

WARHAMMER

WOOD ELVES



WARHAMMER ARMIES









WOOD ELVES



By Mathias Eliasson
v.1.5

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Warhammer: Wood Elves*, your indispensable guide to the guardians of Athel Loren. This book provides all the information you'll require to collect and play with a Wood Elves army in games of Warhammer.

WARHAMMER – THE GAME OF FANTASY BATTLES

If you are reading this book, then you have already taken your first steps into the Warhammer hobby. The Warhammer rulebook contains all the rules you need to fight battles with your miniatures, and every army has its own army book that acts as a definitive guide to collecting and unleashing it upon the tabletop battlefields of the Warhammer world. This army book allows you to turn your collection of Wood Elves into a host of vengeful warriors, ready to shield Athel Loren from the evils of the world.

WOOD ELVES

In the depths of Athel Loren live the isolationist Wood Elves. They care little for the outside world, regarding it with suspicious eyes, and hearts ever willing to avenge transgressions. Woe betide he who brings harm to the forest, and thus courts the Wood Elves' wrath.

Theirs is an existence shaped by the passage of the seasons, by ancient magic and by folklore. Learn the tales of Ariel and Orion, the Mage Queen and Hunter King, and prepare to defend this most wondrous of realms to your dying breath.

The Wood Elves are an army of hunters, masters of the arrow and the spear. Keen-eyed archers stride to war alongside antler-helmed knights, otherworldly enchantresses and cruel-hearted forest spirits. The Wood

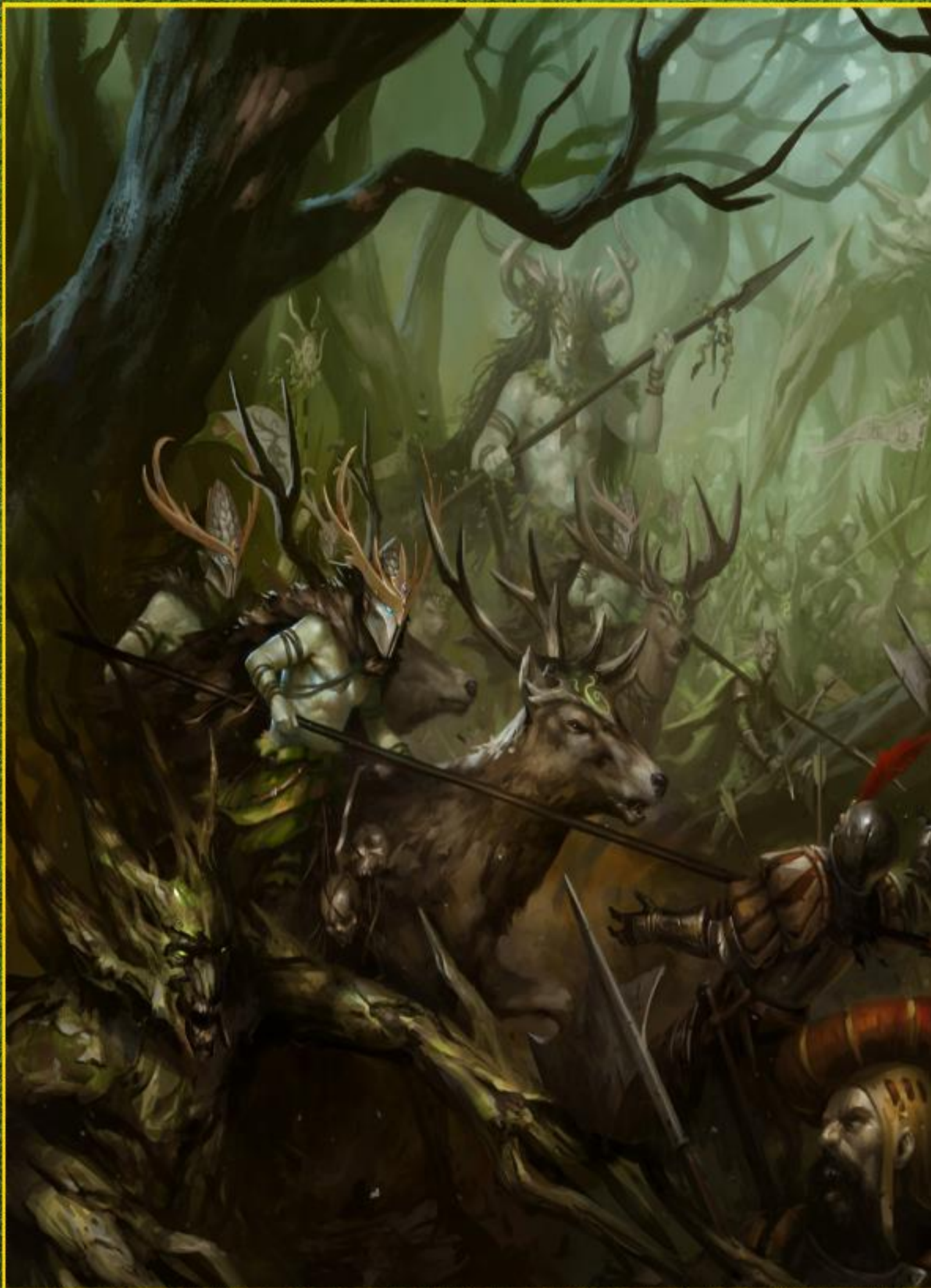
Elves are ranked amongst the finest warriors of the Warhammer world, and are seldom overmatched. Whether you seek to vanquish your foe from afar or eye-to-eye, with sorcery or spell-woven steel, with the valour of Elves or the eternal wrath of the forest itself, your Wood Elf army will speed you to victory.

HOW THIS BOOK WORKS

Warhammer: Wood Elves contains the following sections:

- **The Lords of Athel Loren.** The first section introduces the Wood Elves, detailing their struggle to preserve their greenwood realm. Herein, you will find the tale of the founding of Athel Loren, and of the gathering doom against which the Wood Elves fight.
- **The Deepwood Host.** In this section, you will find all the characters, unit types and monsters available to the Wood Elves. You will find a full description of each unit that covers its role upon the battlefield, its specialised combat abilities, in addition to any rules and unique skills it possesses. This section also includes the Lore of Athel Loren, and the Heirlooms of Athel Loren – magic items unique to the Wood Elves.
- **Wood Elves Army List.** The army list takes all of the models and units presented in the Deepwood Host section and arranges them so you can choose an army for your games of Warhammer. Each unit type also has a points value to help you pit your forces against your opponent in a fair fight.







THE LORDS OF ATHEL LOREN

From beneath the boughs of Athel Loren, the Wood Elves regard the world with distrustful eyes, neither meeting nor embracing anything that lies beyond their own borders.

Yet the Wood Elves know that the fate of Athel Loren is tied to that of other lands.

Though they do not seek to act as the world's protectors, nor enthrone themselves as its rulers, there are those times when the will of Orion and Ariel, the King and Queen in the Woods, must shape the fortunes of other lands. Never has this been truer than in these dark days, where every broken bough or withered leaf carries an omen of darker times to come. As the Wood Elves seek to survive this, the darkest season of Athel Loren, they are willing to put any other land to the sword.

THE WOOD ELVES

The hawk-eyed Wood Elves are the secretive defenders of the great forest of Athel Loren. Their armies are ever on the march, carrying spear and bow against the agents of disorder and ruin. The sentinels of ancient sites across the Old World, the Elves of Athel Loren fight a never-ending battle of vengeance against the lesser races that trespass upon their lands and the ever-spreading corruption of Chaos.

The Wood Elves of Loren are all that remains of a once powerful Elven realm in the Old World. In their prime, the High Elves maintained many colonies and outposts throughout the known world. Nowhere was this more true than within the bounds of Elthin Arvan, the Old World. Many years ago the High Elves of Ulthuan travelled to the Old World to trade with the Dwarfs from the mountains and human barbarians that lived in the forests. For hundreds of years the Elves built proud cities on the coastal plains as ports for their merchant ships sailing to Ulthuan and high towers in the forests,



distant outposts of Elven civilisation in the savage wilderness that was then the Old World – yet it was not to last.

