

Half Ogre Racial Packet

Approved for play-testing in NERO ATL, 1999

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(Re-Edited by same circa 2005,2006)

Appearance:

Half ogres (not actual Hybrids) have physiology not unlike humans. The most notable exception is their yellow skin. The color is a glaring, bright yellow, fully unlike the color of eastern humans. The other notable exception is their large tusks.

Most Half ogres will bear several tattoos. These vary from tribe to tribe, meaning anything from simple marks of allegiance to protective runes (real or symbolic). The only type of tattoo which spans all the various tribes is the aqua tattoo of leadership. This tattoo will be detailed in a later section.

Role-playing notes:

Half ogres are, on the average, the best fighters on Tyrra. Few enemies want to even think about what a blood-raged half ogre war party could do to them, much less actually face them in battle. The fact that they are superior fighting machines is apparent to the half ogre, often leading them to be great braggarts. Both of the above trends stem from one fact; according to half ogre spoken tradition, half ogres were born to fight. To a half ogre every problem can, and probably should be solved with battle. Such is the reason for their dueling system (described later).

Fear is almost non-existent in the half ogre language. The only time, other than due to some form of mind control, they experience fear is when dealing with undead. For some reason, half ogres have an unnatural fear of all types of undead. In the half ogre mind, there is no difference between one undead and the next. A half ogre will often choose the name of a particular type of undead and use it for any undead he encounters. (Example, Grex, a half ogre fighter comes running into town. the guard asks him why he is in such a hurry, and he comments that there are 7 death Knights chasing him. The town then prepares for the worst, only to do battle with 6 skeletons and a ghoul)

Because half ogres see fear as a weakness, they lash out at those that cause them to experience it-- notably necromancers. To the earth loving half ogre, nothing is more foul than Chaos. Often times, unless guarded by undead, the half ogre will slay any known Necromancer on sight. Their theory is; Once a defiler (their term), always a defiler.

Half ogres tend to treat most races with a bit of trepidation. This is largely due to the common usage of the term half ogre; an insult to all half ogres. Half ogres hate the term, as it is a misnomer and belittles the race. Half ogres will generally refer to themselves by caste or tribe. Once a half ogre begins to trust a person, they are considered great allies and compatriots. Nothing is more loyal than a half ogre friend. When placed into a new situation where they know no one, a half-ogre will tend to gravitate towards those persons that appear to be better warriors. As such, they tend to first make friends with orcs, barbarians, Dwarves and humans. They will often think elves, hobblings and scaven to be weak and unnecessary, unless they have proven themselves (in battle, of course).

When it comes to thinking, half ogres are often called stupid. Such is not the case. Half

ogres display a pattern of linear thought. Half ogres will, on average, have difficulty with complex, wordy topics, as well as prefer to talk of concrete ideas, rather than abstract ones (If, at this point, you are unclear on the proper way to roleplay Half ogre thinking patterns, play dumb until you can speak with your race marshal). This makes some things difficult to comprehend, such as reading. However half ogres can, on occasion, be just as bright as your average person. The linear thought processes can best be demonstrated by a lack of tense in their verbs, as well as a lack of case in their nouns. Thus a half ogres' speech will usually sound choppy and crude (e.g.-- rather than saying " I killed him several times", it would be "me squish him buncha times"). Likewise, their writing will reflect a similar style, often with "um"s and "uh" as part of the text. A good idea for accurately simulating their scripting style is to hold the pen in a closed fist and script sloppily. Seldom, if ever, should a person use proper capitalization, spelling, or punctuation.

This linear thinking does have its hindrances, but has its benefits as well. The half ogre can read the subtle signs the earth gives to her children. This is a very limited form of divination. It is detailed later.

Benefits and Drawbacks:

The half ogre leads a violent life. From infancy, he is given the least amount of pampering necessary, and as a result, all half ogres have 2 additional body.

The half ogre also has linear thought as describe above; this causes the cost of scholarly skills to be doubled.

Special ability:

All half ogres can sense signs of impending natural disaster. This information is perceived as a type of sensation closely akin to whatever is going to happen. For example, if a nearby volcano will erupt, the half ogres will feel extremely hot, even if swimming in the lake. It never manifests itself as an exact description of what is going to happen when. Among the shamans, an accurate record of what had happened along with the signs the tribe felt is kept. Using their special skill (Craftsman other: Divination- Giant runes /read nature) they can pinpoint the exact time of the incident, and get a good sense as to what it will be. This skill is known only to half ogre shamans (of the Mainstream Culture), and they will never teach it to a non-shaman, much less anyone not of their tribe. (The differentiation between Craftsman: Giant runes and Craftsman: Read Nature is merely one of how the information is attained. Each tribe will have its own preference for one or the other, but they function exactly the same. It can be likened to the differences in methods of folding linens OOP- People do it the way they have been taught, and think it to be superior, but it really doesn't matter.)

Out of play, the best way to disperse this information is to have a member of the plot committee prepare a small index card with a description of what a character would feel. Each player is then expected to seek this person out as early as possible, get the card, Read it and gives it back to the plot member. In order to use the craftsman skill to deal with the information so gained, the player needs to have a plot Marshall on hand.

Make up: All half ogres have yellow skin. They all have large, protrusive tusks. The yellow skin is best done by a liquid or pancake makeup. Remember, if you use liquid make-up, a setting

powder is recommended; It prevents the makeup from running. The tusks are best made from friendly plastic. In my experience, it works best if you make the teeth fit over the 6 or so teeth in the front of your mouth. The tusks should protrude outward, and if done properly, should fit comfortably. (If done properly, they can even be eaten with, though this is not recommended)

Biological Matters:

The half ogre's metabolism functions at twice the rate of a human. What this means is that the half ogre ages, gestates young, and experiences life at twice the rate of a human. The oldest half ogre died in Elaan at age 62. Practically, the half ogre will attempt to die in combat whenever he feels he is becoming too weak. This usually happens around age 35.

Female half ogres go through a natural cycle of 2 weeks. During one of these weeks they are fertile, and will produce child, if they mate with a compatible male, approximately 50% of the time. If fertilization occurs, the child takes 5 months to bear. At the end of five months, the child must be delivered by caesarian section, due to the slenderness of the females' hips. This is usually done by a tribal healer, a shaman, or in a pinch, an animal husbander. Healing is achieved through use of magic or alchemy.

At age 7 or so, the half ogre begins adolescence, marked by the appearance of the tusks. By the time he is 8, he is half way through puberty, and is turned out from his home.

The half ogre may produce offspring through mating with any of the civilized races of Tyrra. If the female is not a half ogre, the gestation period is 5 months. If the female is, the gestation period is that of the father's race.

All half Ogres have an interesting metabolic defect. Their body cannot break down fructose, the sugar found in fruit. This causes, when fruit is consumed, a dramatic rise in blood sugar levels that must be relieved with activity. The only activity truly capable of lowering the level is Combat. As a result, anytime a half ogre consumes more than a little bit of fruit, fruit juice, or fruit product, they become blood raged and battle crazy. They will subconsciously look for fights, becoming more and more irritated if one can not be found. Eventually, they will resort to seeking combat out, even if only with a tree. Another side effect of the fruit sugar is the decrease in fear level. War parties presented with insurmountable odds, or any undead at all, will almost always consume fruit before entering battle.

(Note: It is not recommended for player to use this as an excuse to ignore the role-playing disadvantage involving undead. Half ogre will generally avoid consuming fruit or fruit by-products unless the situation is really desperate. Additionally, half ogres will quickly grow angry if other people try to continually feed them fruit. The effect of fruit on a half ogre is not particularly pleasant for the half ogre or the people around him. Suggested role-playing tip: the effects of fruit on a half ogre are very similar to those of alcohol on other races. As such, role-playing the resulting physical discomfort after imbibing is recommended.)

Origins:

The following is the story told by the shamans to the young children in the south. It may or may not be true, but is a good story none the less:

Long ago, when the earth was young, the world was devoid of all intelligent life. Mother Earth was sad, for she alone could feel the great loneliness... She then laid several eggs.... They

hatched into beautiful winged serpents-- the dragons. The dragons were proud and happy and kept the Earth company. She taught them all she knew, and soon their power level reached that of hers. Slowly, over time, the dragons split into 2 factions. They began to quarrel, injuring the earth in the process. The earth wept tears for her children. She tried to stop them, but her power was lessened by their creation. So, she decided to have more offspring; these, smaller than the dragons, but very powerful in their own right. Thus were born the giants. They were a great race of very beautiful people, as large as the mighty oak. They outnumbered the Dragons, whom they called brothers. Also, they loved their mother. Thus, they worked hard to stop the fighting. A great battle ensued. The giants were able to claim victory only because in the fighting, the land was torn into several pieces. The two draconic factions were, luckily, on different sides of the great river. Thus on the two landmasses did the two factions stay.

Mother Earth filled the air with soot. The soot choked the dragons when they tried to fly. Thus, for a thousand winters, were they forced to stay where they were. Over this time, each side forgot what it's original Quarrel was about. They even forgot that the other side existed. All they cared about now was destroying the giants. Learning from the Earth's example, they decided to combat the giants with smaller beings. From the trees they carved the Elves, from the stone, the stumpy beards were formed. In the river clay, humans were crafted. One dragon ventured to the edge of the world. He believed that anything he found there would be the toughest of all living things. There he found only a clump of lichen. He cursed it, attempting to roast it with his fiery breath. It survived, little phased. Then he realized he had been right all along, this green plant was the toughest of all living things. From it he formed the green body of the noble orc. Some of the dragons took the flesh of the animals and formed the Scaven. Only one made a creation of his own will, the hobbling, though the hobbling was all together short and weak, the new creation made up for the shortcomings with cleverness. Eventually all the dragons met in the south. On the frozen island, they breathed life into their creations. Each race awoke, somewhat dazed and confused. They were told that they were made to serve the dragons.

Each race was taught a skill, though the dragons saved their greatest skills, in case the underlings ever thought of rebellion. The races were told to go forth and multiply. Each did. When they had grown in sufficient number, the dragons used their powers to assume the guise of their creations. They went and influenced the peoples to slay the Giants. Only the hobblings refused, choosing instead to live lives of happiness. To aid the races in their war, the Dragons taught the arts of the defilers. Armed with the power of darkness, the children of the dragons attacked the giants. Many were lost. Finally, one went to the Great cave and asked the earth for help. Awakening from her slumber, mother earth saw what was happening. Outraged, but weak, She used her power to cause fear in the races. For 300 years, the rivers ran of blood, and the sky was black with soot. At the end of this time, the earth rumbled greatly and from the great cave came the first 1000 of our people. This was the last act of the earth; she then fell into the great sleep in which she even now rests. The Newborn Race called them selves Glorax. They were a hardy lot, as tough as the orc. They had skin the color of gold, the blood of the earth. Their tusks were large, to rip the throats of our enemies. Their ears were keen, so that they may hear the whisper of their sleeping mother. That my child is how we came to be. For a year we wandered in the wilderness. Then a giant found us. Calling us brother he led us to his village. The giants taught us to kill. Each of us was given a sword, or a club. We were sent to destroy a village of elves. Not one elf survived. Afterwards we feasted on their flesh and the boon of their trees. Suddenly, all was different. Each of our people became bloodthirsty. We fought amongst ourselves. Thus did we learn of the double-edged sword of the fruit.

After the effect wore off, we returned to the village of the giants with our numbers greatly reduced. When we arrived, we found the giants to be fighting a great winged serpent. Naturally, we ran in to fight. Outnumbered and wounded by the giants' spears, the dragon was very unhappy. When he saw us carrying high the heads of his beloved elves, he became enraged. He realized that if he were to stay, his life would end. He inhaled deeply. All braced for his deadly breath. Instead, he shouted a curse, grasped outward seizing a giant child and one of us...

Three days later, as we sat sharpening our weapons, tempering them in the blood of the fallen, we noticed a large shadow pass over us. Fearing retaliation from the dragons we rushed to gather our javelins. Suddenly it began raining. Not a rain of water, but one of blood and body parts. Pieces of the two captured children of the earth fell to the ground. Yet, all the pieces were not there. We raised them onto burial litters and prepared for the ensuing war.

We then went to slay a settlement of the stump beards. A month had past. When we began to approach the city, we heard them cry an unfamiliar word- Ogre. They then ran into the earth and hid. We destroyed the city, sacking it for its wealth. It had little, only a few pelts and weapons. This we felt was odd... On our way back to the village, we encountered an abomination. It had skin yellow like ours, but was much larger. Its tusks were crooked, with barbs upon it. Hands the size of bucklers crushed our scout. We set upon it. It screamed that all peoples would die at the hands of the mighty Ogre. There was that word again, ogre. We gathered that this was what the people had mistaken us for. We set upon the creature, slaying it. We dragged the body back to the village, which we found deserted. Not one giant remained. There was evidence of a struggle, but no blood. Odd, we thought. Our shamans went to investigate further. There on a slab of stone was a message in the runic tongue of the giants. It said:

Brethren, A peace has been reached among the Dragons and ourselves. No longer will we interfere with one another. We are now set to destroy the rogue dragon Granvex, who hath made the abomination know as the ogre and seeks to defile our mother. My Children help us. Join with the races of this planet. Attempt to destroy the pitiful Ogre and oust the pockets of evil. Tell not the other races of your connection to us, for now they fear both the dragons and the giants. From time to time, one of us shall call to you to listen to our advice and help our mother fix what is wrong. We shall watch you, our siblings, though we may not be seen. Listen intently to mother, and remember that glory is won in battle.

The shamanee of the Glorax decided a wait of two generations would be wise before questing for the other races. They settled down, and tried to raise families. The wisest of the Glorax set down a warrior's code. Every thing in the village was to be earned through battle. The first Thing was to choose a leader. The best of the fighters emerged victorious. She chose the loser of her last duel, A mighty male as her mate. A month later her stomach was visibly swelling... Five months after the duels, she collapsed onto the floor, her body in pain. The herder of the yaks, mighty mounts of war to the Glorax, recognized this as what occurred when the yaks calved. He went to attend her. Something was wrong. The child couldn't exit. This did not normally happen in yaks, but when it would, the belly must be split. Thus did the herder and he retrieved a bloody tiny male Glorax. However the chief was dying... a cry for help was made, resulting in the arrival of the shaman. He scribed a rune upon her stomach, and asked of his mother, the earth, that she heal the mighty warrior. Thus she did. The child uttered the syllable Klaz. Thus it was named.

