and spells will not function in this area (2d20 days)
74	Target sent to "The Mazes"
75	The caster is picked up by an invisible hand and shaken like a rag-doll for 2d6 rounds. Spell casting under such conditions is impossible
76	Target becomes 2-dimensional (as per Duo-Dimension) for 10 rounds; flat side initially faces caster
77	Area in 60' radius of caster held in stasis 1d10 days; there will probably be someone/something standing outside waiting for the field to end
78	Next missile weapon used by target multiplies into 6 when used
79	Caster polymorphs into something rhyming with his name (DM's choice) (2d4 days)
80	All mounts within 60' polymorphed into goats unless a save vs. polymorph is made by the beasts.
81	The caster and target exchange bodies. If the target is a completely non-sentient object, the caster will fall into a coma
82	The target and caster (only) are sealed in an impenetrable wall of force that only falls when one of the two dies
83	All the spells the caster has memorized go off, one per round, from level one up. Caster has no control over the sequence, but can name targets.
84	A yellow mushroom grows from the caster's right ear in two rounds. It is edible, but tastes of wax. Caster must save vs. spell or be distracted during the process

85	Spell effectiveness (range, duration, area of effect, damage, etc.) increases 200%
86	Spell caster loses all hair, -4 on charisma
87	Spellcaster appears over target, falling on top of him. 1d6 damage per 100 lbs.
88	Target begins bleating like goat for 2d4 rounds
89	Spellcaster and target's race change (2d20 turn duration).
90	Target <i>slowed</i>
91	Target transported naked to Astral plane (or The Hive) for 2d8 turns
92	Spellcaster transported naked to Ethereal plane (or The Lower Ward) for 2d8 rounds
93	Prime humans randomly summoned/teleported. Use Monstrous Manual: 1d8 for table, 1d3 for column, then roll randomly.
94	<i>Living wall</i> created between spellcaster and target
95	Spell duration lasts 1d4 turns
96	Target and spellcaster start debate about uses for a flexible stick
97	Flash flood, all creatures within 60 make dexterity check or be washed away
98	Spellcaster ages 1d10 years
99	Random spell or ability of target's is cast or used instead of spell
100	Illusion of the Lady of Pain appears, apparently annoyed with both parties

Wild Surges

WILD SURGE RESULTS

by Ed Bonny

1. Spell is powered by caster's life-force, causing 1 hp of damage per level of the spell.
2. Bloodthorn patch (PSMC2) springs up in a 10x10 sq. yd patch centered on the target.
3. Caster is affected by feeblemind.
4. Caster's touch is poisonous to non-natives of the plane. Attacked victims must save vs. poison or die. Any food that the caster touches, even food that enters the caster's mouth is also rendered poisonous.
5. Caster's physical form changes into a random lesser tanar'ri.
6. Caster's alignment becomes chaotic evil.
7. Caster's mind is wiped clean of all memorized spells.
8. Suffocate centered on caster.
9. Caster's feet and legs transformed into random demonic counterparts (goat legs with hoofs, squid-like tentacles, etc.).
10. Target grows scaly, whip-like prehensile tail.
11. Caster gains a quasit for a familiar. If caster already has a familiar, that familiar is killed and replaced with the quasit. Caster suffers no ill effects from loss of first familiar.
12. Caster radiates a chaotic evil alignment.
13. Caster can no longer memorize spells in the Abyss.
14. Caster affected by unholy word.
15. Every spellcaster within 50' of the caster affected by Gunther's kaleidoscopic strike.
16. Nightmare arrives and serves as caster's mount so long as caster remains on any lower plane.
17. Caster polymorphs into an animal or monster that most populates the layer he is on. For example, caster would polymorph into a spider or pedipalp on any of Lolth's Abyssal layers.
18. A chaotic evil duplicate of the spell's target appears next to the caster. The duplicate possesses the same innate abilities, hit points, fighting skills, weapons and armor, memorized spells, etc. as the original. The duplicate may try to replace the original, befriend the party, attack, or runaway to explore its new existence. If killed, all the duplicate's belongings vanish.
19. 2d6 larvae appear in front of caster. Some larvae bear the faces of the party's lost loved ones. These larvae tell family secrets, seek to accompany party as guides in the Abyss, prey on the party's fears.
20. Caster affected by insatiable thirst.
21. Caster grows a second head, identical to original, however, second head is chaotic evil and has control over the caster's body 45% of the time.
22. Target affected by Lorloviem's shadowy transformation.
23. Pyrotechnics centered on caster.
24. Incendiary cloud centered on target.
25. Caster's physical form changes into a larva.
26. Chain lightning entered on target.
27. Caster grows 2d10+10 long, spiky thorns from palms of hand. Thorns prevent somatic spellcasting and weapon-wielding, however a successful hit with one of the caster's fists causes 1d4+1 points of damage. Thorns can be painfully plucked out, causing 1hp/damage for each hand cleaned.
28. Target's alignment changes to chaotic evil.
29. Caster affected by enervate.
30. All creatures in a 100' radius around caster affected by fumble.
31. Target is imprisoned.
32. Caster attacked by phantasmal killer.
33. Target grows horns from forehead and razor sharp spine ridges down back destroying any armor worn and shredding clothing.