After the long war between the Elves and the Dwarfs these colonies were abandoned and fell into ruin. Many, like Tol Alessi, where the Bretonnian port of L'Anguille now stands, were besieged by the Dwarfs during the so called 'War of the Beard'. Then disaster befell the folk of Ulthuan, when the treachery and betrayal of Malekith the Accursed beset their ancestral lands with fury and war, the High Elves had little choice but to abandon their holdings across the sea and return home, lest by defending both realms they would ultimately save neither. The High Elves set sail back to Ulthuan and left their cities to fall into ruin. Yet not all the Elves who had settled in the Old World were prepared to abandon it. A few were either unwilling or unable to leave their adopted homes. Most notable of all those who remained behind were the Elf colonies that dwelt near the forest realm of Athel Loren. They relinquished all ties with the High Elves of Ulthuan and declared themselves independent of the Phoenix King and began to evolve a new society of their own, but nevertheless derived in part from the age-old Elven traditions that they remembered. So did the forest of Athel Loren ultimately become a realm unto itself, and the Wood Elves a power in their own right.

This vast tract of tree-covered land would later become known as the Forest of Loren. Bordered to the south and east by high mountains, it was primaeval virgin forest which had never been invaded by Orcs or other foul creatures. Here the last Elves of the Old World felt safe and secure, and their descendants, the Wood Elves, remain in the forest of Loren to this day. Over the centuries their way of life has adapted to living amongst the forests, hunting game and gathering the fruits of the wood. They are expert archers and woodsmen, able to move swiftly and silently through the greenwood. Loren is their domain, a green and magical realm protected by Elven sorcery and soldiery.

BRETONNIAN RELATIONS

Though the Forest of Loren lies within the borders of Bretonnia, it is in fact far older than the Kingdom of Men, and on the whole it is avoided by humans. The King of Bretonnia sometimes sends envoys into the woods to convey promises of support or pleas for help.

Occasionally the Elves and Bretonnians come to blows, but more often than not it is their mutual enemies that have cause to regret the closeness of the two peoples. The Bretonnians prefer to cooperate with their Elven neighbours, and do not venture into their realm unless they have good reason. Evil creatures know that to enter the wood is to invite a swift death from an unseen arrow or a sudden sword stroke.

THE ELVEN RACES

The Wood Elves, or the Asrai as they are named in some tales, are but one of three Elven races. Like the others, they sprang from the cradle of Ulthuan. Unlike the others, they did so before acts of jealousy and spite shattered that great nation and its traditions. For this reason, the Wood Elves hold themselves to be the only true Elves left in the world, for only they embrace the whole of their nature. The folk of Athel Loren are unburdened by ritual sanctimony and therefore capable of great extremes of thought and deed. They are at once capricious and generous, malicious and caring, servants of both the dark and the light.



West of Athel Loren lies Ulthuan, dwelling place of the High Elves, and the Wood Elves' ancestral home. To the Wood Elves, the High Elves, or Asur, are misguided and sanctimonious, trapped by a fallacious belief that only the strength of Ulthuan can prevent the world from slipping into chaos. The folk of Athel Loren know it is folly to claim guardianship of the entire world, and that it is only arrogance that drives their cousins to make the attempt. Further to the northwest lies the chill realm of Naggaroth, the home of the Dark Elves, the malevolent Druchii. Just as the Wood Elves see the princes of Ulthuan as inflexible and staid, they perceive the Naggarothi as wild and impetuous children, lashing out at a world that has most bitterly wronged them.

Perhaps the only commonality between the Dark Elves and High Elves, besides their shared ancestry, is the mix of pity and annoyance with which the Wood Elves regard them both. Despite efforts to the contrary, the folk of Ulthuan and Naggaroth are fading from the world. The Wood Elves, by contrast, neither grow nor dwindle, but are as timeless as the forest in which they dwell. Long ago, at the very beginning of Elven history, a pact was forged between the spirits of the wood and the Elves over the sea. Now, shaped by that accord, the Wood Elves stand at once on the cusp of greatness and on the brink of extinction, living in anticipation of that day on which Athel Loren will burst its bounds and reclaim lost lands, or be overwhelmed by the malice of outsiders.

Irrespective of the land from which they hail, all Elves are incredibly long-lived, though seldom immortal. They are slender and swift, graceful in all their movements, with minds and bodies that are capable of great dexterity. In such feats, the Wood Elves account themselves more capable than their cousins. After all, the folk of Ulthuan and Naggarothi are chiefly city-dwellers, or else trapped aboard warships for weeks at a time. Meanwhile, the Wood Elves are constantly honing their skills in an environment that challenges them every day of their lives.

Elves are subtle creatures at heart, and live in the details of thought and deed that lesser creatures seldom notice. They live for intrigue and find joy in a clever tongue wielded by an accomplished mind. The speech of a Wood Elf is particularly incomprehensible to an outsider. This is not because the words themselves make little sense, but because there are always at least two possible interpretations of the intended meaning. In this way, a promise of assistance can sound disturbingly like a threat, and a death sentence like an offer of clemency. In this way does the speech of the Wood Elves reflect their complicated relationship with the world. Until backed up with deeds, words are just empty prophecies that speak to possible outcome; sometimes, even the Wood Elves do not know what they intend until the moment of action.

Taken together, an Elf's suppleness of mind and body ranks him amongst the deadliest of opponents. Though



he may not be so hardy or as strong as the barbarians of the world, he knows a finesse and precision that no such creature will ever grasp. An Elf sees every chink in his opponent's armour, every weakness of guard. Moreover, he has the speed and skill to exploit these opportunities and land a killing strike before the foe has a chance to react. For a Wood Elf, this is never truer than when he is armed with one of Athel Loren's famed longbows – he can place a shot through the visor of a charging knight from an almost unbelievable distance.

THE ASRAI

Unlike High Elves they favour the bow as their principle weapon, although they are not afraid of hand-to-hand fighting as they are very skilled warriors. They prefer not to wear much armour, so they can move as quickly as possible through the dense woods. Wood Elves favour natural colours for their clothes and apparel such as blue, green and ruddy browns, often decorated with sharply contrasting patterns of a more vivid hue. Many wear their hair long and braided, or decorated with feathers which are a symbol of marksmanship. The most skilled archers amongst them are the scouts, way-watchers, messengers and hunters who patrol the woodlands and hunt down intruders.

Isolated from the wealth and resources of Ulthuan and from the wisdom and learning of High Elven sages, their art and magic developed quite differently. Because of this change of direction they unknowingly avoided the temptations of wealth and luxury which beset their distant kindred and in many ways became a hardier and simpler folk.

Among the Wood Elves intuition rather than learning became the main source of wisdom. They have an innate understanding of the ways and currents of nature and feel kinship with trees and animals. Intrigue and ambition are virtually unknown and many other destructive passions of the Elven psyche are dormant.

Wood Elves have acquired an instinctive cunning and stealth, and have developed a healthy suspicion of strangers and a distrust of anything unnatural. They shun contact with other races and show no mercy to those who invade their realm with malicious intent or who do damage through sheer ignorance or foolishness. They have become the guardians of the forest.

Wood Elves are hardly ever encountered or even seen by anyone unless they want to be. If anyone invading

their realm does catch a glimpse of one, it may well be the last thing he ever sees! The Wood Elves are so difficult to find that the Bretonnian king has to send his best Questing Knights into the wood as his envoys.

On rare occasions an army of Wood Elves may emerge from the forest realm to do battle beyond its borders perhaps to help their allies the Bretonnians against a common enemy. Such events soon pass into legend.

The Wood Elves can distort the forest and time itself with their strange enchantments. Their settlements and places remain secret and hidden from view while travellers wander aimlessly through the forest for ages, never being allowed to find their way into the inner realm until the Waywatchers have observed them and divined their motives.

Wood Elves have strangely beautiful or handsome faces with bright, often violet coloured eyes. Their hair is very fine and will grow very long. Many Elves have blond or silvery grey hair which shimmers like silver or gold thread. Others have raven black hair with an intense bluish sheen. Other colours are rare but not unknown.

Wood Elves have a very pale complexion even for Elves, perhaps because they spend most of their time in the shadows of the trees and the muted sunlight of the woodland glades.

Elven voices are shrill and almost musical to hear, and it is said that their singing can lure a human to his doom, charm a wild beast, induce a tree to grow faster or shape a rock if the singing goes on long enough!



"They say they live high above our heads, and deep beneath the ground of the forest. It's magic, you know. They weave it to make themselves homes, and to hide from us. I mean, I've never seen them, of course, but that's what they say..."