After a year it was finally discovered that no Glorax female could give normal birth to a child, her hips were too narrow. But as long as the shamanee could heal the women all was well. The children grew quickly. At age 8, the mothers decided the children to be old enough to care for them

selves. Each had been taught a skill of combat and had to fend for themselves. Several Years passed, and the children eventually decided to return to their homes, demanding to live there. They were met with force. Some overpowered their mother, and were seen as worthy to live under their roof. Others lost, and were forced to wander again. Eventually every child either returned home, or would join the shamanee to learn the arts of magic. The children were still seen as underlings, until they could defeat their father in combat. Then the parents would hold a great feast. The child would get tattooed as a full member of the tribe.

Thus for 20 years did the Glorax live apart from the dragonspawn. One day a rider entered the village. He was different from the Glorax, and some of the newer Glorax were afraid he was one of them afflicted with some sort of disease. Then the high shaman approached the man with open hands. Sensing this as a gesture of good will the man bowed. He said he was part of an advance scout from a nearby fiefdom. He requested that several of the Glorax accompany him to meet the man's chief. When the envoy entered the camp, all the inhabitants believed them to be ogres. Suddenly ogres attacked the meeting. Enraged at the abominations, the Glorax retaliated with impunity. At first the humans and their elven allies were perplexed by this action, but then, as ogre and Glorax fought one another they realized the two were not of the same race. After the last ogre fell, the humans thanked the Glorax. They said they would return to the village in a fortnight to celebrate peace.

The human and elves theorized that these beings must be a hybrid of the ogre and some, other, higher race (notably human or elf). Thus came the name Half Ogre. Word was sent to the various corners of the land to treat these "half ogres " as civilized people. That, my children, is from whence the accursed term came. It seemed to stick, no matter how hard the Glorax tried to get rid of it.

The 2 weeks passed and the treaty with the settlers was ratified. A week of feasting was proclaimed. Stories were exchanged, and the people were happy. On the last day the half ogres all felt queasy. Their hands visibly shook. The shamans did all manners of divinations, as did the elves. This was the first recorded occurrence of our power to hear the whispers of mother. Most of the divinations reported that the earth was to shake, and danger was near. The "half ogres" loaded up their yaks, Hitching to them wagons to bear the settlers away. In a mass exodus, they left the valley, just as the tremors sent toppling many rocks and trees. The human settlement was destroyed, but most of the settlers survived, seeing with awe the precognitive power of the fair yellow children of the earth. Thus it was recorded in the annals of civilization that the half ogre could sense imminent doom. This would eventually end up, much like the fruit, a double-edged sword.

The settlers returned to their valley, and started to rebuild. Aided by the half ogres, they constructed rounded houses. They surrounded the settlement with a large palisade, and dug out a small spring to form a water pool. The two peoples learned from one another, the settlers learning Combat skills, and the half ogres learning of celestial magics. It was at this time that the runes lost their power. The befuddled shamans discerned that this was due to a large comet that had become trapped in the orbit of Tyrra. The remaining knowledge of the runes was scribed onto a tablet and buried in the earth.

The settlers and the half ogres worked well with one another, becoming prosperous. Their city became a bastion of trade with the northern lands. Thus did the curse come to our people.

This is the story the northern tribes tell. Like the southern story it may or may not be true, but it is a good story too:

The Great Cave

The only evidence of the true origins of the Half Ogre people come from ancient writings known as the Rintah Tablets. It is written on these eroding stone texts that thousands of years ago, the Half Ogres were born from the earth itself out of the one of Tyrra's great orifices known as the Great Cave. Many interpretations are made from the tablets for quite literally they claim that the Half Ogres had crawled out of the Great Cave like newborns from a womb, and thus began the long history of their race. Some Half Ogre shamans today believe that the tablets were meant to be metaphoric in their description of the first days of the Half Ogre, but the greater population of Half Ogres are more inclined to believe the word for word dictation of events described on the tablets.

The Rintah tablets go on to describe how Half Ogres were blinded for days in the sunlit world of Tyrra and how the newly born creatures lived off the bats that lived in the cave. Slowly, they learned to communicate with each other until they had finally semblances what sufficed at the time as their own language.

There were many Half Ogres in the Great Cave-- about 300 in number. While the cave served the newly born Half Ogres for a time, eventually it became too cramped for them to live in. They decided that it would be best if they split up into small groups of 20-30 Half Ogres each and spread themselves around geographically, traveling north from this region.

The valleys to the north seemed promising as potential hunting grounds, and by splitting up in the smaller groups or "tribes" they could hunt in small enough packs that would not consume too quickly the local food supply.

The newly formed tribes migrated northward some 200 miles from the Great Cave. They settled in areas south of what thousands of years later would be known as the kingdom of Evindarr. As the Half Ogres traveled to their new lands, they discovered that a similar breed of creatures known simply as Ogres, lived in these lands. The Ogres or full Ogres, though, had features that were considerably harsher than the Half Ogre and their stature was certainly bulkier, but it was uncanny how similar in many respects the two races truly were.

As they settled in their new homes and built fortified villages and communities, they decided to try and make peaceful relations of their full Ogre cousins who lived in the same regions. Initially, relations were successful, so an attempt to merge both types of Ogres under unified tribes was made. After a few decades though, the union turned out to be less than harmonious. There were several physical differences that became roadblocks to their developing relationship. The Half Ogres were by far better skilled in the use of weapons, but lacked the strength to match their full Ogre cousins. They could not defeat full Ogres in battle, for they had no one to train them to fight better than the abilities they already possessed. Which meant that the full Ogres had the upper hand in governing the tribes.

This presented communication difficulties, for the full Ogres were not all that bright when it came to planning strategic combat, and not nearly as intelligent as the Half Ogres. Sadly, the full Ogres would not listen to the strategies of the Half Ogres, because they had too much pride to believe that their weaker cousins knew better about the arts of war. This social schism is what finally drove the two races apart. That, and the eventual discovery that Ogres and Half Ogres could not bear children together.

The tribes who attempted to live with their full Ogre cousins eventually branched off and returned to their lifestyle of living in their own separate Half Ogre tribes. They did continue to keep good relations with the full Ogres and traded with them. Sometimes they warred and hunted

alongside the full Ogres, too.

During this time and for several years to follow, the Half Ogres learned more about themselves and a unique ability within them that began to surface more and more frequently. At sporadic times, one of their five senses would pick up an abnormal signal, sight, color, sound, smell, taste, or sensation. For a while they did not know what these sensations meant, until they finally put the pieces together and realized that it was a warning of some kind whenever a natural disaster was about to take place. Occasionally they would get one of these sensations and a disaster would not follow, but that was rare. This ability baffled even their most intelligent Ogres. Eventually, they would learn more about this ability, but without the skills to read and write, any retained information about this ability was lost in a few generations' time.

They also discovered something about themselves that almost destroyed any chances of their continued survival. They had an internal drive and instinct for fighting. The slightest insult from even a tribal comrade would send them in a rampaging fury. Internal strife within each tribe grew; many fought and killed for mates, food, and power. When they had lived with the full Ogres, they were not strong enough to challenge the brute strength of the larger creatures for what they desired and were forced to keep their tempers in check. Now, separated from any stronger governing force, they degenerated to a culture in a constant state of internal violent strife and turmoil. Blood feuds were common, as were duels to the death over pride and honor. The more learned of the tribes believed that this path would eventually lead them to extinction.

Concerned for their mutual survival, members and leaders of every Half Ogre tribe came together to work out a system of government where they could live together harmoniously, yet continue to feed their internal drive for fighting and survival. They eventually developed a non-lethal dueling system that would keep anarchy from consuming each tribe, yet fuel their warring nature. They would be able to fight for what they needed in a ceremonial fashion that was never to the death. They could duel for leadership, dominance, family status, settling arguments, and the right to choose mates. This was the only solution to their dilemma and it seemed to work well for the tribes. This means of self-government has maintained to present date.

First Contact With Other Races

Around 4,000 years ago, the Half Ogres had their first contact with the civilized races of Tyrra. This generation of Half Ogres had little knowledge of these other peoples or races at that time, and were wary of any contact with them.

A large group of Humans and Elves settled into one of the valleys where some Half Ogre tribes resided. Some of the settlers discovered one of the tribes and initially thought they were a tribe of full Ogres. However, they noted the oddities these Ogres had in comparison to other Ogres they've encountered before. Their size was a good deal smaller, their features less harsh, and their temperament, in some fashion, under control. The settlers believed them to be some kind of half-breed race and dubbed them their current racial name, Half Ogres, for the very first time. The settlers suspected that the Half Ogres' blood was mixed with some kind of higher race such as Human and decided to attempt to make relations with these creatures.

The Half Ogres were very cautious when they were approached by their new neighbors. Their founding ancestors did warn them that civilized races might not take too kindly to a race possibly related to the savage Ogres of the area. Any outside race was not to be told much about where they came from. The civilized races once warred near the Great Cave and any mention of it might spark their memories of hatred.

Negotiations with the settlers took many months as the Half Ogres scrutinized their intentions before making any peace pact. Eventually the settlers proved that they only sought

peace, and a pact was made between the three races.

Trade between the Half Ogres and the settlers was fruitful. The settlers also depended on the Half Ogres for their survival, because they knew the locale better than the settlers. In exchange for guiding them through the hazards of the valleys and protecting them from local monsters, the Humans and Elves taught the Half Ogres skills they never had access to before. Many of these skills of combat were unknown to the Half Ogres, and they relished the opportunity to learn them. With these new fighting skills, even they could best a full Ogre in one on one combat. Even more important was the learning of the skills involved in wielding magic, with no half Ogre had learned before that time.

The ability to cast magics was very difficult to teach to them, for the skill of reading and writing itself was extremely difficult for any of the Half Ogres to learn. Many gave up early in their literacy education and learned the new fighting skills instead. Those few who learned how to read, write, and read magic were able to grasp the ability to wield magic taught by the Elven settlers. They were revered in their tribes as wise and powerful, and many came to them seeking advice. It was decided by all of the tribal chiefs that these “wiser” Half Ogres take the station as Shaman, or Wiseman to the tribe. Eventually, certain standards had to be made so that not just any spell casting Half Ogre could become a shaman, so they created within each tribe a Shamanees, or shaman council to track their members and initiate any who wished to earn the title and responsibilities of the tribal shaman.

Several of the different tribes’ Shamans came together to think of a way to repay the kindness of the settlers. They decided to try to arbitrate a peace treaty between their full Ogre counterparts, who occasionally would raid the Human and Elven settlements. After managing to get the settlers and the Ogres to come together under an agreement to cease hostilities for the time being, the Half Ogres were able to convince both parties to sign a peace treaty. Coexistence, however, between the full Ogres and the Settlers became strained not long after the treaty went into effect. The full Ogres wanted the settlers to forge weapons for them and to teach them magic but would give nothing in return for these weapons or skills. The full Ogres felt that they were being merciful by not attacking the settlers, and that was enough to merit such gifts. The settlers were not about to arm the full Ogres, which would give the settlers a serious disadvantage if the unpredictable full Ogres ever decided the treaty was null and void. They also argued constantly over land rights, for the Ogres were very territorial and claimed that much of the land the Humans and Elves populated was really Ogre property,

Eventually, the leaders of the full Ogres told the Half Ogres that they were going to kill all of the settlers if they did not cooperate with them. The Half Ogre Shamanees decided it was best to end the treaty and let the two factions come to their own resolve. They did, however, keep up the spirit of the treaty by arbitrating disputes between the settlers and full Ogres from time to time. And sometimes they were successful in preventing bloodshed between the two parties.

For the years that followed, the Half Ogre tribes grew in size, their total population spanning as large as 5,000. Their relationship with the settlers had solidified and the Half Ogres had relationship with the settlers had solidified and the Half Ogres had finally come to terms with their awkward selves. They learned to finally come to terms with their awkward selves. They learned to enjoy life to its fullest, and they looked forward to whatever challenges the future would hold for them. They were robust and had finally made a place for themselves on Tyrra.

The various Shamanees finally learned how to interpret the signs from the gift of

predicting the dramatic shifts in nature. They kept written records to identify the different signs and senses that were given to a Half Ogre before an event happens. Initially, they taught their tribes how to predict these signs, but occasionally Half Ogres without reading and writing skills misinterpreted the signs which caused the shamans to begin reconsidering the allocation of this wide misused information. Three years after the shamans began teaching all Half Ogres the skills to recognize the different signs of nature, almost an entire tribe mistook the sign for an avalanche with that of a flood. They all headed to higher ground only to find it collapse beneath their feet. A great majority of the tribe died in the rubble. Learning from this lesson, the Shamanees of all Half Ogre tribes from then on guarded the secret interpretations of the signs so that only shamans may know what they meant. This helped prevent any more misreading of the signs.

A few years later, the Half Ogres were given a powerful sign, to which the shamans predicted as a powerful sign, to which the shamans predicted as a great earthquake. In a great exodus, the Half Ogres ushered the settlers and full Ogres out of the valley before the earthquake began. The disaster did happen, but most of the escaping residents of the valley survived. The Humans and Elves were in awe of this ability to predict such an event. The Elves theorized that the Ogres have some sort of higher brain function which allowed them limited precognitive abilities. The settlers could not have possibly guessed the truth that the Half Ogres could pick up on the minute signs nature gives before such an event occurs.

Regardless, the heroism and wondrous powers of the Half Ogres were recorded by the settlers, who made it part of their lore. What was meant as praise, would soon end up as condemnation for the Half Ogre race.