34. 1 random spell erased permanently from caster's spellbook.
35. Caster affected by banishment.
36. Caster affected by energy drain.
37. Target polymorphs into a bodak.
38. Caster glows a bright color based on alignment (yellow for lawful good, red for lawful evil, etc.). The light's intensity and duration is equal to continual light.
39. Caster affected by improved invisibility and silence 15'r.
40. A Bigby's clenched fist appears and randomly attacks a different creature each round.
41. Caster affected by Hornung's random dispatcher.
42. All metal within 50' of caster affected by crystalbrittle.
43. Fear centered on caster.
44. Caster and target switch places.
45. A rain of hot blood pours down on caster with effects identical to grease.
46. Abi-Dalzim's horrid wilting centered on caster.
47. Power word, blind affects target.
48. Caster's physical form transforms into an Outer Planar creature of good (archon, aasimon, guardinal, or eladrin).
49. All non-magical clothing within 100' of caster vanishes.
50. Caster's race changes to become a tiefling.
51. 2d6 minor tanar'ri appear and attack party.
52. Target enlarged 200%
53. An acid storm rains on all within 25' of the caster.
54. Melf's minute meteor's strikes target.
55. Rays of enfeeblement rain down on a 100' square area centered on target, one ray each round striking a random target.
56. Earthquake centered on caster.
57. Ice Storm centered on caster.
58. Caster grows large, leathery bat wings providing caster with a flying movement rate of 15, MC: E.
59. Caster's mouth vanishes, leaving caster unable to eat or speak.
60. Target acquires fatal, rotting disease causing 1hp loss per turn.
61. All deceased bodies within 100 yards of caster rise up as free-willed juju zombies possessing the same hit dice they did in life and attack all living creatures.
62. Caster slowly takes on a demonic appearance over the next 24 hours. Skin grows hard, scaly, and pinkish-red. Hair becomes dun-brown, brittle, and wild. Eyes become yellow and teeth grow sharp and pointy. Charisma drops by 3.
63. All gold within 100' of caster transforms into rusted tin.
64. Caster's spellbook becomes sentient, capable of speech, and is chaotic evil. Spellbook refuses to allow the caster to memorize magic from its pages unless the caster furthers the cause of chaos and evil. The spellbook will snap shut on the caster's fingers, turn its pages to give papercuts, yell and scream to prevent its spells from being memorized.
65. Target's form becomes gaseous similar to the vampire ability making the target vulnerable to air attacks.
66. 1d4 night hags summoned to caster's location and attempt to steal all mortal souls present.
67. Black oil continually oozes from every pore of the target. Oil is flammable and if set aflame, causes 2d4 points of damage per round to target.
68. Black dragon (random age) appears and attacks caster.
69. Spectral hand appears in front of caster and attacks a random creature each round with vampiric touch.
70. All deceased bodies within 100 yards of target transform into larvae intent on attacking the caster.
71. Caster affected by attraction.
72. Cloudkill centered on both caster and target.
73. All food and drink within 10' of caster becomes rotten and putrid.
74. Caster receives a vision from the current ruler of the plane's layer.