*- Marc de la Fontaine,
Bretonnian historian and Wood Elf expert*



Elves live for a very long time, usually several Human life times, and once they reach maturity; show very little outward appearance of ageing.

In temperament, Wood Elves are similar to High Elves but lack the taste for luxury that leads to decadence or the haughty manner that leads to kinstrife. Instead, they have cultivated the Elven intuition and reverence for nature. They are very perceptive of the subtle currents pervading the natural world, including magic. Like High Elves they are obstinate and determined, especially when defending their homes and way of life. It takes a long time to earn their trust or respect and any betrayal will provoke certain vengeance.

Like High Elves, Wood Elves are extremely skilled as craftsmen, but unlike their distant kindred in Ulthuan, they do not have access to all the wealth of the world by sea trade. Instead the Wood Elves must rely on what they can find within their own forest realm, supplemented with a few rare things traded with outsiders or brought in by those willing to venture outside.

Wood is therefore used for a great many things: goblets, jars, jewels, weapons and even some armour are intricately carved out of this material. Sometimes the branches of trees will be trained for years to grow in a suitable shape. Stone is also used for a vast number of things. Metals are hard to come by in the forest and



most of the metal artefacts of the Wood Elves are either very ancient heirlooms dating back to the days of the Elven colonies or made from ores found on the surface of the ground in the foothills of the mountains. Elf prospectors looking for ores often encounter Dwarf prospectors, leading to brisk battles among the crags.

The Wood Elves do very little smelting or metalworking since this involves burning wood, which they are loath to do. The metals they prefer are copper and gold, which can be easily beaten into shape without need of fire. They use very little iron which would require blazing furnaces belching out smoke. This is one reason for their lack of armour, although the main reason is that armour would encumber the warriors far too much in the woodland terrain. Fine clothing is woven from thread spun from various plants. Coarse clothing such as capes and tunics is made from the hides of wild beasts or even leaves sewn together.

KINDREDS OF ATHEL LOREN

Communities of Wood Elves often tend towards small, nomadic groups of like-minded individuals, known as kinbands or kindreds, rather than the large and populous cities of other Elves. These kinbands have strong bonds that unite them, ties that are often stronger than those of kith and kin. There are literally hundreds of these nomadic groups that dwell within Athel Loren. Each reflects how it relates to physical influences such as their surrounds, as well as the way they relate to other Elves, Athel Loren and its many and varied fey inhabitants and the attitudes of the individuals.

Kinbands that are many score of leagues apart will often share the same name, for they share the same core beliefs and ideals, though in reality even likeminded kinbands will often be somewhat distant and suspicious towards each other. Some kindreds hold particular rivalries and deeply ingrained mutual suspicions of others, and conflicts between kinbands are not uncommon.

Though the Wood Elves are generally a roaming and nomadic people, each kinband holds allegiance to a particular Elven Highborn. Some Highborns may have more of certain kinbands within his realm, such as the Lord of the Peaks, who has many kinbands of the Warhawk kindreds at his disposal and the Lord of the Southern Glades, where the kindreds of Equos are common.

The Elves were not always united of purpose. To begin with, there was rivalry between these groups, for they were as defined as much by difference in ideology and tradition as they were by ties of blood. Eventually the influence of the forest saw the kindreds united in common cause.

Over time, smaller kindreds – known as kinbands – arose as bloodlines combined and recombined, and as new traditions evolved from those that had been brought from Ulthuan. By the Season of Revelation, there were not only the twelve great kindreds whose lords and ladies ruled Athel Loren alongside Ariel and Orion, but also hundreds of lesser kinbands, each dedicated to a unique way of life.



All Wood Elves are able to move easily through dense forest. They are born in the forest and live all their lives among the trees. The woodlands are their natural habitat and they have learned the ways of moving quickly and stealthily among the trees even when in regiments. The Elven steeds can also instinctively pick their way through the forest.

The inhabitants of Athel Loren are mysterious and secretive beings, rarely seen beyond their forest homeland and thus little understood by the outside world. The Wood Elves seek only to preserve the continued safety of the forest in which they dwell. In the defence of their woodland realm, the Wood Elves and their allies are deadly and unforgiving. Those who are foolish enough to set foot within their woodland realm, or otherwise threaten the sanctity of Athel Loren, invite the fury of the Wood Elves, whether in open combat or through sudden ambush.

They follow a path walked by no other, and often appear capricious or cruel, though in truth each harmful act they perform is always balanced by one of beneficence. The Wood Elves have been likened to a force of nature, neither truly good nor evil; Athel Loren and the Wood Elves are far removed from simple comparison with the values held by other races. Like a placid lake, the Wood Elves can appear serene, beautiful and enchanting, or as frightening and destructive as a storm. They have a deep understanding of the cycles and balance of nature, and strive to maintain this balance in all things. For every tree that falls, another must replace it. For every intruder that

the Wood Elves guide out of Athel Loren, another is slain without question or remorse, and left where he falls to be claimed by the forest. Bones and skulls can often be seen on the outskirts of Athel Loren, many with arrows protruding from ribs or embedded in eye-sockets, before they are obscured and covered by twisting roots and undergrowth or taken away by forest animals.

Ever watchful and vigilant, the Wood Elves guard Athel Loren ceaselessly. Even those who enter the forest with no ill intention are regarded with suspicion and resentment, and will often come to a bad end. The Wood Elves have a distinct lack of interest in the goings on of the world outside of the forest, and care little for those who are not their own. On occasion they must take part in wars and battles beyond the borders of their forests, in order to save their homes from future threat, but this is rare indeed. If the Wood Elves could live their lives without interference from the world beyond their fey lands, then they would do so gladly. However, Athel Loren is constantly assailed by those that seek to invade and corrupt it, and so they must wage an unending battle against these despoilers.

Unparalleled archers and almost unnaturally stealthy, the Wood Elves are a deadly foe to face. Those that they slay will rarely have even glimpsed their enemy before being struck down by unerringly accurate arrows from the dense woods. Swift and silent, the Wood Elves erupt from the trees in sudden bursts of savagery, ruthlessly cutting down their enemies before vanishing like ghosts into the depths of the forest.

THE TAIN OF CHAOS

No matter what they might like to think, Elves are not immune to the influence of Chaos; they are untouched by physical mutation, but the power of the Dark Gods has seeped into their souls. Here it fans an arrogance that was legendary even in ancient times. The unconditional compassion that was once the Elves' defining trait has long since been extinguished, replaced by a belief in their own pre-eminence that knows no denial.

This arrogance has manifested differently amongst the Elven races. It has remade the Dark Elves as selfish despoilers of a world they see fit only for their pleasure. The High Elves it has made stubborn and conceited, the self-appointed protectors of a realm whose fate lies far beyond their control. Only the Wood Elves reject the lure of bending other lands to their will, for in them, the influence of Chaos has awakened only distrust and isolationism. The folk of Athel Loren crave nothing so much as to be left alone, to tend the groves of their woodland home in peace. Only on those occasions where the fate of the wider world threatens Athel Loren do they even notice the lands beyond the forest's eaves.

A REALM APART

The aloof Wood Elves are isolationist in the extreme, caring naught for the affairs and travails of other realms and races. Their concern is solely for Athel Loren, for its survival and protection and for that of its splintered offshoots across the face of the world. Truly, the Wood Elves would feel little sadness if the Empire of man burned, so long as their cherished woodlands endured. Yet this is not to say that the Wood Elves



entirely shun dealings with the outer world. Through the otherworldly waters of the Crystal Mere, prophetesses and scryers sift the strands of future fate, seeking significant signs or portents of the next threat.

Not all such threats need be ended entirely, but merely whittled to weakness or redirected upon a different path – one that does not lead to Athel Loren's borders. It is fortunate that it is so, for the Wood Elves are not so numerous as the other Elven peoples, and could ill-afford blood-soaked and bitter campaigns of interminable length. Better that each battle is carefully chosen for maximum effect: slay an Orc Warlord, and his coalition of tribes is as likely to tear itself apart as it is to continue upon its rampage. Lure a Beastmen warherd onto the defences of an Empire town and its deep-rooted hatred of Man will drive all other goals before it. It is fair to say that the Wood Elves have little in the way of allies, but rather a wide array of enemies of varying degrees, who they use as weapons against one another as need dictates.