Here the two stories converge. The following story is probably true, as both the northern and the southern tribes agree on it:

Slaves of Elaan- Traders who came to the valley to sell their wares to the settlers heard the tales of the miracle that the Half Ogres performed and brought the story back north with them. Eventually, this story reached as far north as the Elaan Empire, which today would encompass parts of the lands known as Niman, Ashbury, and Volta. Emperor Manarack Dravus of the Elaan learned of the Half Ogres and their “precognitive skills.”

The Elaan Empire at the time was in turmoil; the outer provinces were in a constant state of revolt. Emperor Manarack wanted to retain the entirety of the empire and keep it from falling apart by provincial dissolution. He was looking for any opportunity to save it from such a fate. He figured that if he had enough of these precognitive Half Ogres under his control he could predict certain outcomes and save his empire by preventing certain futures from happening.

For three years, Emperor Manarack sent slavers to capture as many Half Ogres as possible and bring them back to his empire. The slavers begin hunting down and capturing the Half Ogres as soon as they reached the southern regions where the creatures lived. The human and Elven settlers interceded and tried to stop the slaver mercenaries of the Elaan. The slavers led the settlers into a trap and killed all of them. Those who resurfaced left the valley in fear. The settlers realized that these Elaan slavers were too powerful to overcome, and that the Half Ogres were doomed. They could have done nothing else but run away and save their own lives.

The Elaan slave army continued to capture Half Ogres. Initially, the slavers captured them in small groups, such as Half Ogre hunting parties. But as the Half Ogre populations

became more and more depleted by the slavers, their villages became easier targets. Soon, whole tribes were captured by the slaver army.

Out of sheer desperation, the remaining southern Half Ogre tribes went into hiding. The slavers could not find the secret Half Ogre stronghold, and gave up their search. They returned back to the Elaan Empire with their last batch of Half Ogre slaves.

The captured half ogres were brought north, farther than they had ever been before, to the cold reaches of the Elaan empire. Emperor Manarack sorted through the thousands of new slaves to find the most potent seers. Through the torture of many slaves, Manarack discovered that the shamans of each tribe possessed the skill to see the future best. After weeding out the shamans, Manarack sent the balance of the half ogres to work as normal slaves, mostly doing hard labor. Realizing the emperor had been given false information about their powers, the shamans played along as “psychic” advisors. One particular shaman, Caff, even took the role of the emperor’s personal advisor.

In their years of service, the shamans realized that the empire was crumbling, and a slave revolt was immanent. They also realized it would be beneficial to aid this revolt, expediting it’s implementation. A former chief of one of the tribes, Burc, was stationed in the kitchens of the emperor. Caff asked Burc to be a liaison between the resistance and the Shamans. Burc agreed, and joined the resistance, bringing many of his people with him. Finally the resistance was poised to strike at the capital, given proper chance. Burc went to Caff, telling him that the time was nigh.

A week later, Manarack stormed into the shamans’ quarters, Demanding to know the future of his empire after several uprisings in the north had occurred. He made an ultimatum to the half ogre wise men—Answer within a week, or they all would be killed to the point of no return. Taking his cue, Caff had all the shamans fake a trance, fasting and chanting bits of the old tongue. After 2 days the “trance” ended. Caff told the emperor that he and the shamans saw the northern territories falling to revolting slaves. He said that in his vision the place was not guarded well, and that if the emperor sent most of his forces to the north, he could probably avert this disaster. Manarack stormed from the room calling to his military commanders. He had bought the lie.

The emperor sent a great portion of his army, and most of the secret police to the north. Caff told Burc that when the army was three days from the capital, the rebels should strike. After three days of hiding, the real revolt occurred. The slaves laid siege to the palace, and after a bitter four day battle, finally routed the imperial guard.

Manarack and his brother Corax escaped from the palace by means of a secret tunnel. The last thing he did before leaving the castle was to poison the food stores. The dravus brothers were never seen again.

The rebels burned the slave dens, and looted the city. Caff and his fellows ate a wondrous feast that night, and all died of the poison. Many did not return, but Caff did.

Northern Migration

For several years after the fall of Elaan, the half ogres living under the new provisional government felt out of place. Although they had shared many of the same experiences with the slaves, the half ogres felt uneasy living in such a large and mixed populous.

The new government had found it difficult to rule over such wild peoples as most of the slaves were. That, coupled with the vastness of the empire caused many problems. Some of the ex-slaves abused their new freedom, becoming lazy, and stealing what they wanted. Though the

new government leaders were good people, they had no experience leading a people who had only known the crack of a whip and the cold steel of the shackles. And the government was adamant about not reinstituting slavery.

The Half ogres longed for life to be as it was. Burc and Caff, now great heroes, had different ideas about the future of their people. Caff believed that nothing remained of their southern homes, and that the half ogres should go north in search of suitable lands. Burc, however, disagreed, saying that he believed many of the tribes of the south had probably survived. He longed to be with his family. The trip might be hazardous, but he was willing to take it.

Many sided with both leaders. Finally it was decided to execute both plans. A duel could have decided the matter finally, but so many people were involved, that a simple duel was out of the question. Burc and Caff wished each other well, and parted company on good terms.

Thus ends the common stories. For more on Caff, and the northern tribes, see the Ashbury section. To find out about Burc, and the southern tribes, see the Tyrangel/ Southwatch section.

Culture:

People playing a half ogre have several options of culture. The biggest choice is to decide whether your character grew up in mainstream half-ogre culture, or was a member of the Hatcha. Mainstream half ogre culture varies little from place to place, but does have specific regional flavour as outlined in the Chapter-specific section.

Mainstream Half ogre Culture:

The half ogre's culture is based upon combat. Every position, piece of property and right is earned through a duel. Over the years, an explicit system of rules for the duel has evolved.

Holidays:

Half ogres usually do not have a set holiday, but have celebrations at certain times in nature's cycle. Each season has a specific fest to liven spirits and commemorate its passage.

Winterfest- Celebrated the first hard frost after the shortest day of the year. It is held inside one of the larger huts, and includes a feast of roasted game, bonfires and various intoxicating drinks. It served to help stave off cabin fever in the colder months.

Springfest- Celebrated when the local birds begin to sing at night. A large banquet with many types of fruit, bread and jams are served. The ensuing battle rages lead to many duels, and this is also the time most mates are chosen.

Summerfest- Celebrated when the shamanee divines that this day shall be the hottest. A large pit is dug, and filled with water. The half ogres swim and play to escape the brutal heat. Deer and boar are served with large quantities of grain spirits.

Autumfest- Celebrated as the leaves change color. The last of the fresh produce is eaten, usually resulting in a large turkey and yam dinner. The fallen leaves and branches are piled high and set

ablaze. Goblins are snared, and placed in a pit for young half ogres to fight by the light of the fire.

Dueling system: According to the dueling rules, known as the "racoosee reyva" a duel must be fought for the following reasons:

- You are called a liar
- You, your friends, your family, your tribe, or your martial abilities are insulted
- Someone steals from or attacks you, your friends, your family, or your tribe
- Whenever a person attempts to cheat you out of money or items
- If a person annoys you constantly by offering you fruit or fruit derivatives in order to incite your blood rage
- If someone steals from your kill
- To establish dominance with a hitherto unknown Half ogre. Such a duel can be repeated every season. The loser must treat the winner as his superior.

Duels are also used to:

- Decide tribal leaders. Whenever a serious challenge is issued, but no more often than once a year, all half ogres are permitted to enter the contest. They each mark a pebble and place it into a pot. The high shaman stirs it, and a child pulls two stones out. Those individuals duel. The winner's stone goes into another pot. This is repeated until no stones exist in the original pot. Then a similar thing happens with the second pot, until only 2 contestants remain. Those two duels and the winner can challenge the old Chief. If he wins he is declared Chief and, He will travel to a secret place and be tattooed by the high shaman with the mark of a leader.
- To Choose a mate. Each sex duels for the right to choose first. The system works as above.
- Try criminals. A criminal is considered innocent if he can defeat the chief in a duel. He ma also choose not to initiate this duel and instead take the punishment given
- To resolve civil cases. Both contestants must agree to the terms before hand, clearly defining what will be gained from the duel if each should win

The dueling rules are:

1. The duel must be announced by one of the two parties.
- 2 a duel may not be refused for any reason other than pregnancy
3. An arbiter must be chosen to ensure the duel is fairly fought. Both people must agree on this person.
4. ONLY melee weapons may be used. No missiles, magic, gases, armor, shields, enhancing spells, enchanted weapons, or blade poisons may be used. Each contestant must enter the combat with identical spell combat protection (e.g. bless, shield, magic armor, etc)
5. A healer, a person with curative elixirs, or a person trained at first aid must be present.
6. Before starting, each member must announce what will be gained if he wins.
- 7.All styles of fighting not expressly forbidden are allowed. Combat ends when one person falls to the ground unconscious, bleeding to death, or if a person yields. The healer will mend the fallen if he is bleeding to death or unconscious.
8. The use of a finishing move is forbidden under pain of death. Defeat is humiliation enough, and no life need be shed
9. Once victory is claimed, the vanquished must abide by the ruling
10. The ruling made is absolute. No rematch is permitted, and each contestant should not be bitter.

Violators will be banished for 6 months.

11. No fruit product may be eaten in the hour prior to a duel.

BE CAREFUL WHEN DUELING OTHER RACES.

They always tend to complain about the rules. And often they have little honor and will attempt to kill the vanquished. If you feel doubts about dueling a member of another race, find another means to settle the dispute. If none can be found, choose the highest-ranking noble in the town as an arbiter. It won't guarantee the person won't kill you, but most nobles can muster a life spell if necessary.

Criminal matters:

For most cases, no written law exists in the half-ogre society. Usually if a person commits what would be considered a crime, some party is slighted. That person may then petition the chief to ask the shamanee to accuse the individual. If the individual is accused, he must then either accept the punishment, or try to prove his innocence against the chief. If the individual is not accused, he may still be dueled by the slighted party. On occasion, the crime an individual may commit slights the whole tribe. In that case, the youngest shaman, the grand Shaman, and the chief hear all evidence and go into private to decide on the outcome. If 2 of the 3 choose to accuse the individual, he must either accept their ruling, or duel the chief. Examples of crimes that are considered to slight the whole tribe and their punishments follow:

Arson: Death and permanent banishment

Extortion: banishment, time determined by shamanee

Extreme cowardice: banishment, time determined by the shamanee

Homicide (killing another)- Death and permanent banishment.

Missing guard duty- 6 month banishment

Necromancy- Branding, Death, and permanent exile

Slavery- Death and permanent Exile

Treason (against the tribe, or tribal allies) Death and permanent exile

Breaking Banishment- Death for all except those permanently banished, Obliteration for them.

Language- almost all half ogres speak the common tongue of Avalon. Any deviancies from this will be noted in the section containing specific chapter information. That being said, Long Ago the half ogre people developed their own language. Remnants of it are some times spoken, especially as a matter of formality, or to add emphasis. A list of common expressions and words is below. Each should be spoken harshly, and with a halting gruff Tone.

ANNUU- An insult, it means literally - "Filthy pig"

BES- A term of endearment, it means, "mate"

BROG- The verb "to Fight"

DURG- Thief (insulting)

EHLL- Home/hut

IZSU- food, (literal- "game")

JINGAH- Lower than dirt, an insult
NAUP- Coward, also an insult
OHSE- Mine (possessive)
PAHMM- Giant (the race)
RACOOSE- I challenge you (to a duel)
REYVA- Rule or Law (literal Will of the chief)
SCKOOO- Liar (said with disgust)
SINGA- Tribe or village
VAAH- Scum (insult)

So, You want to be a shaman-

A player wishing to aspire to shaman hood must meet several requirements. First he must learn how to cast a ninth level spell of any school. Then he must seek entrance to the shamanee in play. After a short test to determine if the half ogre can cast a ninth level spell, the shamanee vote on whether they feel the applicant is of good character and has something to add to the wisdom of the tribe. This vote is done by ball. Each shaman deposits a ball, white, blue, or black into a pot the white ball is a vote of definitely, the blue a neutral vote, and the black is a vote of no. If any black ball is found in the pot, the applicant is denied and must wait an entire season to seek entrance again. If there are more white balls than blue, he is accepted, otherwise he is rejected. Once accepted, he/she must duel (see dueling section) the high shaman for the right to join. If he succeeds, he is welcomed to the shamanee. (If he fails, he must wait another season to challenge the grand shaman again.) That night, the shaman takes him to a remote location and shows him the herbs and small animal parts needed to make the tribal leaders tattoo. The grand shaman then starts to instruct him on the reading of the Giant Runes/ Interpreting Nature, depending on the culture of the tribe. Any time after this, a character has the option of purchasing Craftsman: Giant runes/Read Nature (cost 3 build). Both the reading of nature/ giant runes and the ingredients of the leadership tattoo are considered very secret. You will not willingly tell them to any one, even your best friend or mate. It is not necessary to purchase CO: Giant runes/Read nature immediately after becoming a shaman. However, if the character waits too long to purchase the Skill and something happens to the balance of nature in the vicinity that he/she cannot interpret then he/she will be the butt of jokes by other tribe members. It is therefore very smart to purchase this skill immediately after becoming a shaman. Only the players who out of game have met the requirements to become a shaman and have been invited to be part of the tribe's Shamanee can obtain and wield this skill without repercussions. Those Half Ogres who gain the skill without becoming a Shaman (but have the spell pyramid necessary to learn it) may face severe in-game punishment from their tribes or others if discovered. Those who manage to obtain the Craftsman skill without becoming a Shaman and do not have the proper spell pyramid, will not have the properly disciplined intelligence, and will often get a misreading on the interpretations of any signs nature gives them. (OOP: It will function exactly as Astrology)

So you want to be the chief-

To become the chief, you must defeat the previous chief in a duel. The process of this special duel is detailed in the dueling section. Once you have won, the high shaman will lead you to a secret place, usually a grove or a cave. There the newest shaman has prepared the ink for your tattoo. You will be tattooed with a mark. This mark looks like a "tribal" tattoo (thus patterned after the tattoos of the

Moari civilization on real earth) and will always be of an aqua color. Mixing equal parts of blue and green liquid make up best represents this color. Some eyeshadows will also do well. Each time you lose the position, you wont have the tattoo removed, but if you regain it, another will be applied. As the leader of the tribe, you get to live in the largest home in the village. It is two stories, and is usually surrounded by a fence of some sort. The people of the tribe may give you a gift, but they will NOT keep you up, even if you order them too. You are expected to be as self sufficient as you were before. The only difference is you get to allocate the communal labor, and lead the people into battle. (*Remember, on an out of play note, if you abuse this privilege, you may find that the plot committee "conveniently" has you randomly abducted or worse*)

Common Stories:

These stories are told to young half ogres and sometimes sang during great festivals by the shamanee. Interestingly enough, they vary little from tribe to tribe.