75. Entanglement centered on target.
76. Target's appearance is changed into that of a random baatezu.
77. Target's hands transformed into wickedly sharp, hooked claws (i.e. hook horror) causing 1d8+1 points of damage per claw. Target can no longer manipulate objects such as wield weapons, carry a shield, or cast spells requiring somatic components.
78. Caster affected by forget, no save allowed.
79. Spectral hand attacks caster with chill touch.
80. Caster shoots 1d3 magic missiles from mouth each round when speaking. Missiles strike the person that the caster is addressing.
81. Evard's black tentacles under no one's control appear around caster.
82. Caster begins to melt into a gooey glob of protoplasm. If effect is not dispelled within 3d4 rounds, the caster can only be returned to his normal self by a wish.
83. Caster affected by symbol of hopelessness.
84. All magical weapons and armor within 20' of caster lose their plusses.
85. Uncontrollable vortex centered on target.
86. All beings within 20' of caster suffer 1d8+2 hit points of damage from wild surge energies.
87. A rain of melf's acid arrows falls down on all beings within 100' of caster, one arrow striking each being per round.
88. Target is stricken deaf and blind as the priest spells, cause deafness and cause blindness, no save allowed.
89. One random magical item belonging to target permanently disappears.
90. Caster affected by hold person.
91. Death fog centered on caster.
92. Target affected by feign death.
93. Caster gains a limited telepathy allowing mental contact with all tanar'ri within 100'.
94. Lower resistance affects all beings within 50' of caster.
95. Caster hurled 1d6x10 feet in a random direction taking 1d4 points of damage for every 10 feet thrown.
96. Caster affected by mind fog.
97. Roll for a result on the Wild Surge table in Tome of Magic.
98. Double Surged! Roll twice on this table, ignoring any 98 results.
99. Spell effect has 120' radius centered on target (all within radius suffer the effect).
100. Spell effectiveness (range, duration, area of effect, damage etc.) increases 200%.

Wild Surges

WILD SURGE RESULTS

by Ed Bonny

1. Caster is immune to the damaging effects of Limbo's primal elemental soup.
2. Random non-living items within a 10' radius of the caster vanish with an audible pop, 1 item vanishing per round. Items can be personal effects or rocks lying on the ground.
3. Target glows with a bright, pulsing green light.
4. Caster affected by improved invisibility.
5. One random magical item on caster is affected by Alamir's fundamental breakdown. Caster gains knowledge of item's construction as if he cast spell.
6. All food and water within 30' of caster vanishes.
7. Target gains a movement rate of 96 while travelling through Limbo.
8. Dimensional explosion centered on caster causing 2d4 hp of damage to all within 10'. Explosion creates a temporary planar rift sucking in all beings within 30' and dropping them off in the Astral Plane. Rift seals itself in 1d3 rounds.
9. 1d4 slaadi attracted (random type) to caster's location. Slaadi insist that caster cause another wild surge and attack if caster does not comply.
10. Caster dissolves into primal chaos matter (no save), seemingly lost forever. Caster reforms apparently unharmed in 2d4 rounds.
11. Prismatic spray erupts from caster's eyes.
12. Target affected by Hornung's random dispatcher.
13. Regardless of which spell is cast, all magic spells cast within 100' of caster are treated as if they are Nahal's reckless dweomer (including spell that caster just cast).
14. One random article of clothing vanishes from each character within 20' of caster.
15. Caster affected by Nahal's nonsensical nullifier.
16. Dispel magic centered on caster.
17. Caster and all within 20' teleported to the Spawning Stone.
18. 1d2 individuals within 100' of the caster are randomly affected by corporeal instability as per the bite of a chaos beast.
19. Target protected by spell turning.
20. Giant purple slaad appears and grants caster a limited wish.
21. All chaos-shaped land within 1 mile of the caster instantly dissolves into primal chaos.
22. A vortex appears under no one's control in front of caster, randomly moving about.
23. Caster harmlessly bathed in multi-colored lights that flash the colors of the spectrum.
24. While on Limbo, no slaad will attack caster unless caster attacks first.
25. Chaos nausea strikes all within 30 yd. of caster who suffer a -4 penalty to initiative and to hit rolls.
26. Target's alignment changes to chaotic neutral.
27. Caster is affected by wildstrike.
28. Rainbow pattern appears in front of caster.
29. Caster can change self at will.
30. Caster is granted the permanent ability to learn and cast wild magic spells. If caster is a wild mage, caster gains the ability to cast one additional wild magic spell per day in addition to the wild mage's normal spell complement. Spell may be any level that the wild mage can normally cast.
31. While on Limbo, any slaad the caster encounters will immediately attack.
32. Create water centered on caster.
33. Target splits into two lesser beings. All attributes are divided evenly among these two new beings: personal items including clothing, money; levels/hit dice, etc. Both creatures have identical memories and ability scores but start living separate lives at this point. Dual-classed or