In recent years the signs of destruction have been many, for the malefic powers of Chaos are on the rise. The atavistic Beastmen multiply across the Old World and beyond, spawned from the dank hearts of Chaos-tainted woodlands. From the north come tribes of warlike men and hosts of daemonic terrors, intent on conquering and consuming the world of Man. Ariel, the Mage Queen of Athel Loren, understands full well that inactivity in the face of evil ultimately leads to defeat, for once the realms of Man have fallen, the domains of the Elves will be next. For this reason the armies of the Wood Elves march abroad in numbers greater than ever before, waging their covert wars against those in the sway of the Ruinous Powers wherever they may be found.

THE FATE OF THE BODY

When a Wood Elf dies, their body is returned to the forest. Thus does their passing nurture the trees that have nurtured them every day of their life. The precise manner by which this is achieved varies from family to family and kindred to kindred. Some burn their fallen kin on great pyres, echoing the rite that ends Orion's time in the waking world. Others bury their dead deep in the ground, where the hungry roots of the trees can easily draw nourishment from the mouldering remains.

Such traditions are important to the Wood Elves, and form a key part of their pact with the forest. If an Elf is slain in distant lands, they are brought home to Athel Loren, even though thousands of leagues might lie in between. If this is impossible, as is often the case during times of war, Treemen and Dryads are bidden to feast upon the corpse, so they at least may gain from the tragedy. Such practices are abhorrent to the Elves of other lands, but to the Wood Elves they are simply another aspect of the Weave.

THE DEEPWOOD HOST

The history of the Wood Elves is a search for balance and solitude tempered by ceaseless war. For thousands of years, they have lived in harmony with the sentient forest of Athel Loren, and with the spirits that dwell beneath its boughs. Here they have learnt to dwell in concord with the seasons and the weave of life and death that binds all living things together. Unlike the other Elven races of the world, the Wood Elves have never sought to rule, and wish only to see their homeland persist through all the coming ages of the world. It is this cause in which they fight, for no land endures long if it cannot take up arms against those that wish it harm, and the waking woodland of Athel Loren has more than its fair share of enemies.

The humans see the forest as a brooding and malicious foe, and perhaps they are correct. Neither the Wood Elves, nor the forest spirits to which their fate is tied, care for the lives of outsiders. They think nothing of resorting to slaughter to ease affront, and there are always those who seem eager to provoke their wrath. Dwarfs see Athel Loren's boughs as a resource to be harvested and put to work as fuel for their great machines. Reckless wizards too see the forest as a wellspring of fuel, but it is not timber they crave, but

THE FATE OF THE SPIRIT

Ever since the coming of Chaos, Slaanesh has feasted on the spirits of Elven dead, for no other race possesses souls so sweet and filled with sensation. Alas, few Elven deities can offer salvation, for the Chaos Gods broke the power of the Elven pantheon long ago. Those few that can still intercede are either unreliable, or else offer an outcome scarcely less dire.

To avoid this terrible fate, the Wood Elves make a pact with Athel Loren that extends far beyond their mortal bodies. When a Wood Elf perishes, the forest he has tended for so long absorbs his spirit and keeps it safe from thirsting Slaanesh. The final result of this transubstantiation can vary wildly. Most souls immediately lose all sense of identity, and meld with the forest. Some spirits wander the paths they walked in life, hidden from the gaze of all but the most magically attuned, carrying messages and warnings to those who can hear their words. Others, driven by undying need to protect their woodland home, take root in deadwood hulks, animating the barren timbers into the battle-forms known as Tree Kin. Some Elves even believe that they have encountered loved ones reborn in the form of wild animals or as mischievous spite-creatures that flit between the boughs.

Such things might seem unlikely to outsiders, but there is little that is impossible beneath the eaves of Athel Loren. In this way, every grove and hall in the forest is overlaid with echoes of past, present and future, and home to both the living and the dead.

the magical essence which gives life to the trees and vigour to those that live within the forest's bounds. Then there are those that seek to topple the trees and defile the ground for no other reason than to cause destruction.

Unlike the drilled and trained citizen soldiers raised by their Dark Elf and High Elf cousins, the Wood Elves have little in the way of formal military. Instead, an army of Athel Loren is an alliance of kinbands and clans, summoned by the warhorns of the hunt. Each individual warrior brings martial skills of bow and blade honed in the dangerous environs of Athel Loren, skills that combine with the Elves' inherent grace and speed to create warriors as deadly as any to be found the world over.

When called to war, a Wood Elf army can travel great distance in the space of a single night, for there are mystical pathways that bind Athel Loren to the many forests of the world. The Wood Elves can tread these paths, appearing without warning many hundreds of leagues distant, easily circumventing defences, vanguards and patrols. So do the Deepwood Hosts of Athel Loren avoid drawn-out confrontation by means of stealth and illusion. Where other armies fight extended campaigns to reach their foe, the Wood Elves strike at the heart of the enemy with the very first blow.

The battle starts with a single arrow, fired by the greatest marksman in the host and aimed at the enemy warlord's heart. This signal given, Glade Guard and Waywatchers emerge from concealment and blacken the skies with their own volleys, each shot guided by an instinct beyond human comprehension. Only then do the hunting horns sound, loosing the Wood Elves to the fray.



WOODLAND AMBUSHES

While the Wood Elves of Athel Loren are not averse to bringing their deadly skill to the battlefields of the Old World and beyond, their chief way of warfare does not lie with formed battle lines and streaming banners, but with stealth, guile and ambush. Few orders of march can help but to take an army past areas of woodland, and it is at this point that it is most vulnerable to attack from the forces of Athel Loren. To the Elven Spellweavers, all forests are as one, connected to each other with hidden paths. There is never any warning that such an ambush is about to take place, for unusual signs rarely register within the wood until a hail of arrows pours forth, striking with deadly accuracy at the most vulnerable points in the unwary column, sowing disarray and panic in their wake. Then, hard on the heels of the first deadly volley, Dryads and Wardancers burst from the wood, cutting down their foes with precise and fluid strikes even as more arrows lance over their heads. For larger ambushes, the Wood Elves may be accompanied by more powerful allies, such as Tree Kin or a great Forest Dragon, all the swifter to break the spirit of the enemy and leave their fleeing forms to the mercy of the Glade Riders' pursuit.

As the army advances, phalanxes of Eternal Guard, veteran warriors whose wits are as sharp as their glinting two-headed spears, tread close about the lords and princes that command the host. Unflinching and unyielding, they are sworn to defend their lords even in the face of certain death.

On the flanks, Glade Riders and Wild Riders spur their steeds onwards, ever alert for a gap in the enemy formation. They gallop swiftly forwards, darting between the foe's spears and swords to wreak havoc on the flanks and rear of the enemy battle line. Elsewhere, tattooed Wardancers strike deep into the enemy ranks before leaping away, every thrust and parry an act of worship to the trickster god Loec, every fluid movement another step in the shadow-dance that binds and destroys.

Warhawk riders swoop and soar overhead, diving down to assail enemy war machines before returning to the skies clad in the blood of their prey. There can be no refuge when fighting the Wood Elves, for no secret path or refuge can be hidden from the sight of the Waywatchers. Better a clean death on the open plain than to be hunted down like vermin. Perhaps most famous of all are the archers of Athel Loren, the Glade Guard, whose deadly aim has become legend the world over.

The skills at the command of the Wood Elves are immense and varied yet, when they go to war, they do not go alone. The pact that binds the Wood Elves to defend Athel Loren also impels the forest spirits to fight at their side. About and around the favoured of

the forest flit ravenous Spites, their spindly limbs belying unholy strength, but these are the least of the spirits of the wood. Dark shapes loom out of the treeline to take their place amidst the Wood Elf ranks. Dryads dart ahead, their graceful and willowy forms belying the malice in their icy hearts. Scarcely is a battlefield picked as clean as when Dryads make their sport – the wounded become offerings in the deepwood shrines and the slain become little more than mulch. Tree Kin, deadwood husks animated by the will of Athel Loren, shatter shields and bones alike with tumultuous blows from bark-clad fists, lowering above all are the massive and evil-tempered Treemen, the ancients of Athel Loren woken from slumber by the supplications of Elven Treesingers. Their footfalls make the ground tremble, their roots burst upwards from the ground to throttle and crush, and their every blow sweeps enemies aside like broken twigs. Through the skies come the legendary creatures that dwell at the heart of Athel Loren; emerald Forest Dragons of immense size and wondrous entities coalesced from the dreams of the living forest itself.