Frei and the Shoemaker, a fable.

Once upon a time, there was a Half Ogre named Frei who worked as a blacksmith in a human village. Jeronome, the town shoemaker, had a shop near Frei and did not think much of him, jealous that Frei made more money at the blacksmith trade than Jeronome did as shoemaker. The town they lived in had a very small militia, because the merchants were too busy with their trade to bother volunteering to help protect it.

One Spring, several Trolls began roaming about the woods near the town. The Trolls ransacked a couple neighboring houses and were thought to be a threat to the village. Frei wanted to help the militia protect the village and kill off the Trolls. Jeronome did not. He had much to do and as far as he was concerned, it was not his responsibility.

For several weeks, Frei patrolled with the militia. His customers were angered that he did not have their metal forged for them on time. Jeronome had an old forge in his cellar and stole some of Frei's customers. He joked with many merchants that Frei was a fool to anger his customers.

One day, the Trolls attacked the village in full force. They found Jeronome defenseless and killed him. They then burned his home and shoemaker shop to the ground. Frei and the militia soon after were able to finally defeat and drive away the Trolls once and for all. The villagers were grateful for Frei's help and rewarded him well.

The moral of the story: Shoemakers make terrible blacksmiths, but Half Ogres always make great warriors.

The Orange Grove

Many of you do not know of the folly of the Redun tribe. Here it is- Many years ago they were a powerful tribe, some of the best Half Ogre warriors came from Redun. They had also made many enemies amongst several Goblin and Orc tribes. These tribes united to destroy the Redun. At the time, the Redun was lead by Unox. a powerful, yet dim-witted tribal leader. He frustrated his Shamanee to no end with his stupid and irrational decisions.

When Unox learned about the pact between the Goblins and Orcs, he announced that the tribe would attack these upstarts after they had gathered their forces. His Shamans disagreed

with this decision, saying that it would be easier to attack them while the Goblins and Orcs were disorganized. Unox insisted it would be cowardly of the tribe to strike out at the enemy prematurely, avoiding the challenge of battling with the Goblins and Orcs at their peak. He had a different idea as to how to defeat them.

A week passed by and the enemy forces had finally come together and became a formidable army. The Shamans pleaded for Unox to reconsider his plan, saying that to meet them head on was nothing more than a suicide run. Unox scoffed at them. He then relocated the tribe's people to an orange grove a few miles away. He also left a clear trail for the enemy army to follow. Once they arrived at the grove, he ordered the entire tribe to eat all the oranges their stomachs could fill. The Shamans warned Unox that if they did that, the whole tribe would go into an uncontrollable rampage, killing all they came into contact with.

Unox replied that it was exactly what they needed to do to defeat this enemy army. The order was issued and soon the entire tribe had filled their entire bellies with orange pulp and rind. Meanwhile, the enemy army broke up in several internal quarrels. It became rapidly apparent that the Goblin and Orc tribes could not stay united for very long, even to face a common foe. After several melees, the enemy tribes drifted in several directions into the woods. The great Goblin and Orc army never stayed together long enough to pursue the Redun tribe.

The Redun tribe was dizzy with fury and bloodlust, after several hours waiting for the Goblins and Orcs. Eventually one Half Ogre shoved a comrade the wrong way and a great fight broke out amongst them. Self control, tribal unity, leadership, even recognizing friend from foe was no longer possible for the now berserk tribe. They slaughtered each other until very few were left standing alive. Those who resurrected were terribly ashamed of what happened at the orange grove.

They never returned to the Redun tribe. It was the end of this once mighty tribe. So we must remember their tragedy and tell the tale at every great feast so that others do not repeat the same mistake- We must always know when and when not to eat fruit before battle, for it could mean our undoing as well.

Suhl and the Twelve Mountains:

The shamans to teach the youngsters about other races use this story. From tribe to tribe, The Proper names may change, but all in all the story remains the same.

Once, long ago there was a great warrior of our race named Suhl. He fought in a war against a group of evil humans that lived in the north. He slew many enemies and fought many battles. After the war he headed back to his tribe. A great snow came, separating him from his comrades. He found a cave and rested there for five nights as the storm raged on.

Suhl awoke on the sixth day and realized he was lost. He knew that his home was south, and that if he traveled that way he would eventually recognize some land marks and make his way home. He discovered a trail leading south through several mountains.

The first mountain he came to was tall and covered with snow and ice. He met a traveler there; an Elven man named Jacob. They traveled together for company. Jacob always complained of the cold and built fires each night. Suhl said this was not smart and that it could attract enemies. On the third night Jacob's fire attracted many wolves. Jacob was weak and was killed by the wolves. His screams of pain awoke Suhl, who then killed all the wolves. Thus did Suhl learn that Elves are easy prey and should not be brought to a fight.

The second mountain was covered with many caves. Almost nothing lived there. Suhl met an Orcish man named Skall and they decided to travel together. Many Trolls lived in the caves and would attack the two at night. Suhl and Skall were both great warriors and always watched out for each other. For three nights they slew trolls by the dozens. On the fourth day they reached the other side of the mountain. Skall went west to find his tribe and Suhl continued south. Thus did Suhl learn that Orcs are a good people who fight well.

The third mountain was a sleeping volcano. Suhl met a Biata woman named Sarilla. They traveled together up the mountain. On the fourth day, Suhl felt as if he was covered in burning oil. Not being a shaman, he could only guess that the volcano would erupt soon. He made Sarilla rush down the mountain. The mountain didn't erupt and she claimed Suhl was mad. Later that night he awoke to find her astride him with her claw at his head. She claimed to be healing his mind. Suhl struck her mightily and chased her up the mountain, but gave up when she ran into a cave. As he walked down the mountain he heard a rumbling. He rushed for the bottom of the mountain. When he turned back to look at the eruption, he saw Sarilla rushing down the path. The lava caught her and she exploded into flames and died screaming. Thus did Suhl learn that the Biata are a devious race that must be watched at all times.

The fourth mountain was beautiful and covered with clouds. He met a barbarian man named Killaxe. They decided to travel together. Two paths existed, one was full of pits and crevasses, and the other was smooth with a gentle slope. The two men decided to take the easier path. They eventually came to a collection of burial mounds. Killaxe claimed that evil spirits would plague him and his tribe if he crossed for no reason. Suhl said that was not true as undead didn't come out during the day. Killaxe still refused. Suhl gave up and decided to cross. As he did, three bandits leapt out, intent on killing him. Killaxe gave up his fear and aided his friend. Together they killed the three women. Killaxe ran from the mounds and told Suhl he could help no more. Suhl ventured on and eventually came to the other side. Thus did Suhl learn that barbarians are good fighters, but are often too superstitious for their own good.

The fifth mountain had many hot springs. Suhl met a mystic wood elf named Fernell on the path up the mountain. Fernell seemed to like Suhl and they traveled together, sharing a bed roll at night. Eventually they came to a stream they had to swim across. Suhl easily made it across, but Fernell did not. Half way across she became tired and clung to a rock to keep from being pulled under. While searching for his rope to save her, Suhl discovered that his sack of gems was missing. He realized Fernell must have stolen it and left her to die a cold watery death. Thus did Suhl realize that mystic wood elves are a weak race of common thieves that will steal your heart while taking your money.

The sixth mountain was barren and windswept. Many small animals lived there. Suhl met a male scavenger that resembled a mink. His name was Carthidge. The wind was bitter cold and Suhl shivered badly. Carthidge, covered in thick fur, was warm. Suhl wanted to kill some of the small animals that lived there to make a fur coat. Carthidge was offended, claiming he would kill Suhl if Suhl tried to kill the animals of the mountain. On the fourth day, Suhl could bear the cold no longer. He found a nest of ermines and began to club them with his mace. Carthidge attacked Suhl, and Suhl caved his skull in with the mace. Suhl skinned Carthidge and had a very warm fur coat. Thus did Suhl learn that the scaven are nothing but weak animals pretending to be civilized.

The seventh mountain was laden with crevasses and boulders. Suhl met a hobbling man named Grenich on the path. They traveled together, and Suhl often thought Grenich a great burden. Grenich had difficulty navigating the terrain. On the third day, they came to a chasm that was over twenty feet wide. Suhl looked down and could not see a bottom. He was about to turn around when

Grenich produced a grapnel, some rope and a few spikes. In a matter of minutes, he had spanned the chasm. The two safely crossed. And parted company. Thus did Suhl learn that the hobblings were a weak people, but they made up for it with cleverness.

The eighth mountain was covered in brambles, and many thorn bushes. Suhl met a stone elf female named Zenith. They traveled together, and Suhl noticed that she spoke little and never smiled. As they ascended the mountains, the brambles became thicker, blocking all paths. They pressed on. For two days the thorns tore at their skin and clothes. Zenith and Suhl bled much. The stone elf passed out. Suhl bandaged her, and put his bed furs over her to keep her warm. That evening a storm blew in, bringing lightning and rain with it. Suhl sat vigilant over Zenith's sleeping body as the lightning struck the mountain for most of the night. The next morning Zenith awoke to find Suhl drenched, half mad from the deafening thunder. Using her powers she soothed his mind. They traveled the rest of the path without incident. At the base of the mountain, they parted ways. Thus did Suhl learn that Stone Elves, while weak of body, were strong of mind.

The ninth mountain had a flat top, with a beautiful lake in the center. Suhl met a gypsy named Rodrigo. They traveled together and Rodrigo told Suhl many tales, Suhl thought many to be too fantastic to be true, but they were good stories anyway. Rodrigo brought a large bottle of mead on the trip. The two drank it and became very drunk the first night. Rodrigo traded Suhl a jar of dried beetles that brought good luck for a jewel encrusted dagger Suhl had brought home from the war. The next morning, while holding his aching head, Suhl realized he had been tricked. He demanded the dagger back. Rodrigo refused, claiming a deal could not be undone. Suhl took the dagger by force. The two didn't speak the rest of the trip, and when they reached a fork in the path, Rodrigo cursed Suhl with the tail of an ass, and ran away. Thus did Suhl learn that gypsies are sneaky thieves not to be trusted at all.

The tenth mountain had many rock slides. Suhl met a tiger Saar female named Thrush on the path. Together they traveled up the mountain. The path was difficult, and the two slid as they climbed. It took 10 days to reach the top. Nothing grew here, and both Suhl and Thrush were very hungry. Thrush decided to scout ahead, looking for a clear path with her catlike agility. She went a ways and was gone for a while. Suhl began to feel queasy. He felt as though the earth beneath him was rumbling. Thrush then called to him saying all was clear. Cautiously, he tossed stones before him, expecting a rockslide. As he had expected, one of the stones caused a rockslide. Then Thrush leapt out. Suhl realized she had meant to kill him. He unslung his mighty mace and caved her skull in. He left her body for the carrion crawlers and vultures, making his way down to the base of the mountain. Thus did Suhl learn all Saars are savage animals pretending to be civilized.

The eleventh mountain was steep and covered with icy patches. Suhl met a dwarven female named Valia. The two were both sturdy enough to navigate the mountain, and made good travel companions. Valia spoke very little, but she did comment on the axe Suhl was using to chop ice with. She said the metal had a flaw, and would soon break. Suhl dismissed this saying that he had taken it off a dead enemy officer in the war. The next day, while chopping holes in the ice to make foot holds, the blade shattered. Shards of metal wounded Suhl, making his left arm useless. He began to plummet, but Valia grabbed him as he fell by, saving his life. With her help, Suhl was able to cross the mountain. The two parted as friends. Thus did Suhl learn that dwarves are a capable people, and that they are experts at weaponcraft.

The twelfth mountain was black as soot, and smelled of brimstone. Suhl met a dark elf named Kenshi. Kenshi spoke little to Suhl, and when he did, it was always as if Suhl were a child. Suhl disliked Kenshi's company. Kenshi disliked traveling during the day, and would only travel at night when all Suhl could see was Kenshi's eyes reflecting the starlight. On the third night of travel,

Kenshi appeared before Suhl and demanded money for protection. Suhl scoffed and said that the black elf must be insane, Suhl could fend for himself. Suhl traveled the rest of the night not knowing if Kenshi was lurking to kill him at any given moment. Just before dawn, Kenshi reappeared, asking for money again. Suhl readied his mighty mace, and told the man no. Kenshi sighed, throwing three severed northmen heads before Suhl. Kenshi said that they had followed Suhl since the beginning, and that more lurked in the night. As Kenshi disappeared into the shadows, he told Suhl to be certain to accept a dark elven offer, for it is seldom they will come to your aid. Dawn came and no sign of Kenshi or of northmen could be found. Suhl made his way down the mountain peacefully. Thus did Suhl learn that there is more to the dark elves than meets the eye, and that one should never turn their backs upon them.

The road leading down from the last mountain merged with a trail, which eventually led to the encampment of Suhl's party. As he feasted by the fire he told them of his travels, and they asked if he traveled with a normal human. He said no, he had fought along side humans in the great war, and knew them well enough. Besides who would want to travel with a greedy, know it all, confusing human who could barely keep up in a fight. It's not that great of an adventure to travel with one anyway.