multi-racial creatures will split along class/race lines. A half-elf ranger/mage might split into an elf ranger and a human mage (or any combination of the two).

34. A magic dead region with a 1 mile radius is centered on the caster. No magic spells, items, or spell-like abilities function within this region.
35. Caster gains an immunity to first level wizard spells of a random school.
36. Roll as if the caster had used a wand of wonder.
37. 1d4 chaos imps invisibly invade the caster's belongings.
38. Target changes color (stripes, plaids, and patterns possible).
39. A harmless rain of multi-colored toads falls. Toads look suspiciously like tiny slaadi.
40. Target's head changes to look like a slaad's head (random color). Charisma drops by -3.
41. Caster and chaos unite! Caster can see clearly through Limbo's primal matter up to 10 miles.
42. A random magical wall appears in front of caster (i.e. ice, prismatic, fire, force, etc.)
43. Target believes he is a slaad (random color).
44. Caster's mouth pours forth water as if a decanter of endless water (random effect: stream, fountain, or geyser). Caster cannot close mouth, speak, or cast spells until effect ends.
45. An area 100' radius surrounding the target is silenced.
46. Caster can only speak in the babbling manner of a Xaositect. If caster is/was a Xaositect, then caster's speech becomes grammatically correct.
47. Hornung's baneful deflector affects target.
48. Caster's alignment changes to a random new one.
49. A two-way gate opens up to a random Prime Material World allowing travel to and from that world.
50. Roll dice and announce that nothing seems to happen when in fact, nothing did happen.
51. Caster's physical form changes into a slaad (33% chance each of becoming a green, red, or blue slaad).
52. Caster's mouth issues forth smoke as if an ever-smoking bottle. Caster cannot close mouth, speak, or cast spells until effect ends.
53. Target affected by random causality.
54. All beings within 100' of caster (including caster) affected by either cure serious wounds/cause serious wounds (50% chance of either result for each being).
55. Caster protected by chaotic commands.
56. One random non-magical weapon within 20' of caster is permanently imbued with magic and life and also made sentient: Magical Plusses = 1d4+1; Ego = 4+d12; Intelligence = 4d4; Alignment = chaotic neutral. The weapon's personality is wildly raucous, seeking to spread chaos through fighting.
57. Caster's spellbook vanishes.
58. Chaos shaped matter within 500' of the caster becomes something other than intended. DMs could have a grassy field become a suffocating ocean of dust or even a deadly lava field, while village buildings could transform into fragile glass structures or scorching columns of fire, etc.
59. Caster's race changes into a rogue modron.
60. Bright light equivalent to a light spell shines out of target's nose, mouth, and ears. Target finds sleeping impossible until light is extinguished.
61. Target reduced.
62. Caster affected by Mordenkainen's lucubration.
63. All weapons blink out of their owner's possession, randomly blinking back in different locations within spell range.
64. Chaos-shaped land grows arms and hands. Each person within 100' of caster is attacked by a Maximillian's stony grasp.
65. All food within 50' of caster turns into a variety of vibrantly colorful, fresh flowers.
66. Caster's non-magical clothing dissolves harmlessly into primal chaos matter.
67. All potions within 20' of caster permanently changed into potions of delusion or sweetwater (50% chance of either).
68. A downpour of fresh apples, pumpkins, peaches, broccoli, and other fruits and vegetables pelts all characters within 10' of caster, causing 1 hp of damage per round of this rain of produce.
69. All glass within 200' of caster affected by glassteel.