Such is the Wood Elf army at war, a force of nature roused to terrible destruction against which no mortal enemy can hope to triumph, as merciless and unforgiving as the deepwinter frost.

THE END TIMES

For much of the Wood Elves' existence, they spared little thought for the outside world unless it began to encroach on their daily lives. Indeed, only the very youngest and oldest paid it any heed. The youngest did so because they yearned for an adventure that could not be found within the forest's bounds, the oldest because they had been taught too many times that Athel Loren was not so removed from the circles of the world as they might have wished.

Yet, little by little, the Wood Elves have come to realise that the fate of other realms is theirs also. There are rumblings of a doom that will see the world torn asunder, and the sanctity of Athel Loren forever lost. Such is a fate fit to shake even the Wood Elves from their millennia of isolation. Guided by prophecy and the wisdom of Ariel, their immortal Mage Queen, the Wood Elves seek to prevent the oncoming disaster from claiming their forest home. Now, their hosts march with a purpose not seen for millennia. They know Athel Loren will not survive the coming disaster unscathed, and if the price of saving their beloved home is the preservation of other realms, then so be it.

"We record the passing of the seasons, but we cannot predict them. It is simply how things are. In many ways, this is like life, no? It moves and changes, but who can say when, or how it will happen."

- Lecai Fleetfoot, Deepwood Scout and would-be philosopher





The mist swirled around the boles of the ancient oak trees like some living thing creeping through the dusk. The Elf woman froze, and instinctively her steed halted. Medb the Spellsinger turned her head slowly from side to side trying to locate the sound once more. In this tense state it seemed to her as if the deafening pounding of her own heartbeat, like some Orcish drum, would drown out all other noises.

The Unicorn snorted, its breath steaming in the chill air. Silverhorn was uneasy also. The magical beast could sense the evil presence too, like some lurking black shadow between the trees. The stench of death and Dark Magic hung over this part of the forest. The fetid, sweet smell assailed the wizard's nostrils, almost making her gag with its dark, cloying foulness.

There it was again. A scrabbling, the rattle of tumbling stones, the crack of a twig, the hollow knock of bone on wood. Medb raised a hand and every Wood Elf in the party tensed ready for the command to attack.

"What is it" hissed an archer, standing at the Spellsinger's knee.

"Necromancy," was her whispered reply. "There is one abroad who would rather the dead did not rest easy in their graves this night."

The wizard dropped her hand and kicked her heels into the Unicorn's sides. The Wood Elf host burst through the line of trees and into the glade, their battle-cries echoing around the standing stones and ancient burial mounds. The Necromancer looked up in startled surprise, but at the same moment, the cairn of stones next to him collapsed. A mass of Skeletons clambered from the rubble of their desecrated grave clutching age-dulled weapons in their bony hands.

A hoarse whinnying and the pounding of hooves drew the Wood Elves' attention away from the newly-risen Undead warriors as Skeleton Horsemen rode across the clearing on their fleshless steeds to engage Medb's Glade Riders. A blood-chilling screech split the air above the shattered mounds and the Master Mage felt a fearful dread wash over her like a tide.

Looking up, Medb could see the Carrion, black silhouettes against the velvet blue of night. And then a great beating wind battered her, created by the strokes of some great bird's mighty wings, and she was filled with a feeling of reassurance. The aerial protector had joined the Wood Elves in their time of need: once more the beak and talons of Corrawk Greywing would tear apart the foul monstrosities of unlife. Raising both hands above her head, the Spellsinger made ready to cast the first of her magic spells.



THE ASRAI PANTHEON

Every Wood Elf holds Kumous and Isha above all other beings, but beyond that they make little distinction between the Gods of the Heavens and the Gods of the Underworld. Instead, they worship according to the calling of their own natures, embracing the wildness of Khaine as readily as the compassion of Lileath.

KURNOUS, THE HUNTER

Kurnous is the God of the Hunt, and the lord of wild places. All Elves venerate him, for he is the husband of Isha, and the father of their race, but none do so more than the Wood Elves, who believe that it is only they that lice the existence of which Kurnous would approve. Kurnous requires that a hunter never kills animals for sport, but slays only ravening beasts or those whose bounty of meat and hide are necessary for survival. Violating this creed is dangerous the world over, for Kurnous is a vengeful deity, but it is never more foolish than when in Athel Loren.

Kurnous manifests in the beasts of the forest and represents the untamed savagery of nature. Although dangerous and unpredictable, Kurnous's animalistic wrath is directed only at those who provoke him. While passion for the hunt is strong, the beasts and followers of Kurnous's hunt only to survive.

Perhaps the greatest cause of friction between Wood Elves and other races is mistreatment of animals, which is considered sacrilegious to Kurnous and a crime

against the natural world. The attainment of Yenlui requires balance between rational thought and the primal impulse that motivates every living thing. Asrai reject the concept of animal-rearing and view the human practise of keeping livestock as abhorrent.

ISHA, THE MOTHER

Isha is the goddess of the harvest and bountiful land. She is the mother not only to the Elves, but to all the noble creatures of the world. Wood Elf legend tells that, in times past, Isha was forbidden from treating directly with her mortal children by Asuryan, the Emperor of the Heavens.

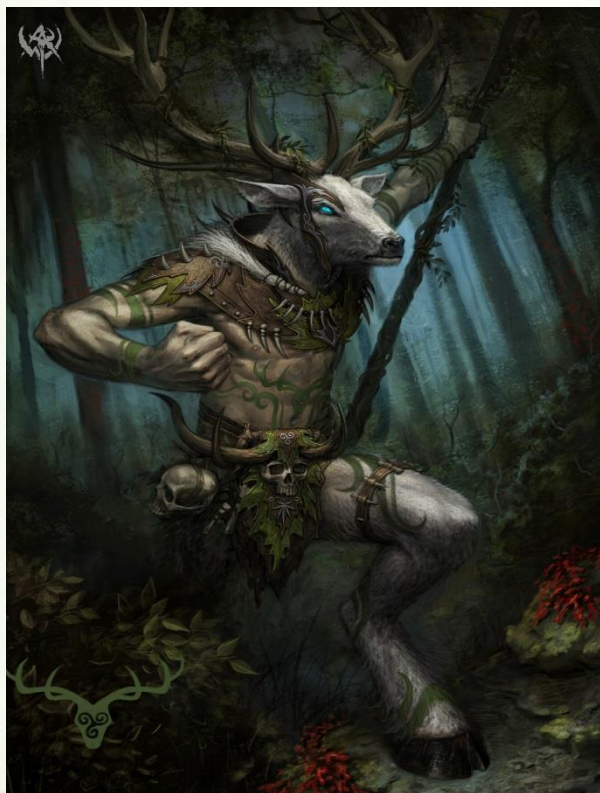
However, those same legends go on to tell that Isha and her consort, the Hunter God Kurnous, chafed at Asuryan's decree and, after the Elven pantheon was scattered and defeated by the Dark Gods of Chaos, chose to take mortal form amongst the only Elven people who had stayed true to their teachings. Thus, tell the Wood Elves, were Ariel and Orion reborn as something more than mortal, and Athel Loren transformed into a realm divinely blessed.

LOEC, THE SHADOW DANCER

The deities of the elven pantheon are contradictory figures, none more so than the god Loec. He is known as the Dancer of the Shadows, and is personified by laughter and trickery. Such acts are sacred to him, and lift the hearts of believers from the grasp of Chaos and despair. Loec has a darker side, associated with revenge, deception, and darkness. Most elves honour their gods equally, but the wardancers esteem Loec in particular.

The Harlequin or Laughing God, as Loec is known, is a free spirit in Asrai folklore. Loec appeals to the Wood Elves' mischievous nature, which is no doubt encouraged by their faerie allies who delight in playing practical jokes. While the Asrai believe that laughter can liberate them from their worries and enable easier communion with the Gods and spirits, caution must be exercised. Mirth should always be tempered with an equal measure of sober introspection to preserve the balance of Yenlui. The smith god Vaul is sometimes worshipped as a balancing counterpart to Loec.

Loec often causes more trouble than good, albeit unintentionally, and with ultimately positive outcomes. The Harlequin intervenes more directly in the lives of mortals than other deities do, by sending his divine servants to guide or misdirect people as he sees fit, which the Asrai believe stirs animosity amongst the gods. To escape retribution from the others, Loec is believed to hide in the Space Between Worlds, and know exactly where each silver path of the Shadow Walk leads.