Famous Half Ogres:

Burc: Burc lead the Half Ogre slaves in a rebellion against the Elaan Empire in an effort to free them. He later migrated with several of his people back to their southern homelands. Avalon (for more details read the Tyrangel Half Ogre section)

Shaman Caff: Shaman Caff convinced Emperor Manarack of the Elaan Empire that he and his cabal of Half Ogre shamans had a psychic vision of the doom of the Elaan Empire. By giving the emperor misinformation, Caff enabled Burc to pull off a successful coup against the empire, freeing all of the slaves. Later in life, Caff lead a migration of Half Ogres throughout the northern continent of Avalon (for more details read the Ashbury Half Ogre section).

Playing a Hatcha

Occasionally a hunting party will encounter a strange half ogre. They usually challenge him to a duel, and the bewildered creature flees as the weapons are drawn. Over the years, the term Hatcha (literally *-those who do not fight*) has been used for these Half Ogres. No one is sure of the origin of the Hatcha, as they do not have a written or oral culture stretching far enough back to find a common point, though it may be linked to the actions of the Giants in the northern area of Avalon- Long ago In the Ashbury area, many young half-ogres were kidnapped by the giants, and forced to work "righting" nature. Many were never seen again. They eventually grew up, had children and because of their youth at the time of abduction, they didn't know much about their culture. It is theorized that they became the Hatcha. While they run from Challenges, this is not to mean that the Hatcha are cowards, they just do not understand the dueling tradition, and fear they will be set upon by the entire party.

Playing a Hatcha is easy, it also allows an easy out for players who created their characters before this packet. It can be assumed that sometime after being released from the giant's services, some of the young half ogres banded together forming tribes, etc, that had no knowledge of their

roots. Hatches get all the benefits and drawbacks any other half ogre does. They merely don't know a lot about their race.

They still will have odd feelings, still get the willies from undead, etc, but they are free to react in different manners from "standard" half-ogres.

Players playing "standard" half-ogres are free to react any way they deem appropriate to the hatcha, though curiosity and pity are often prevalent.

Chapter specific Area:

Half ogres of the Tyrangel/ Southwatch area:

(NERO Atlanta)

Original by George A Cavender

Culture: The Half-ogres of the Tyrangel area call them selves "The Tribe of the Waning Moon". They are somewhat different from their northern counterparts. Several generations of slavery after their return to Avalon and a run in with a pack of werewolves have influenced their culture. Each half-ogre belongs to a caste and hates with a passion the werewolves (they refer to them as "the Big wolf" see the history section for more info). The castes are not like most real world ones, as a person can change their caste, and actually chooses which caste to join. The castes are remnants of the slaver's separation of the various professions. There are 6 castes:

Babyfangs- Young Half-ogre children. They bear a moon tattoo on their left cheek. The color is that of their dominant parent's star (see Below)

Pariah- These are outcastes. Their tattoos have been removed, and they are generally attacked on sight if recognized as a former member of the tribe.

BloodFangs- The warrior caste. Each has Red tusks, a moon tattoo as the Babyfangs, as well as a hollow red star tattoo over their right eye. During times of war, the blood fangs (and all the other castes) they fill the hollow part of the tattoo with a blood based paint.

Black Hands: these are the stealth warriors of the Tribe. Each has a hollow Black star over their right eye. They also have the moon from their time as a Babyfang, As well as a solid black tattoo covering their entire left hand.

Azure Eyes: The celestial/ battle Mages. Each has a hollow blue star over their right eye, the Babyfang moon, and one or more blue eyelid (see below). Once a person joins this caste, he may never become chief.

Alabaster hand: The Healing/ protective mages. Each has a hollow purple star over their right eye, the Babyfang moon, and a solid white (palm excluded) right hand.

****Note**** Membership in a caste is not limited by class. Any class may, if they meet the tests of the caste, join any class.**

Joining castes:

Each caste has its own criteria for joining. They are as follows:

Blood Fang:

The entrant must, anytime after defeating their mother to return into her home, call out at the top of his lungs that he is worthy of being called blood fang. At that moment all of the Blood fangs not occupied with important matters- Guard duty, criminal trial, occupied in a duel, etc. will begin to converge on the applicant. He is Wrestled to the ground, and bore away to a nearby cave. The blood fangs toss all manner of fruit and fruit juices into the cave, and wall the young applicant in the cavern for a week. During that week, the blood fangs spend their time seizing many dangerous animals and monsters. These are brought to the cave. The Blood fangs stake the monsters out around the entrance to the cave, set many large mechanical traps in the area, and light a large ring of brush afire to form a flaming barrier 3 yards from the cave mouth. the door to the cave is opened and a half starved, blood raged almost insane Half ogre emerges, bent on destruction. if he can kill all of the creatures and not get killed by the traps, he passes the test. if not he may try again when he resurrects, or he may embrace cowardice and run through the fire, barring him from joining for a full year.

Once he has passed the test of battle, an applicant is healed and prepared for the final test. All of the blood fangs are given a riding crop. The applicant must run the gauntlet, ending up at a large table with a gourd on it. in the gourd is a secret herbal mixture which will give him the blood red teeth of the caste. He is then tattooed with his star, and is at that moment a blood fang.

Black Hand:

Individuals of the black hand are a special lot. Before a child is turned out of his home, the black hand decides if he is worthy to undergo training in their art. This decision is based on previous scouting excursions by the silent, stealthy black hand. If the child shows promise, he is abducted the night before he is to be turned out by masked invaders (disguised Black hands) He is clubbed about the head to the point of unconsciousness.

He will awake in a pitch black room. A gruff voice instructs him to do many tasks in utter silence. Each time the child makes a noise, he is stuck with a riding crop. The child may try to escape, but he is chained to the wall. When the child learns stealth enough to complete most tasks silently, the masked overseer lights a lantern, seizes the child and leads him to a dingy cell. For 3 days he is kept there with no sustenance. He is then conveniently rescued by the black hand. The offer to let him go back to his family, or join their ranks. Most choose to join.

If he chooses to join the caste, he is seized by 2 members while a third covers his whole left hand with a black tattoo. This is a very painful procedure, and the child is told not to scream. Nothing occurs if he does scream, it is just considered bad form. For six months thereafter, the child is taught in any roguish skill he chooses. At the end of his lessons, He is told that before sun down on the next day, he must bring 30 gold worth of treasure to his teacher. If he does so, he is accepted as a full member and is tattooed with the hollow black star on his face. If he is unable to gather all the money, he must repeat the training/ treasure hunt again until successful.

Azure Eye:

The azure eye caste will attract people with a love for battle magics. The largest portion are

celestial, but all schools are accepted, provided they are not defilers. an applicant may join the caste at anytime in their life. He must show he can cast a spell to a member, and ask to join. The member takes the individual to one of the shamans in this caste, or the most powerful azure eye if none are shamans. That person will have the individual held down, and his lower right eyelid tattooed. Hence forth he may never be a tribal chief. The applicant is then assigned to a teacher. when the teacher feels the applicant is ready, (of course after some studying and free labor) and the applicant can cast a third level spell, the applicant has his lower left eyelid tattooed, and is tattooed with the hollow blue star. The applicant is then considered a full member of the caste. Later when he learns a ninth level spell his upper left eyelid is tattooed, and if he pursues formal magics and achieves 1st level, his upper right eyelid is tattooed.

Alabaster hand:

The alabaster hand are the tribal healers. they are also the ones in charge of Spell protections. Theirs is the gentlest of all initiations. An applicant must ask to be a member. If the majority of the cast agree, and the person can heal, or offer protection (be it magical, alchemichal, or any other non physical way) he is accepted. He is tattooed with a hollow purple star. He is then instructed to visit the most powerful healer in the tribe. This person blindfolds the young applicant and leads him to an ancient cave. Here the applicant is told a present lies for him at the bottom of a pool of white water. Looking down on the ground he sees a bubbling white pool. Reaching his hand into it, he finds nothing. However when he retrieves his hand, he notices it has been bleached solid white. That was his gift. He is now a full fledged member of the caste.

History

After the fall of Elaan, the two heroes of the rebellion, Burc and Caff each took a party in a different direction. Burc went south. When he arrived in the area he set up a small encampment. They first started by clearing a forest. They fashioned the trees into a large palisade. Huts were built, and A well dug. The people began to live and prosper again. Thus they did for 5 generations. One year during the festival of the Bittercold, a strange group of men entered the Village. They said aloud in a booming voice "follow us brethren" Thus did every half ogre follow these beings, now known to be giants. The giants loaded the Half ogres into a large barge and took them across the sea.

For many lifetimes , the half ogres did all manner of things in the continents of Zephyr, Amys and Gandar. They would dig springs in the desert, Harvest flowers in the jungle, etc. finally The foreign lands Suited the eccentric giants. all of the half ogres were offered passage back to Avalon, but many decided to stay in the new lands. Those that chose to return boarded a ship and departed across the great salty river. As they were crossing, a great storm welled up. Several of the half ogres were swept overboard. Full of strength, they tried to keep up, but were soon pulled behind. The last thing the half ogres saw was their brothers being swept beneath the waves.

After the storm cleared, the journey was very easy. It seemed that a pod of dolphins were helping to guide the ship , allowing for a peaceful journey. On occasion, one of the half ogres would see, or so he thought, a glint of yellow beneath the waves, perhaps the fallen had survived. The Giants moved the ship into a bay on the southern coast of Avalon. The half ogres gleefully jumped into the water, swimming ashore, sea sick from their long voyage.

The half ogre's first order of business was to erect a city. Cutting a forest, they began constructing their rounded huts, as well as building the city wall. Within 3 months, the city was fully finished. The half ogres then began their peaceful existence.

One day, a large caravan of humans approached the palisade. They entered the village bearing gifts of beer and bread. The half ogres, as of yet unable to harvest their newly planted grain, feasted on the food. Each ate until full, drifting easily off into a peaceful sleep, almost too easily. The Tribe awoke to find itself shackled in the bottom of wagons. They had been captured by slavers. The slavers evaluated the skills of each person and tattooed a color coded star mark upon their face to identify their vocation. The whole lot became property of some cruel master in the north. For 7 generations, the half ogres were forced to toil in the various enterprises of this man. Finally when he had finished all of his work in the north, he moved the entire population to the south. As the caravan entered what is now Southwatch, The main wagon's axle broke. The guards went to seek a possible replacement. After they had entered the woods, several screams were heard. The guards were not seen again.

For many days, the half ogres starved in their steel shackles. Then they saw a small, heavily armed band of humans approach the wagons. These humans looked in awe upon the half ogres, never having seen "ogres so small." They proceeded to raid the food stores and prepare a huge feast. While they were eating, one of the men had an idea about entertainment. He went to one of the empty wagons and unhitched it. Moving the wheeled cage around to the feast area, the others realized his plan. 2 men chose 2 of the half ogres from the cages. One had a blue star over his left eye, the other had a red star in a similar location. 2 clubs, and a large piece of roast were tossed into the cage. They were quickly followed by the half ogres.

The original plan was to watch the brutes smash one another over the food. However this was not the case. Freed of their shackles, both ran for a club. The azure eye tossed his club to the Bloodfang. Then the azure eye destroyed the door with his magic. Unleashed was the full fury of the Bloodfang warrior. The 5 bandits probably could have taken the warrior by force, were it not for the cleverness of the azure eye. He destroyed the door on a cage full of Bloodfangs, Releasing as many as he could. Seizing large rocks, the warriors crushed the men into pulp. Th azure eye then went and released all of the others. One healer decided to have some fun. Healing the two bandit leaders, he cut their tongues out. Then he tossed hem into a cage, along with 2 rocks and a turkey. The bloodfangs moved a large stone to seal the door and left the two men there.

In the south watch area, as well as most of the lands south of Therendry, no half ogres lived. After the battle with the Jhivante, all the remnants of the southern tribe integrated with their northern brethren. The newly transplanted half ogres found the land to be good, and full of virtue. Slowly, tenuously at first they reached out to the other races in the area. The first they met were the elves. At first, as was common through out the history of the half ogre race, the elves were frightened. None in the initial contact group had ever seen ogres this small, and wondered of their origins. The leader of the tribe thought to bring the group to the nearest city.

In the city, an old elder had remembered the legends of the chaos hating half ogre. He claimed, rather erroneously, that they were of part elven descent, and would make good allies. Thus was trade established. The elves provided soft blankets, and finely tanned hides. The half-ogres skill with weapons allowed them to provide the elves with many types of animals to eat. Word spread quickly that the half ogre traders were fair, and only sold the best of meat to their trade partners. Eventually, many different people would come to the village of the half ogres, not only to trade goods but also to gain training. Thus a prosperous time began.

One warm autumn day a group of the colorful humans approached the village. The half ogres approached the wagons in peace. The gypsies had many wares and the peoples traded well. In fact the half ogres exhausted their resources, and were forced to hunt that night for their own food. When the Half-ogres returned, they found their village in flames, their remaining people huddled in the

foundry, wounded and in need of help. They immediately set the alabaster hands to fixing the wounded. In the light of the full moon they began to search for other survivors. They found many dead, but only one wounded. The small child was trapped under a beam that had fallen from one of the flaming huts. As the Blood fangs tried to lift the beam from the child's body, she coughed. As she died the last words she uttered was "the colorful humans...."

Suddenly the half ogres thought about their trade partners. Several rushed out to help the gypsies. But their wagons were empty. Not alight mind you, but just deserted. And it was not deserted like a people fled in fear, but as if they had just left of their own volition. This was considered odd. but it was assumed that perhaps whomever attacked the village feared the gypsies curses. The search parties returned to the now ruined village.

Total, 17 were dead, 5 wounded and the entire village destroyed. All of the people claimed that a large pack of upright wolves attacked and looted the village. The whole tribe decided to hunt down these "big wolves." For a month they wandered searching for signs of the evil wolves. One day, exactly one month after the destruction of the village, none of the 5 wounded half ogres could be found. The chief searched high and low for the missing half ogres, finding them clenched in pain, about a mile from the camp. He watched with horror as they began to look less and less like him, and more and more like wolves. They were changing before his eyes. he seized his hunting horn, and sounded it with all his might. The entire tribe converged on the sound and quickly slew the lycanthropes.