70. Gobs of sovereign glue fall from the sky in a 100' radius around caster. Each round, a character has a 20% chance of being hit by a gob. Affected characters will have weapons glued to hands, helms to heads, spell components to fingers, etc.
71. Caster's race changes into a random genasi. If an elemental spell triggered the wild surge, the caster becomes a genasi of that element.
72. The spell effect, if physical (such as magic missile or fireball), becomes both sentient (low intelligence) and alive, perceiving the wild mage as its master. Spell effect follows caster around like a puppy dog usually wreaking havoc wherever it travels. If an offensive spell, its mere touch could cause damage. Hit dice of spell effect "creature" is equivalent to the level of the spell.
73. Caster gains magic resistance to wild magic and wild surges equal to 1% per caster's level.
74. Target falls asleep.
75. 1d4 spells in caster's spellbook replaced randomly by new spells of the same level.
76. All beings within 100' of caster affected by chaotic sleep.
77. All the caster's non-magical clothing becomes a quasi-living, sentient being, each with its own annoying personality. Shoes threaten to untie themselves if not given a rest. Shirts and pants complain loudly if torn, ripped, or soiled. All clothing ceaselessly nags the caster to avoid combat, to be washed and ironed, etc. Caster suffers a -2 to initiative while in possession of such distracting clothes.
78. Caster's physical form changes into an Outer Planar creature that personifies the caster's alignment. A lawful neutral caster would take the form of some modron, a lawful evil caster would look like a baatezu, true neutral would appear as a type of rilmani.
79. All gold and silver within 20' of caster vanishes.
80. All within 10' of caster affected by babble (reverse of tongues).
81. Caster granted wildfire.
82. Target's race changes randomly every round.
83. Strange and ornate tattoos that suspiciously look like slaadi markings appear and eventually cover caster's body. After duration, they eventually fade with no apparent harm done to the caster.
84. 1d6 modrons (pentadron rank or lower) are summoned to Limbo and attack caster whom they perceive as an instrument of chaos.
85. A deafeningly loud noise blankets an area in a 100 yd radius around caster. Verbal communication becomes impossible and fighting is done at -2 to hit.
86. Wildwind appears over target.
87. Caster affected by Hornung's random dispatcher.
88. An elemental explosion (randomly earth, air, water, or fire) centered on caster doing damage and having an area of effect equivalent to a delayed blast fireball.
89. All non-magical metal on caster vanishes.
90. A wildzone centered on caster appears and moves with caster.
91. Caster's race changes into a githzerai.
92. Caster instinctively knows the slaadi tongue.
93. Harmless sprays of color (looking like prismatic spray) spring from caster's hands. Every 5th round, the effect is actually a real prismatic spray.
94. Roll for a result on the "neutral" Wild Magic Table.
95. Double surged! Roll for a result on the "good" and the "evil" tables.
96. Roll for a result on the "good" Wild Magic Table.
97. Roll for a result on the "evil" Table.
98. Double Surged! Roll twice on this table, ignoring any 95 and 98 results.
99. Spell effect has 120' radius centered on target (all within radius suffer the effect).
100. Spell effectiveness (range, duration, area of effect, damage etc.) increases 200%.