Though Forest Dragons seldom pay heed or homage to the deities of the Elves (few are prepared to admit the existence of beings nobler or more powerful than Dragons), most have a grudging respect for Loec, the Lord of Laughter. At heart, Dragons are creatures of cunning and intellect, and they admire the legerdemain by which the Shadow Dancer rescues Elven souls from Slaanesh as well as the trickery Loec employs to erode the Dark Prince's vengeance once the deed is done. Indeed, many Forest Dragons hold true to the belief that Loec honed his cleverness under the tutelage of Draugnir, Father of Dragons. The Wardancers, being Loec's foremost devotees, hold that the opposite is true, and love to engage Forest Dragons in battles of wits to prove their point.



LILEATH, THE MAIDEN

Lileath is the goddess of the moon, the patron of mages, seers and scholars. She seldom speaks directly to mortals, for Asuryan forbade such communion long ago, and instead sends whispers through dreams. Lileath is ever ready to judge an Elf by their heart's intent, and offers redemption to those noble souls whose fate has taken a dark turn. Though Lileath is fading slower than the rest of the Elven pantheon, her days are numbered all the same. It is said that she is spending her final days preparing her final legacy for the Elves, though what that is, none can say.

Although Lileath, is technically classified as a minor deity in the Asrai pantheon, she is actually an influential member of the triumvirate. Because Lileath represents innocence, luck and untapped potential, she is the goddess of prophets and seers. The Asrai use celestial water as a divination medium, observing the reflections of stars (or Spites) upon the glassy surface of a water-bowl, pond or lake. Water infused with aethyric magic is believed to reflect constellations that aren't visible by direct stargazing, or even display fleeting images of distant happenings.

By divining Isha's will through her celestial daughter Lileath, Wood Elves can learn which paths of destiny must be followed in order to achieve natural harmony and ultimate Yenlui.

MORAI-HEG, GODDESS OF FATE AND DEATH

The Asrai believe that Morai-Heg guides the souls of their deceased kin from the forest to the Otherworld and back again when the time is right. Morai-heg is also believed to know all mortal secrets. The fates of the living are kept in a pouch made of skin that Morai-Heg wears, often obscuring the prophecies of Lileath's followers. The true path to Yenlui is sometimes only found after death, in the Otherworld realms.

In Asrai fable songs, the Raven often appears as a herald of Morai-heg. Wood Elves learn to read the ravens' migration patterns as omens, either good or ill depending on their timing. Ravens are also rumoured to fly between worlds. In many legends, a hero or animal finds a portal to the Otherworld by following the ravens from an Elven burial glade.

THE TALE OF ATHERIN

Dedicated though the Wild Riders are to the needs of their noble king, they have no pretensions to incorruptibility; indeed, it would be laughable for any being to make such a claim in Athel Loren, where much is illusory, and the magics of enchantment are wielded by so many, and with such skill. It was to guard against subversion that Ariel placed the very first Wild Riders under an oath of secrecy that has since bound all who have worn the hunter's mantle.

Only one Wild Rider, in all the years since, has broken that geas. His name was Atherin of the Red Horn, and he did so not under duress, nor out of promise of wealth or godly favour, but to impress his beloved, Kalara, a princess of Wydrioth, by speaking of those hallowed secrets. Legend tells that Atherin was struck dumb in the moment of his betrayal and, sensing a greater change overtaking him, fled from his love's side and deep into the forest where no other would witness his shame. Kalara was distraught with her loss, but no amount of searching or sorcerous scrying would reveal Atherin to her.

A long and mournful year passed. Kalara resolved to appease Kurnous on her lover's behalf, and embarked upon a hunt in his name. For many months she roamed the glades and fields of Athel Loren, searching for a quarry worthy of the Hunter God. At last, on the windswept plains of Eldroth, she beheld a suitable prey, a mighty stag with a full and glorious crown of antlers. In one smooth motion, Kalara nocked an arrow to her bow, and let fly. The princess did not miss her mark. The shot took the stag in his right eye, and the beast fell dead in that same moment.

Eager to begin the rites that would dedicate the kill to Kurnous, Kalara spurred her steed forward through the long grass. Alas, she found no trace of the stag, but lying amongst the grasses she discovered the naked and lifeless body of her lost love, an arrow buried deep in his skull. Thus passed Atherin of the Red Horn, though his tale lives ever on as a warning to those who might be tempted to betray Kurnous' trust. As for Kalara, she wandered, broken-hearted and desolate, for many turnings of the world, unable to forgive herself for the part she had played in Atherin's death. Only in Athel Loren's darkest hour would she find redemption, but that is another story...



VAUL, THE MAKER

Vaul is the god of the forge, the patron of artisans, smiths and armourers. Wounded by Khaine during the long ago wars of the gods, Vaul is both crippled and blind. Yet still he labours, night and day, to create weapons of incredible potency to aid both gods and Elves, his tears of shame hissing upon the forge and falling to the mortal world as shards of flint. Vaul hates Khaine but toils without once considering rebellion. The Maker can see the coming doom of the Elves and knows they will need all of Khaine's might and fury to survive it.

Vaul is described in fable songs as a blind, crippled Elf of once-noble bearing, who carries a smith's hammer. Vaul is said to have received his injuries and become imprisoned by members of the Cytharai during the War in the Heavens. Vaul is a balancing influence in the whimsical Asrai psyche, keeping their creative energies focused and grounded, and is often worshipped as a counterpart to Loec.

Although shrines to Vaul can be found in most Asrai workshops, temples devoted to the God of Smiths are only established at volcanoes or calderas. Priests of Vaul extract metals directly from the lava that seeps from the earth to forge Quicksteel. To honour Vaul's eternal suffering, smith-priests endure the heat of their volcanic forge temples without complaint.

Glade Guards revere Vaul greatly, for a hunter is naught without a quiver of arrows that fly true. Regardless of rank or station, all Wood Elves craft their own arrows; something so crucial to survival should never be left to another's hand. Every Glade Guard carries a single flint-headed arrow, lovingly crafted from a stone from the realm of Torgovann inscribed with the words 'Ethis Yl Idrion' – the Maker's Tear. Such a weapon is used against only the direst of foes; a shard of godly sorrow should not be wasted upon inconsequential enemies.

MATHLANN, GOD OF STORMS AND RIVERS

The Sealord, Warden of the Lost and the Explorer are names given to Mathlann, God of Storms. The majority of Asrai also revere Mathlann as a bringer of rain and guardian of rivers. Fable songs teach that Mathlann is the father of Lileath and former lover of Isha, and that the elder god allows his daughter to reveal the ever-changing will of her mother through his watery domain. Therefore, the path to natural harmony and ultimate Yenlui requires reverence of all three.

Wood Elves who leave the forest worship Mathlann the Explorer as they follow the weaving rivers through the world beyond. Laurëlorne Elves have venerated Mathlann the Sealord ever since a great flood devastated the northern coasts of the woodland realm long ago. In a ritual to commemorate the legendary disaster, floating lamps and other tributes are set adrift on the River Demst to appease the God of Storms.

ERETHKHIAL, THE PALE QUEEN

Ereth Khial is the supreme goddess of the Underworld, and a cooeter of souls. Before the rise of Slaanesh, it was she who claimed the souls of the Eloen dead, intending to fashion an army of the dead to depose Asuryan from his lofty throne. Now, she must content herself with such scraps as she can steal from the Dark Prince's table, or somehow seize those souls that dare escaped his grasp. It is at her command that the shadowy rephallim spirits escape the Wildwood to prey upon the Tree Kin, for it is said she treasures their indomitable souls above all.

ANATHRAEMA, THE SAVAGE HUNTRESS

Anath Raema is a vengeful goddess and the dark mirror to Kumous, God of the Hunt. Where the disciples of Kurnous venerate wild places, those who follow Anath Raema see them only as bounteous lands where the dominant predator can slake her fury in the blood of the meek. Such selfish behaviour is seldom tolerated in Athel Loren, for it is certain to upset the balance of the Weave, but it is rumoured that many embittered warriors of the Pine Crags have forsaken Kumous in favour of a more vindictive mistress...