Suddenly from out of the bushes another werewolf emerged. Howling, he lunged at the chief. Before he made any contact with the stalwart leader, the azure eyes burned him into cinders with their mighty magics. As the now limp body fell to the ground, the half-ogres saw it change. It was one of the gypsies who had so recently visited them. On that day, Graz Heartrender, mighty chief of the southern tribe, declared that from henceforth the tribe should be the tribe bent on destroying the "big wolves" . Realizing the moon was the source of the lycanthropes power, the tribe decided, after some deliberation, to call themselves "the tribe of the waning moon" to represent that they were the doom of the harvest-time gypsies and all other werewolves. since that time they have rebuilt their village in a more secure location, and now great honor is given to any person, or group of people who successfully slay one of the were kind.

Members of note in the Tribe of the waning moon:

Grok Backwhacker- Current chief. age 16. Member of the Blackhand. defeated Grom Toestabber in the chieftom duel by distracting the chief, shouting a warning of approaching undead, then inserting a knife between Grom's ribs.

Dreg Runeeye- head shaman. Age 32. Member of the azure eye. Most gifted seer of recent years. Has never missed a divination since becoming a shaman.

Grom Toestabber- Most recent chief. Grom is now 20. his epithet comes from his innovative fighting style- he would use a short sword to block his opponents blows, while mortally stabbing them in the toe with a spear. A blood fang to the end he hopes to win back his title from Grok within the year.

Skrob Heartpatcher- Highest level healer. Now 30 she seeks the items necessary to create a healing circle for the tribe. epithet comes from an incident with an insane troll that was killing off tribal

hunting parties. It would rip the people's heart out and consume it. Skrob hid in the brush, healing them after the creature left. She eventually went on to lead those warriors in a battle against the creature, gaining great fame.

Half ogres of the Hadran empire

(NERO Midwest)

Original by: Christopher Reum, edited and adapted to fit continuity

Overview/Philosophies:

There are many different half-ogre clans and tribes scattered across the lands of Hadran. Each tribe varies in its history and its view points since there is not one main half-ogre group. Most half-ogres can be found in the cities and towns of other cultures especially humans, but many are found as lone travelers. In contrast to other tribal groups, such as the barbarians though, half-ogres are not male dominated and rely on both men and women to be the hunters and the family care-givers. The main half-ogre theme is survival because most tribes live in harsh regions which is why they believe that strength is everything and civilization is a weakness that detracts from survival. They do not normally prey on civilized folk but will defend their territory against any threat, and because their tribes are usually small, they often must unite with other races to defend themselves against others.

History/Legends:

Each tribe of half-ogres has a different opinion about their origins; however, it is consistent that they do not relate themselves to true ogres. In what was once the Hadran Empire, the few tribes that have been discovered have remained aloof in the Dragonspine Mountains, but occasionally seek or offer aid to their neighbors. It is generally thought that the half ogre tribes here are formed from the warriors that fled the horrific battle with the Jhivante. Heading west, they eventually met a group of dwarves. Living with the dwarves eventually led to a slightly modified culture from that of the east.

Society:

As stated previously, half-ogres are a warrior people who see one's strength as all important. Because most half-ogre tribes live in harsh lands, the most important feat for any individual is survival. Most tribes do not grow things, they hunt and gather or take anything that they need in order to survive.

Half-ogre tribes in the Hadran area are generally male dominated, but on occasion, a female has become leader of her tribe after defeating the previous leader in combat, but culturally the women are just as important as the men often hunting next to their mates. Most tribes' leaders appoint themselves tribal chieftain after they defeat the current chieftain in combat (usually not to the death).

However, many tribes also have a council of elders, who help the leader make wise decisions, but the chieftain final word is law. Every tribe also has a tribal shaman, who, unlike the shamans of the east, is exclusively an Earth caster. In many tribes, the shaman is so powerful and influential that they actually lead the tribe.

Culture:

As with any society, family is seen as an important concept; however, half-ogres have two ideas of family. One could be termed as the immediate family, which consists of the father, mother, and children. The other could be called the extended family, which consists of everyone else within the tribe. Many half-ogres believe that the growth of children and the knowledge that they obtain is the responsibility of the entire tribe, not just their father and mother. Most scholars believe that this developed because both men and women can be the hunters/warriors and because if survival being difficult, either could die and the children must rely upon the rest of the tribe for their knowledge and survival.

Daughters and widowed females are married off by the father to the most powerful or richest male. Usually this is done to secure allegiances or to repay debts, and marriage does not have to be only inter-tribal. Daughters can be married to other tribes or other clans to secure relations or seal agreements.

Relations with other Races:

Hadran Half-ogres have an affinity to strong races such as humans, half-orcs, and barbarians. They still generally see humans as a weak people because they live in fortified cities but will seek their aid whenever necessary. Half-orcs and barbarians tend to survive in similar terrain as the half-ogre people, so they are seen as more powerful races, but neither is dealt with frequently because of their aggressive nature.

Hadran half-ogres see hobblings as weak little creatures, who can not defend themselves against any threat. They also see elves as frail beings, but believe that the elves can be stout fighters when they combine their magics with their skill in shiny weapons.

Half-ogres are closest to dwarves because they both live in mountainous regions. Dwarves are seen as great fighters, but half-ogres size just doesn't allow it much freedom underground, so many half-ogres tend to fear enclosed spaces.

Use of Magic:

As with all half ogres, Hadran's population has a difficult time understanding scholarly things including celestial magic and as a people, they tend towards the use of earth magic. They have no concept of good and bad earth magic (earth vs. necromancy) and will use necromantic spells to defend themselves. Of course the fear of undead still exists, and no half ogre will create, control, or aid these abominations. Of course when it comes to battle, they would rather show their power in armed combat, but the use of magic to defeat an enemy can be appropriate.

Language:

Half-ogres have both a complicated oral language and a very simplistic written language normally kept by the tribal shaman or chieftain if there is no shaman. Oral stories, rituals, and dances are the basis of teaching other half-ogres including the young. It is a great person who can retell his deeds through dance or oration.

Special note from Nero Midwest:

As a Nero Midwest player, you have a choice between which of the various tribes of Maeridor that you will be a member of. Currently these tribes are left up to the individuals to name and organize with permission of the racial marshal and the plot committee.

Half Ogres of the Ashbury Area:

(NERO NY)

Original written by Eric Hamilton and edited by Heidi Hooper

History of the Northern Tribes:

Reaction to the Disappearance of Burc's Migration

After nearly a thousand years of growing and developing prosperous tribes in the north, the tribal leaders from each tribe came together to discuss opening relations again with their southern counterparts. No one had heard from Burc and his people since they had made their journey to return to the southern homelands. It was decided that since Burc's people were of blood relations, more or less, they deserved to be re-established as part of the greater Half Ogre community in the north, regardless of the great distance that separated them from each other. Representatives from each tribe's Shamanees were to return to the ancient homelands to see if Burc's people survived the journey, and to restore their kinship with the southern tribes.

The visiting northern Half Ogres returned to their ancient home and found the tribes of the Half Ogres who had gone into hiding from the Elaan slavers. These long lost relations reported that they had never heard of Burc or his people. They claimed that, to their knowledge, no Half Ogre lived in the homelands when they Ogres insisted that Humans must have killed all of Burc's people while they made their journey to these lands. This theory was discredited by the northern Half Ogres, because the Humans in the lands where Burc would have traveled through to get here did not have populations large enough to mount such an oppressive force. The northern shamans then asked if there were any tribal ruins in the area. The southern Half Ogres said that there were some artifacts left behind by someone who lived in the area hundreds of years ago and abruptly decided or were forced to leave the area.

The northern shamans were brought to the foundations of an abandoned village where some pottery and stone goods remained intact. The artifacts had been patterned from the Elaan empire's pottery design in the crude way only Half Ogre craftsmen would have made them. These were definitely the tribal grounds of Burc's people. The southern tribes suggested that perhaps they were captured or killed by Humans. The northern shamans disagreed. The foundations of the huts were intact. There were no clear signs of struggle or disaster in this site, or in the other remains of the abandoned village they discovered in the following weeks. It seemed as if whole tribes just suddenly disappeared four centuries ago.

The northern Half Ogre shamans stayed with the southern tribes for a month longer and established cordial relations with their southern counterparts, but none wanted to stay behind to learn more about what happened to Burc's people. These southern Half Ogres were militantly against interacting with most - civilized races and their bigotry and single-mindedness about the issue could only be tolerated by the northern shamans for only so long. The northern shamans were creatures who lived to learn truths, and they found it difficult to be around Half Ogres who refused to believe that Humans or other races were nothing more than duplicitous swine, regardless of any evidence proving otherwise. They returned north and once every 30 years or so make the

journey back to the southern homelands to continue and expand upon their newly formed relationship with the tribes there.

Each visit kept trying to convince their southern comrades that the other civilized races were not the threat they thought them to be. Eventually, the southern Half Ogres began to see more reason about the issue. But it would not be for many years before the southern Half Ogres resumed tentative relations with Humans, and even then, their bigotry and paranoia towards them was still very much present in their society.

Toys of the Giants

Around 3,000 years ago, several northern tribes began reporting alarming numbers of tribal members who were report, missing, some never to be seen again. Those who did return, told stories of being abducted by beings who claimed to be Giants. There were fables about creatures called Giants that went all the way back to their earliest history, as far back as when they first emerged from the Great Cave. The creatures involved in the recent abductions were different than the ones of the fable, which described them as beings 20 feet in height that displayed frighteningly powerful feats of strength. The "Giants" reported kidnapping the Half Ogres were described as being the size of most races that walked on Tyrra and traveling with intelligent Goblins. Reports indicated that any half Ogre who was approached by any of these new Giants were compelled to obey their every wish. A Half Ogre had no choice but to be subservient to them.

The Giants ordered them to perform all sorts of tasks from nursing a herd of sick deer back to health to stopping erosion from eating away at the edge of a forest. Sometimes it took Half Ogres weeks to complete a task before they could return home, sometimes months, and sometimes Half Ogres were never seen again.

These kidnappings kept occurring for nearly a century until one Shaman named Pall decided to stop these abductions once and for all, for too many Half Ogres that had been kidnapped and never returned to their tribes. The population of the different tribes were beginning to wane significantly Shaman Pall decided he would find these Giants and stop them to the best of his ability. He refused to allow anyone to accompany him, and he journeyed alone to the Frostpeak Mountains where the Giants were last seen

One year later, the amount of Half Ogre abductions reduced significantly and the once great threat Giants posed became more of a nuisance than anything else. Any abduction from there on were isolated incidents here and there. Obviously Shaman Pall did something to convince the Giants to decrease their abductions. The Half Ogres would have declared him a hero, if he had ever returned home, but Shaman Pall was never seen again.

The Human/ Ogre Wars

Around 2,000 years ago, a great migration of Ogres and Yeti migrated south from the northern wastelands. They were a crueler, more war-driven breed than the average Ogres. They pillaged Human outposts and villages as they marched down south towards the lands that would later become the kingdom of Evendarr Their brute force and relentless slaughter posed a threat to the Human and barbarian populations. War seemed inevitable.

Half Ogre leaders tried to settle matters amicably by meeting with the belligerent Ogre forces. The Ogres refuse to back down claiming that the Humans served no purpose than to die in their hands The Half Ogres were asked to betray the "weak" Humans and join the Ogre brigade in destroying the Humans to claim the lands as their own.

There was much disharmony amongst the Half Ogre tribes. Some wished to join the Ogres, believing that the Humans would probably kill them later anyway just for even being distantly related to the Ogres, for there was a growing overall prejudice toward OGREkind from the other races that many Half Ogres believed would target them as well. Many Half Ogres believed that the Humans deserved their support and allegiance more than the Ogres since for hundreds of years they had lived and coexisted in harmony with them. They barely knew enough about this new warlike race of Ogres to say they could trust them as their Human and barbarian allies. It certainly seemed dubious that these warlike Ogres would act benign towards any of their neighbors.

They finally decided which side they would join when it was discovered that the Ogres and Yeti ate the flesh of their victims after they defeated them in battle. Half Ogres could understand the warlike attitude of the Ogres, but never could they sit back and watch their distant cousins do such horrible acts against the Humans. Devouring their enemies after battle was foreign to Half Ogres. They decided at that point to side with the Humans if the hostilities escalated to the scale of an all out war.

The 13 Year War was a very brutal affair. The Ogres and Yeti tortured their captives for sheer pleasure, ate their victims entrails (which later was learned that these Ogres believed that the guts of one's enemy is was the heart of their strength and if devoured, became the strength of the Ogre champion), used necromancy to create undead to add to their forces, and burned every village and farm field they came across so that the Humans had no supplies to fall back upon. No one was prepared to fight a war where the enemy used such horrifying tactics. For the first ten years, the Ogres and Yeti had the upper hand in most of the battles fought in the war. The Ogres had conquered the lands as far south as the regions later known as Blythedale, forcing the Barbarians of the area to retreat beyond the northeastern shores of Lake Hollym.

But soon, the torn and tattered regiments of the Elves, Humans, Half Ogres, and Barbarians joined as one fighting force and began driving the Ogres back, slowly reclaiming the lands they had lost to them. Finally the Ogres and Yetis of the northern Wastelands, now severely decreased in numbers and supplies, retreated back to their frost-laden home. The war was won by the natives of the lands, and the Half Ogres, along with the other races, could begin to rebuild their settlements.

Disaster in the South

Around 1,000 years ago, six Giants began rounding up Half Ogres from every northern tribe they came across systematically. They spared no able-bodied Half Ogre in these large-scale abductions and there was great panic amongst those who feared that the Giants were going to annihilate their entire race. Although that was not the purpose behind the abductions, the Giants' true intentions would ultimately lead them to the most terrifying and traumatic episode in the entirety of Half Ogre history.

It took the six Giants three years to round up thousands of Half Ogres, as well as other creatures, to amass what was later discovered by the Half Ogres to be an army of formidable power. Problems developed when they revealed their mission to the Half Ogres.

The Giants explained that one of their own kind had been felled by the evil necromancers of Jhivantane and created as some form of greater undead. The necromancers were using the undead Giant to capture the Half Ogres of the southern tribes to be transformed into an undead army of unparalleled might. It was perhaps too late to save the southern tribes, but the Giants wanted to stop the undead Giant and Half Ogres before they began paving the way to allow the

Jhivantane necromancers to turn Tyrra into a chaos irradiated cesspool.

Once they revealed their mission, however, the Giants' control over Half Ogres was relinquished for they could not force them to take a blow to any civilized race, especially fellow Half Ogres, regardless of whether or not they were undead. The Giants no longer had obedient slaves and had to negotiate with the Half Ogres to keep their support in joining them in this war. Many promises were made to return some relatives abducted long ago by the Giants before the Half Ogres would agree to follow them to the southern tribal grounds. In truth, the Half Ogres would have joined them in the war with or without the concessions promised, for they were just as adamant on saving their southern counterparts from this necromantic evil. They just took advantage of the Giants who, for the first time, had to deal with the Half Ogres on their terms. It was a major landmark for the development of the relationship between Giants and Half Ogres. Once negotiations had been settled, the Giants' army headed south.

A great war between necromancers of Jhivantane and the Giants took place in the southern tribal homelands of the Half Ogres. The lands themselves had already been Corrupted by their twisted necromantic rituals, many of which had never been seen before by the Half Ogres. Ritual Fear Zones frightened to death any who stayed too long within them; Chaos Mists would seep into warriors' lungs and slowly drained them of life; Purple Moss would pollinate in the air and grow in the tracheas of those unfortunate enough to inhale the pollen, causing nausea to the victim for days until they finally gagged to death; and Flesh Rot would cause a victim's body part to begin to decay and eventually become undead, often taking a life of it's own and the animated limb would try to kill the host body to complete the undead transformation.

The necromancers' greatest weapon, though, was the undead Giant they had captured some time before the war. This fearsome undead monstrosity had retained its ability to control living Half Ogres. This led to mental tug-of-wars between the living Giants and the undead Giant over the living army of Half Ogres. It was a terrifying experience to be a Half Ogre to be one minute under the "guidance" of the Giants who brought them to the war and the next minute a puppet for the undead Giant and fall victim to some form of necromancy cast upon them.

It was a war of horrors like none seen before by the Half Ogres. Every day they fought their undead counterparts, and any living Half Ogre who had died in battle was instantly turned undead by one of the necromancers. The undead Ghorgranus took control of any living Half Ogre around him and sent them to the other side to be transformed and added to their ranks. Unfortunately, the other Giants could not affect the undead Half Ogres in the same way. This went on for months and took a serious toll on the sanity of the living Half Ogres every day was a constant reminder that if they failed, they could become mindless zombies like their southern relations.

Many, in hysteria, ran screaming from the battlefield claiming that they saw their own face amongst the ranks of undead. It was a natural psychological breakdown that one expects after so many months of horrendous battle, but the vision of their image amongst the undead was misinterpreted as a sign from nature portending their doom. The stress of facing such evil day after day had taken its toll on all of the Half Ogres. Some ran from battle and never returned again, something that no Half Ogre had ever done in the middle of a war before. Some remained but did not sleep at night. The Giants did what they could to keep all of their Half Ogres from retreating. It looked for a time that the war was to be lost to the Jhivantane necromancers.

Finally, after a year's combat, the Giants slew Ghorgranus and he did not regenerate in his undead form—he died his final death. Without their undead Giant, the Necromancers' forces began depleting rapidly, until finally they were defeated. The Giants chased away or killed the

last remaining necromancers. One of their ranks, another Giant named Tyrell Givenns, has disappeared a month earlier, wounded by an unknown Dragon Magic spell. The southern Half Ogres who were in the undead army were all greater undead and had perished after their allotted amount of regenerations had been used up. The Half Ogres did not stay around long to celebrate their victory. They solidified their arrangements with the Giants and returned with their "missing" and left for home. They desperately wanted to leave the lands they were physically repulsed by the "tainted" lands. There were no good memories from this ordeal. They did not feel like victors, for in winning, they had to destroy a significant population of their own kind. In many ways, they felt as if they were forced to commit genocide on the southern Half Ogres.

It is this experience that planted the seed of the racial fear of undead. Their traumatic experiences were given as warning to all in their tribes of the horrors that can only spawn from unlife and necromancy. And from generation to generation stories and Warnings grew more vivid and powerful, impacting each Half Ogre more and more until the Half Ogres became so terrified of undead that even a zombie would make them pause in fear.

Local History

Before Ashbury

In 56 ER (Evendarr Record), news of a kingdom ruled primarily by Humans in the southern regions of the tribal lands the Half Ogres reached every Half Ogre village. The Half Ogres had seen many Human or Elven communities rise and fall in the millennia of their existence, but never had they seen such organized effort to develop and expand a large-scale government since the Elaan Empire.

Many shaman's were wary of this developing government fearing that the Evendarrian kingdom might evolve into a similar degenerate and fascist state as Elaan had ultimately become. But many more reassuring rumors came to them as well as the Evendarrian goodwill representatives who spread the good word about their kingdom made pilgrimages in the surrounding territories on the borders of Evendarr. Many of the Half Ogre tribes that resided on the lands already occupied by Evendarr had sign pacts and agreements to join the kingdom so long as the traditions and tribe's government were to remain intact after being absorbed by Evendarr.

Many of the tribes north of the slowly growing kingdom were reticent of Evendarrian rule. This is mostly because the Northmen Barbarians of the area had expressed their convictions that that Kingdom of Evendarr was nothing more than a nation motivated solely on conquering and oppressing the local inhabitants of lands they prized.

The region at that time that was eventually to become Ashbury, although mainly Barbarian country, also housed several Half Ogre tribes who lived and thrived in the region. The Half Ogres had enough trouble with local undead to not worry as much as the Barbarians about the encroaching kingdom. A great and terrible liche moved into the lands of what would be later known as Blythedale. The Barbarians dubbed her "mistress of the dead" and apparently she was a formidable caster who controlled many undead.

This greatly disturbed many of the local Half Ogre tribes, but their fears did not really begin to emerge until the liche, named Mournna, attempted to kidnap an entire Half Ogre tribe in 184 ER. Other tribes had found out later that an undead army of fair size attacked the small village of Tuku at sundown one April evening. Many of the tribe's traps and long distance weapons kept the undead at bay long enough for the tribal leader, Ehri, to assess the situation.

The tribe was clearly outnumbered by the undead and already Ehri saw the fear growing in her tribe. She knew that if they faced such an undead force in combat there was no way to keep the morale up enough to keep her Half Ogres from running from battle. There was no doubt that they would lose to the undead. She also noted that the perimeter guards of the tribe had already fallen to the undead, but were not killed. For some reason the undead had captured any Half Ogres they came across. Then she saw in the distance within the far ranks of the undead, a female undead who seemed to be their leader barking orders to her necromantic minions. It was Mournna- the liche was out hunting Half Ogres for her twisted experiments.

Ehri gathered as many of her Half Ogre villagers the center of the fortified community leaving a few behind to keep watch on the amassing undead forces 500 yards from their village. She took the villagers to a pit which they fill with water every Summerfest for swimming in. Using hollowed bamboo sticks used for crafting blow-dart weaponry, smoking pipes, and primitive flutes, she had the tribe bury themselves completely in the pit using the bamboo to stick out only slightly so they could breathe. Ehri then committed suicide so she could resurrect in a permanent circle 20 miles away.

Within an hour, Mournna's forces took down the few Half Ogres guarding and invaded the community. The hidden Half Ogres were almost discovered when one of the undead tripped on a bamboo air vent, but the creature was mindless and moved on without making the connection. Mournna ultimately did not find the well-hidden tribe and left before the sun rose. Ehri returned the next day and dug out the terrified tribe. They wanted to abandoned the village and migrate away from the area. She, however, wanted to stay and gather all of the local tribes to retaliate against Mournna, but she lost a duel with one of the strongest advocates on leaving the area, who then took on the mantle as tribal leader for defeating Ehri. Soon after their victory, they left the lands and never returned.

The tribe of the Tuku no longer exists, for they had integrated themselves into other tribes. The other tribes learned of Mournna's attack on Tuku. They, however, did not abandon their homes like the Tuku tribe. Instead, they increased their fortifications and became better prepared to deal with the liche if she ever called upon any of the other tribes.

By 250 ER, tensions began brewing with the local Barbarian tribes, for the quickly developing Rotarian duchy was claiming more and more Barbarian lands as their own. The Half Ogres still had their own difficulties to worry about at the time. Raids upon several Half Ogre tribes from northern Ogres began increasing in frequency. For reasons unfathomable to the Half Ogres, these Ogres were signaling them with their raiding parties. The Ogres took no prisoners and killed all Half Ogres they came across.

After a decade of this brutal onslaught, the Half Ogre tribes united in the cause to defeat this Ogre menace in 262 ER. There were great losses on both sides of the war, but, ultimately, the Half Ogres were the craftier of the warriors and finally drove the Ogres back to their northern wastelands.

Duchy History

On 272 ER. King Ulson Endarr III began his campaign of colonization of the lands between Lake Hollym and the Grey Hills. His troops began moving westward from the duchy of Rotaria and they encountered the barbarian tribes that resided in those parts. The barbarians did not take kindly to what they saw as an invasion force in their homelands. They were adamant that these foreigners not be allowed to absorb their lands into the kingdom of Evendarr. They engaged the king's men in what began a series of brutal territorial wars.

The local Half Ogre tribes were at first eager to fight alongside their barbarian neighbors. They relished the combat and found the king's men to be worthy adversaries to fight. Eventually, it became clear to the tribes that they were not making any significant progress in pushing back the king's forces from their lands. For every 20 of the king's men that died in battle, 40 more replaced them in the next battle.

Finally, the local shamans met with the king's generals under a flag of truce. They found that the Evandarrians were not an unjust or malicious people as the barbarians made them out to be, they simply wanted to expand upon their rapidly growing kingdom. The Half Ogre tribes were promised that when absorbed into the kingdom, their villages and customs would not be altered under the king's rule. With that, they changed their allegiances and joined the king's armies in rounding up and defeating the barbarians. The Half Ogre were considered traitors by the barbarians for a hundred years afterwards, but today, most remnants of those barbarian tribes do not remember much about the event to care about the "betrayal."

For the next two centuries, the regions colonized by Ulson's forces and other migrations into nearby lands began the formation of what was soon to be known as the duchy of Ashbury.

During these formative years, a traumatic event took place in the late 400s when the Troll King Fangthorn rose to power to lead his people against the Evendarnan settlers. The great war hero, Captaln Connor Arawyn, rallied the local people against the fearsome Troll forces in the Tower Hills. He even visited the local Half Ogre tribes to ask them to join his cause, and stepped in and dueled with several tribal leaders to gain their audience. He defeated ail but one tribal leader, who joined his war party anyway, impressed with Connor's acknowledgment of Half Ogre tradition and protocol.

The Half Ogres rallied to the cause and joined in the war against the Trolls in 479 ER. Many great warriors of Half Ogre history fought, died, and triumphed in that war. To this day, to have a relative who fought in that war is considered good luck to local Half Ogres. After Fangthorn was defeated, some Half Ogres settled down in the estate of Battlewoods to form the community of Rolssa. There they took the bones to the defeated Trolls and made them into musical pipes as souvenirs of the war. They actually became skilled at making the crude woodwinds and it became renowned for that particular tribe to have many members skilled in the craft of the pipes' construction.

Eventually, some Half Ogres throughout the kingdom would try their hand at becoming a noble for the kingdom. Ashbury's first Half Ogre knight was squired under Duke Henry Songbringer himself. The knight, Sir Ghurt, was given the estates of Bramlebush and Dabrak. Sir Ghurt was a just knight, but was a little rough around the edges.

For three years he managed the estates in a no-nonsense type fashion. In 525 ER, a traveling Half Ogress named Rheer came to his manor house complaining he allowed bandits to run rampant in his barony. Sir Ghurt took slight to this comment and denied it vehemently, calling her a trouble-causing wench. Rheer challenged to him a duel, claiming she could run these estates better than he could. Enraged, he accepted the challenge, not thinking clearly of what he had just agreed to the battle was brief and Rheer easily claimed the victory. She then invited all of the local Half Ogre leaders to join her in a banquet to celebrate her victory and new title.

Word got to Duke Henry quickly from the angry citizens of Bramlebush and Dabrak of what happened. He quickly rode out by horseback with his knights to quell the matter. He found Rheer, or as she had self-proclaimed herself, Dame Rheer, in Ghul's manor house. He told her that he could not acknowledge her as one of his knights because of some cockeyed Half Ogre

tradition which says she can take a noble title through a ceremonial duel. He told her that he alone had the right to choose his knights, and even then, they must first pass the school of chivalry, to which she had never squired or pupiled from before. Dame Rheer pointed out that if he removed her title, her tribal leader guests would be greatly upset at a Duke who had no respect for their culture.

Duke Henry's knights told him to just remove the woman now and get it over with. They felt that any Half Ogre rebellion caused by this political fiasco could be easily contained or quelled. Henry realized that this would not end here if he did things the way his knights suggested. The matter would not close if they forced the Half Ogres into a compromise they were unwilling to adhere to. Someday, the Issue would come up again in some other conflicting situation between the laws of the tribal duel and the Code of Chivalry. He would have to resolve this using a means the Half Ogres understood, so he challenged her to a duel knowing she could not refuse.

He would allow her to keep the title if she won. He gambled that his fighting skills were greater than hers. Luckily for the Duke, his parrying ability was slightly better than hers when they engaged in the sword fight. He won the duel and Henry took the estates back under his wing until a suitable replacement for Ghurt could be found. Since that time, in Ashbury, it has been made clear to Half Ogres that if they wished to become a noble of any kind, they must first swear that the Code of Chivalry comes before all things, including the traditional Half Ogre duel.