ELDRAZOR, LORD OF BLADES

Eldrazor is the patron of duellists and of those who yearn to fight battles for the sake of honour. As such, his favour is often sought by warriors of the Eternal Guard – especially on the eve of a trial by combat. Yet Eldrazor's favour is also valuable in battle – at least if the combatant fights for a just cause, rather than out of mindless barbarism. So it is that one of the oldest traditions of the Eternal Guard is to ritually consecrate regions of Athel Loren and mark them with crossed-daggerpendants and finger-bone totems. Thus are many of the forest's glades sanctified as mortal extensions of Eldrazor's otherworldly Arena of Death. It is said that the Lord of Blades pays special attention to those battles fought upon his holy ground, and will even intervene if he is moved to do so. As a result, the Eternal Guard habitually plan any defence of Athel Loren around these key sites. Mortal valour and skill is all very well, they say, but only a fool passes up the opportunity to have a god join the battle.

DRAKIRA, QUEEN OF VENGEANCE

As the persecutors of trespassers and headers, many Waywatchers pay homage to Drakira, Queen of Vengeance. Like them, she is easily bored by the conventions of society and a willing outcast from her own kind. Drakira loves nothing more than to see the transgressions of the past repaid in blood and fire. She is ever willing to aid a mortal Elfin the search for vengeance, whether retribution is sought for a raw wound of recent days, or a shadow-shrouded vendetta of the ancient past. Drakira's blessings are many and swiftly granted, but are never entirely without a price. After all, vengeance consummated brands the perpetrator just as surely as it does the victim.



It had never stopped raining since the Bretonnian knight and his party had started their quest. Sir Paravaunt rode resolutely forward through the trees, his warhorse picking its way slowly and patiently down the narrow, muddy path. The rain poured down through the leaves and branches and streamed off his armour. Six rangy hounds loped after the knight and his horse, and behind them trailed four miserable retainers, lugging their lord's baggage and equipment. They were soaked to the skin, and covered with mud. Wet, tired and miserable, they just wanted to turn round and go home.

Sir Paravaunt gazed sternly ahead through the visor of his helmet, and ignored or pretended not to hear the moans of his servants. A strange fervour warmed his spirit and glazed his eyes – he was in love...

The object of the knight's devotion was the lady Ariane, eldest daughter of the Duke Boniface. She was tall, pale and proud, and he was a slave to her piercing green eyes. I will be yours, she had said, as they dallied in the rose garden; if you fetch me the horn of a unicorn. Do this small thing for me, prove your love and your courage, and I will be yours forever...

That very afternoon, passion burning through his veins, he had ridden east into the wild wood on a quest to find a unicorn and steal its horn.

The forbidden forest was a dark, fey place, and time seemed to flow strangely there. How long had they been travelling – days, weeks, months? In moments of weakness Sir Paravaunt feared he might be losing his mind. After their overnight stay in the Shimmering Tower, everything seemed rather vague and muddled. Hadn't he started his quest with seven retainers and three hounds? And his horse – was it just the twilight gloom of the forest that made the stallion look black rather than grey?

The constant rain eventually sapped the party's spirits, only the hounds and the knight's horse seemed unaffected. Even the knight's two retainers ceased their mutterings, and plodded along in surly silence.

The pervasive damp made Sir Paravaunt's joints ache, and his breath was becoming wheezy. They had nearly run out of food, and he was constantly hungry. He felt weak, and his plate armour hung loose about his body.

It was impossible to tell what direction they were going in. The narrow path they were following wound on and on round the massive tree trunks. Faint, musical laughter filtered down from the branches above his head.

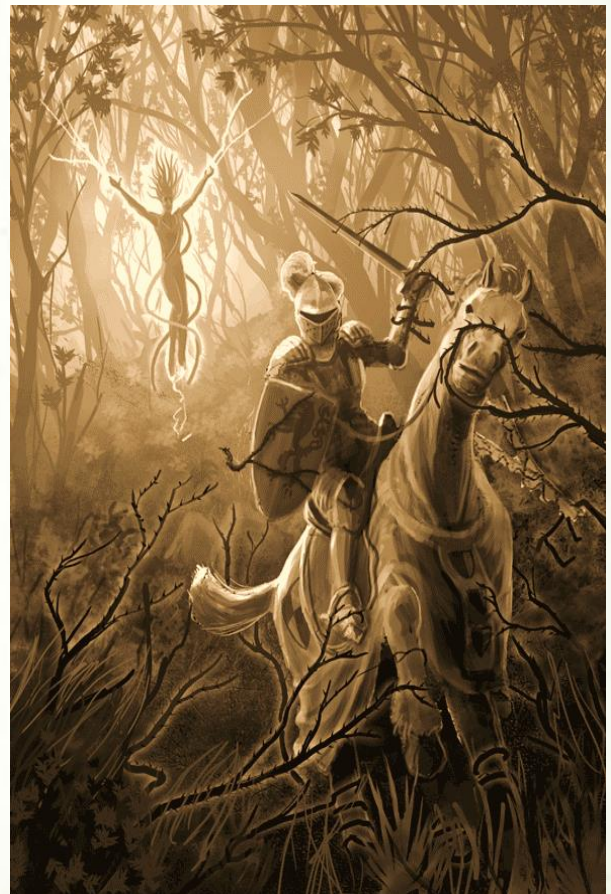
When his horse stopped suddenly, Sir Paravaunt nearly fell off. They were standing at the edge of a bright clearing. Sunlight cascaded down from above, and in the warm light spring flowers grew and butterflies

fluttered. In the middle of the clearing stood a beautiful young girl, feeding handfuls of grass to a horned white horse. With some difficulty, the knight clambered down from his horse, which refused to enter the clearing. He drew his sword and advanced towards the girl and the unicorn.

"My gallant knight – do you not recognise me?" asked the girl, in a lilting, playful voice. "You enjoyed my company in the Shimmering Tower. What a brave quest, and for such a noble purpose. But you are not so handsome now as you were then. Do you feel old, sir knight? Your face is lined and grizzled, your beard is long and grey. Your joints ache and your bones are crabbed. Why, you look like a man of sixty summers. Come, sir knight – take your prize if you can!"

As she spoke, the girl took hold of the unicorn's neck and held its head down, offering him its horn. The knight walked feebly forward, barely able to move for the weight of his armour. As he raised his rusty sword to cut off the beast's horn, the unicorn raised its head and stared straight into the knight's eyes. The force of its ancient gaze sapped all the power from his limbs, and he toppled forward onto the grass with a crash, all the life drained from his body.

"How soon mortal beauty fades. Yesterday he was so pretty!" laughed the girl. Petting the ten happy hounds that gambolled about her legs, she ran lightly off into the trees, which burst into blossom as she passed.



KEY

Temples



Halls



Yn Cromarc Wyldyr - The Wild Heath



The Grey Mountains



Parravon

Tal Driacha

Ystin Hukon

Tal Rond

Addaivoch
Tree of Woe

Tal Valerin

Tal Brianda

Ystin
Morai-Heg

Quenelles

River Brienne

N

Glade of
Eternal
Midnight

Tal Stornos

Talrennic

Meadow
Glades

CAVAROC
The Skymark
Reaches

Tal Amara

The Halls
of Equos

Coeth-mara

ATYLWYTH
The Winterheart

Tal Amere

Inverin Mountains

Drüne Fell

Tal Eth Ayr

Yn Edryl Koiran
(King's Glade)

Tal Cullon

Crystal
Mere

Tal Drost

Tyr Vanna

CYTHRAL
The Wildwood

Tyr Edrell

Callotinen Edge

The Sylamel
Tree

Druthandor
Gate

Ystin
Asuryan

Ystin
Hoeth

Tears of
Isha

Callach-mor Hills

TORGOVANN
The Forge of
Starlight

Vaul's Anvil

Tal Dovar

Mirror Pools
of Ithorien

The Chains of Vaul

Deep Forests
of Durthu

Ystin
Khaine

Crag Halls
of Findol

Tal Jul-finel

Seolath-m
Ridge

FYR DARRIC
Trickster's Wood

Tal Hakan

Feast Halls of
the Wardance

Halls of
Anaereth

Threllock

Council of
Beasts

Tal Varigan

WYDRIOTH
The Pine Crag

ARGWYLN
The Moonspring
Glades

Ystin
Eldrazor

Waterfall
Palace of the
Naiad Court

The Vaults
of Winter

The Eomain
Tarn

ARRAÑOC
The Summerstrand

Glade of
the Lost

Tal Enda Varian

TIRSYTH
The Ashenhall

Glade of Eternal
Moonlight

Tower of the
Eternal Wood

Delliandra

The Alarin Hills

Upper
Grismerie

Loocrimere

The Summer
Tree

Chasm Glade
of Beithir Seun

Hills of
the Dead

Ystin
Lileath



Worldroots
Living
Dead

THE REALM OF ATHEL LOREN

The realm of Loren is huge, from the deep oak woods at its core to the scattered beech and birch at its edge. It contains hills and mountains, rocky outcrops, and hidden valleys. Most Wood Elves live in Athel Loren, the largest and most important of their hidden cities, but there are numerous other smaller settlements too.