In 577 ER, reports from many tribes that a Giant by the name of Myron had visited their villages and communities. For no reason that he would give, he rounded up the Half Ogre children from the ages 3-6 and selected the strongest of them and took them away from the tribe. Nothing the tribes could do would prevent this from happening. It is estimated that 72 total Half Ogre children were abducted and never returned.

In later years, sighting of groups of Half Ogres in deep forests began accumulating. When approached, they'd scurry away like frightened children, evading contact from even their own kind. It is guessed that these 'wild' Half Ogres were the children who were abducted by Myron. The 'Wild' Half Ogres were later dubbed "Hacha" (translated in common as "those who never fight"). Since their discovery, Half Ogres tell their children that if they don't behave, Myron will come for them in the night and turn them into a "Hacha."

In the Fall of 593, several Half Ogres began to get signs of something wrong with the ecology. They couldn't place what the signs meant for the shamans had nothing recorded on these particular signs, so they could not identify what the shift in the local environment was, but they suspected that it had something to do with fire.

Famous Half Ogres of the Ashbury area:

Edduu: Edduu is the current leader of the Tury tribe. He is getting old in age and soon may not be able to fight well enough to keep his title as tribal leader.

Ehri: Tribal leader Ehri saved most of her tribe from an attack by the liche Mournna by burying them in a pit with air holes to breathe out of. She was later deposed by the Tuku tribe because they were not willing to follow her in her crusade against Mournna.

Sir Ghurt: Ghurt was the first Half Ogre knight in Ashbury. He held his title for three years, but

lost it in a duel with a Half Ogress named Rheer. Because of the conflicts with the Code of Chivalry and the laws of the duel, all Half Ogres taking noble title must swear to the Code above and beyond anything else, including their cultural ties to dueling for dominance

Grogg: Grogg is considered the greatest Half Ogre warrior in all history. Born in the year 107 ER of the Inbo tribe. Grogg had quickly made a name for himself by defeating an adult in a duel for dominance at age six. An unusual feat, but even more unusual is the fact that he continued to defeat adults in duels every time he challenged them, despite his young age. It is believed by many scholarly shamans that he was a savant in the arts of fighting, for he had the uncanny ability to size up his foe almost instantaneously and use their weaknesses in their battle technique to his advantage. Grogg became tribal leader upon the age of 16 and maintained that mantle until the day he died. Grogg was never defeated in a duel, and only died once in battle when facing overwhelming odds. When Grogg was 60, he died suddenly and painlessly in his sleep. Many great Half Ogre warriors claim that Grogg appears in their dream to challenge them to a duel. The dreamers always seem to lose. Shamans speculate that this dream vision is the spirit of Grogg seeking the one opponent who can defeat him in battle, so that he can finally rest at peace, no longer carrying the burdensome title of champion.

Hamak: Hamak is the current leader of the Cire tribe. He is a templar that uses Earth magics. He comes from a long lineage, which has ruled the Cire tribe for centuries. Like all of his tribal leader relatives before him, he keeps relations with the rest of the tribes to a minimum

Grand Shaman Inuch: In the Pall tribe, the Shamanee has been dedicated for centuries in the research of Giants. They catalog every piece of information about these creatures so that they can begin to understand who they are and what their purpose is in abducting Half Ogres. All Half Ogre disappearances and sightings of Giants are sent to the Pall Tribe. Abductees who have been returned are interrogated for days about their experience. The current leader of the Shamanee is Grand Shaman Inuch. Her focus on the investigations is to make the Half Ogres relive their experiences by setting up simulations of the event. She also has taken in a Stone Elf and Biata to delve deeper into the victim's minds, to which has brought discord to the rest of the Shamanee, who don't like the idea of outsiders being involved in their business, especially one of those devious Biata.

Lahtz: Lahtz is the leader of the Inbo tribe. He has lost and reclaimed his leadership so many times that his face's tattoos have become one big aqua blue blob.

Nolru: Nolru is the current leader of the Ut-Mar tribe. His tribe has a law punishable by death against consorting with undead. No one is allowed to bargain or even speak to the undead.

Shaman Pall: Pall halted a great deal of the nefarious kidnappings by the Giants but never returned from his meeting with them to tell how he did it.

Raddu: Raddu is the current leader of the Gallem tribe. He is mated to a full Ogre woman named Fohss. It is rumored that the full Ogres living in the tribe arranged this mating so that they

could ease their way into leadership positions and take over the tribe.

Rheer: Rheer defeated a Half Ogre knight named Ghurt and took his noble title by the rights of the duel. Duke Henry Songbringer had to duel with her to get his lands back. He was very lucky and defeated her. The Duke proclaimed that from that point onwards, any Half Ogre taking noble office must swear fealty to the Code of Chivalry in such a manner that they cannot duel for their titles or lands. This has deterred many Half Ogres from wanting a noble title (for more details read Half Ogre history).

Sharii: Sharii is the current leader of the Talit Moors tribe. It is well known that she will not mate with any Half Ogre, because she has yet to find her one that can defeat her in a duel.

The story of Shaman Pall and the Giants

Almost 3,000 years before there was ever a kingdom named Evendarr, the Half Ogre tribes lived in these lands, much the same way as we do today. We enjoyed the hunt and the battles against our enemies. We thought we were our own masters, bowing to none except our tribal leaders. That was before the Giants entered our lives again. In the beginning, we came from the great cave, lost, without home or identity. None could write back then, so all we have from those early years are broken stories and rumors. One rumor says that we were bound in kinship to the Giants, a great race of large men. In some way, The Giants angered the humans and other races and were thought to have been killed off in a great war during those early days of our existence. That is not necessarily true.

Years ago, several different tribes claimed that many of their tribes' members were disappearing, some never to be seen again. Those who did return told of tales of being abducted by beings claiming to be the same race of Giants that knew us in the years of the great cave. They were different now, instead of being 20 feet tall, they were size of most races that walk on Tyrra, and they traveled with intelligent Goblins. Any Half Ogre who came upon one of these Giants were compelled to obey their every wish. A Half Ogre had no choice but to be subservient any Giant who approaches them. The Giants ordered them to perform all sorts of bizarre tasks including planting trees to make a forest out of a desert and destroying all of a certain kind of bees' hive in a given area. Sometimes it took Half Ogres weeks to complete a task before they could go home, sometimes months. And sometimes, Half Ogres never returned at all.

These mass kidnappings kept occurring for nearly a century, until one Shaman named Pall decided that enough was enough. Too many Half Ogres were abducted and never returned at this point. The populations of the different tribes were waning significantly. Shaman Pall decided he would find these Giants and stop them to the best of his ability. He took no one with him and went to the Frostpeak Mountains where they were last seen. No one ever saw Shaman Pall again.

A year later, however, the amount of Half Ogre abductions reduced significantly and the once great threat Giants posed became more of a nuisance than anything else. Any abduction from there on were isolated incidents here and there. Obviously Shaman Pall did something to convince the Giants to decrease their abductions.

Three hundred years after Shaman Pall disappeared, one of the strange intelligent Goblins who act as servants to the Giants told the tale of Pall and the Giants to a kidnapped Half Ogress who was lucky to have returned to her tribe. She was told that Shaman Pall indeed found

the Giants and tried to convince them to stop the abductions altogether. The Giants refused. Shaman Pall pulled out an ancient scroll he found during his journey to find the Giants. With it he wielded powerful magics and reversed their roles. The Giants' ability to control him was transferred to him and he now could control them. He used his abilities to keep them from kidnapping Half Ogres as much as possible.

Because of this new power, Shaman Pall became immortal and is constantly keeping track of the Giants, making sure they don't become the threat to the Half Ogre race as they once were. This Goblin who relayed this story never told the Half Ogress where Shaman Pall lives today. Many have sought to find Shaman Pall. but none have ever succeeded. Wherever he may be, he is always looking down upon us with favor. He shall always be revered as a great hero and known to us all as "the one who commands Giants."

Half Ogres of Dyllaria

(W.A.R.)

History by George A. Cavender,
balance uncredited/ chapter publication,
edited for continuity

History: (as told by Klang, Grand shaman of the Fatestealer clan)

In the seasons after the great fleeing, the people of Elaan were scared. Word reached them quickly of the revolt, and the disappearance of the Dravus brothers. Fearing retribution from both sides, an enterprising lady, Known as Aylaytia, took her household south into the region the humans now call *****. Known for her kindness, she decided to set up a small village in the valley near the ***** mountains. Unlike most masters, Aylaytia treated her servants as equals. She allowed them to marry as they chose, and to possess things of value. This meant her servants worked hard for her, and brought her great amounts of money. It is even said she would dine with her workers on occasion. Among her servants were several of our people, most of whom had not grown tusks. These held positions in the ladies house. Barren by nature, she looked upon these children as her own. She raised them to become her heirs, teaching them the secrets of reading, and of brewing. She smiled as, in her twilight, they grew to be strong. The first of them was Kornak. A wise man, he followed the rules he had learned in the great books of politicks. He divide the lands into fiefs, and called him self king. For many generations the "kingdom" grew. In 550, calamity struck. A large rock fell from the sky. Several of the humans living in the area were burned to death from the flames. The rest decided to seize the rock, and build a monument. The head blacksmith, Rupert the Quencher set upon it. Several nights later, a scream was heard. When the people investigated, it appeared that Rupert had a large puss filled wound forming on his leg. Otherwise he appeared fine... Several days later, his fever broke, and he appeared well. He returned to his work within the week... Several days later, he mysteriously vanished.

Within the next few weeks, several children went missing, and others told stories of a boogie monster stalking them. Eventually these stories stopped as all of the children disappeared. Animals, even adults started going missing. Slowly the entire human village was emptied. Kornak became worried, and sent some guards to investigate. What they found was shocking. The entire village was deserted. Then they saw. The people were pale, and their flesh was beginning to rot. Much like undead, they shambled towards the guards, teeth gnashing. The guards dispatched them, and blood rained down upon them all...

The blood began to seethe and boil upon their flesh. Everyone who had touched it became violently ill. The healer, having waited, came forward to heal them. Nothing seemed to work. Further, just being near the blood made the healer feel ill. She left to tell Kornak of what had happened. Kornak decided to lead his mighty army into the humans' fiefs, to discern what was causing the problem. They were never seen again.

In the months that followed more and more people went missing. Finally, it was decided that the land had become poisoned, and that leaving was the best option. Between our people, and the followers of Orog, peace existed. But there was a difference of opinion. We believe that the plains were the proper path to go, while he chose the mountains. Thus what had been brought together in chains was separated in friendship. To this day, we still trade with them, our furs and pets for their precious metals.

Society:

Half Ogres in Dyllaria are restricted to a small community within the extremely treacherous Ogre's Den Mountains. These brave pioneers have declared the region to be called the Kingdom of Iridan. This so-called kingdom is dominated by the walled village of Mintown. A small but lucrative mining operation here yields enough gold to spur a fragile trade link with the Barbarian tribes of the Battle Plains. As for the rest of the population, they reside in small villages which are constantly raided and demolished by bands of Ogres only to spring up again. They are well aware of Tilicaf's presence in the Fortress of Kaas and are victims of his raiders often.

Personality:

Often quiet and reclusive among other races, Half-Ogres are very sociable among their own kind. They are hard-workers and those from Dyllaria usually tend to be lawful in nature.

Marriage:

Half-Ogre marriage is a private affair between mates. There are no witnesses to the ritual, known as the Ceremony of Binding, but the vows are honored and adultery is very uncommon. Mating is for life and even if one partner dies, the other will not remarry out of respect for the allegiance to one another.

Birth:

Half-Ogre women are very strong and hard working. They continue to carry the same work load on through their pregnancy and often right up to the moment of birth. Recovery time is only one to three hours on average unless the birth has been extremely difficult.

Death:

Half-Ogres mourn death much the same as humans do, but with much less outward show of emotion. The dead are always cremated.

Interracial Relations:

Half-Ogres hold very few, if any, racial prejudices. They usually dislike Drae because the slavers from the Slaver's Peaks have led numerous assaults on Iridan in hopes of acquiring some of the powerful Half-Ogres as workers in their silver mines.

Family:

Half-Ogre families include a mated pair and their unwed children. The main head of the household is the father, followed closely by the mother. Males are hunters and females concentrate on domestic duties. Young males leave home between the ages of 7 to 8 years to find a mate.

Leisure:

Half-Ogres are very competitive and enjoy games that rely on strength. Wrestling, rock throwing, and numerous other physical contests dominate their spare time. Many also take up craftsman skills such as tanning, trapping, and weaponsmithing as well as many other types of hobbies.

Heroes, Lord, and Legends:

Orog Shallindar (awe-rawg) - Led the Half-Ogres into Dyllaria, founded Mintown, and proclaimed Iridan a kingdom in 576.

Torak Shallindar - Current ruler and King of Iridan. Called the High Chief Torak of Mintown. Son of Orog, he has ruled since his father's death in 587.

Special Note from the editor:

Portions of this packet, specifically the dueling system, The northern Origin story, the biological section, parts of the culture section, and the language section, draw heavily, or come directly from the Nero New York Half Ogre packet, written by Eric Hamilton, and edited by Heidi Hooper.

Edit history:

2/1998:

- Began work
- Contacted chapters re: racial packets.
- Began stitching them together into a greater framework

1/1999:

- Released first collective packet, subsequently approved for play testing.
- Included pointed ears as additional drawback
- Included reduction to the cost of the first weapon skill as a bonus.
- Required purchase of weapon skill at low levels (due to culture)
- Reduced cost of “read runes” a skill proposed in the playtest “Rune Magic”

Circa 2005:

- Got rid of references to pointed ears, Runic magic, weapon skill cost reductions, etc.

8/2006:

- Re-edited the text for clarity.
- Scanned and OCR'ed original Ashbury packet to eliminate pesky “waiting on electronic copy”.
- Got rid of references to pointed ears, Runic magic, weapon skill cost reductions, etc.
- Minor edits for clarity and flow.
- Generated PDF form