The oldest of all the forests of the Old World, its most ancient trees having grown from saplings seeded by the Old Ones' servants. Whether it was the Old Ones that granted strange life to these woods, or perhaps the coming of Chaos that awoke the trees, it is impossible to say. All that can be said is that in the dawn of time, the trees began to think in a way that trees are not meant to, and that they learned of feelings such as anger and hate. The forest became aware of itself, and of the other races crawling like insects upon the world, and it was not pleased with their intentions. Of all the great forests of the Old World, the Forest of Loren is the most wild and virgin.

The forest of Athel Loren is a mystical place greatly feared by all who dwell within its shadow. It extends along the banks of two great rivers, rising from the fertile plains of Bretonnia and reaching high into the mountains. Standing stones carved with worn Elven runes mark the borders of this primeval realm, placed there by the first Elven settlers to contain the wild lands within. Within the forest's span, giant trees loom overhead, their branches moving slowly, straining to escape the magical barrier of the watchstones. Roots twist and claw across the fern-covered rocks and loam, and low mists coil and spread throughout its hollows and glades. None tread beneath these eaves without feeling the forest's eyes upon them. Every step is dogged by a sense of watchfulness that permeates each leafy glade and winding track. This verdant labyrinth unsettles even the most courageous soul; filled with movement glimpsed from the corner of the eye, strange noises and the feeling that one is being watched at all times. There is a slumbering awareness and a sense of watchfulness that permeates each leafy glade and winding track.

Athel Loren is an unsettling place, filled with movement glimpsed from the corner of the eye, strange noises and the feeling that one is being watched by hundreds of pairs of eyes. Dark forms move through the twisting branches and dense undergrowth; tiny darting shapes flit between the trees on the very edge of vision. One gets the impression that Athel Loren itself is sentient, watchful and secretive. In fact, it sees and feels everything within its boundaries and is watchful and secretive, perfectly willing to destroy those that seek to enter. Only the insanely brave, mad or foolish dare to cross into Athel Loren, for the forest is a haunted place, filled with unquiet, malicious spirits of the forest, strange and magical creatures, and the mysterious and dangerous Wood Elves.

The forest of Athel Loren defies the natural laws of the world and time flows strangely within its bounds. There are few safe paths through Athel Loren. An individual that treks under the dark boughs for what may only seem like a couple of hours may, if he survives, return home to find that a hundred years have passed. Equally, one might wander lost within Athel Loren for decades, only to find that scant minutes have passed in the outside world. Athel Loren is more alive than any normal forest, and navigating through it is no easy task as landmarks and glades shift and move. What was open clearing one night may be heavily wooded the next morning, and pathways often disappear or turn back on themselves without warning within hours.

Most that try to enter Athel Loren find themselves constantly returning to where they started despite their best efforts to make headway. Even if an intruder try and walk a straight path, they invariably find themselves turned around and facing out of the forest, his sanity tested by the horrors and wonders he encountered within. Most travellers that persist in entering Athel Loren are found on its outskirts as little more than gibbering wrecks, their sanity shredded by whatever horrors they witnessed in the magical forest. That is, if they ever return.

But not all forays end in disaster, for there are those spirits whose hearts are not darkened to the other living creatures of the world. The fortunate or the worthy might occasionally find passage between the changing paths, guided perhaps by a welcome shaft of sunlight,





or coming across a forest trail at an unexpected turn. So it is that there are always those that would dare the secrets of the dark forest to learn its secrets or drawn by fanciful tales of treasures and hidden knowledge to be won.

Throughout Athel Loren are the magical halls of the Elven lords. These places are filled with ghostly music, laughter that sounds like the wind blowing through trees in autumn, and soft glowing light. The mighty entrance doors to the Elven halls are woven from the trunks of ancient trees or delve into the turf of the hillside; they are hidden to those the Elves do not welcome, though they might pass within a few paces of such portals.

Those that enter through one of these strange gateways find themselves in a grand, beautiful cavern deep below the tree or hill. Roots can be seen far above, curving down from the roof of the hall to form elegant, interweaving pillars. Here the Wood Elves make their homes: fine structures of ethereal beauty. Elegant lanterns adorn the hall, filled with tiny flitting, glowing figures. Here the Wood Elves feast and celebrate the natural cycles of the forest, holding grand banquets of woodland game and free flowing, intoxicating Elven wines. The halls are alive with wild dancing, lilting laughter and melodic music. Boy children taken from the lands around the forest, destined never to grow old, joyfully serve their graceful Elven masters. It is not unheard of for outsiders, such as Bretonnian questing

"Athel Loren is at once salvation and damnation. We walk the bough betwixt greatness everlasting and complete annihilation. Only the forest has the answer, and the forest is too-oft silent to the question."

*- Elui Woodwhisper,
Prophet and Scribe to the Phoenix King*

knights, to on occasion join an Elven feast, but it is a foolish individual indeed that would eat or drink the foodstuffs of the Elves without invitation.

Elves have dwelt around and within Athel Loren for almost five thousands years. Over this time they have become intrinsically linked with their forest home, and their nature has changed to reflect Athel Loren. Forsaking their ties to other Elven folk, the Wood Elves have become deeply secretive and suspicious, and shun all outsiders. They are the guardians of the forest, and their fate is utterly entwined with that of Athel Loren: if the forest were to die, the Wood Elves would die with it.

THE ETERNAL REALMS

Athel Loren is divided into twelve realms, each ruled by a lord or lady of the great council. Some realms are permanently locked in time, and only ever experience a single season as the years pass. Others dwell eternally under the night, or in the glory of the noon-day sun.

Scattered throughout the glades of these realms are the magical halls of the lords and ladies, their mighty entrance doors woven from the trunks of ancient trees or delved into the hillside. They are hidden to those the Elves do not welcome, and many an interloper has passed within a few paces of such a portal without knowing it was there. Those who enter through one of these strange gateways find themselves in a series of grand, beautiful caverns deep below the tree or hill. Roots can be seen far above, curving down from the roof of the hall to form elegant, interweaving pillars set with silver and gemstones. Everywhere there is ghostly music, soft glowing light and laughter that sounds like the wind blowing through autumnal trees.

It is in these halls that the Wood Elves feast and celebrate the natural cycles of the forest, holding grand banquets of woodland game and free-flowing, intoxicating Elven wines. Children taken from the lands around the forest, destined never to grow old, joyfully serve their graceful Elven masters. The halls are alive with wild dancing, lilting laughter and melodic music. It is not unheard of for outsiders, such as Bretonnian questing knights, to on occasion join an Elven feast, but it is a foolish individual indeed that would eat or drink the foodstuffs of the Elves without invitation.

TALSYN, THE GROVES OF ETERNITY

Ruled by Lord Araloth the Bold

Talsyn is the largest and most prosperous of all Athel Loren's high realms, and its warriors have ever formed the backbone of its armies. Other lords and ladies of the great council are resentful of this status, claiming it arises not from merit, but because both the King's Glade and the Oak of Ages lie within the Groves of Eternity. Perhaps there is as much truth as jealousy in this sentiment, but whilst many envy Lord Araloth for his prestige, few desire his burdens.



Nowhere in Athel Loren is there a stronger bond between Elves and forest spirits as there is in the Groves of Eternity. This was the part of the forest that the Elder Treeman Adanhu claimed as his own, and since his passing, the other spirits have steadfastly honoured his vision of coexistence. Not that the Dryads can be said to be friendly exactly, but they at least refrain from the kidnapping of Elf children that is so rife in other parts of Athel Loren.

It is in Talsyn that the nexus of worldroots can be found. When the world was young, the spirits of Athel Loren travelled these living pathways to the forests of distant lands. Alas, many of those routes are now closed, either because the worldroots themselves have been sundered, or because the forests at the far end have been consumed by the hungry forges of barbarous races. Nonetheless, the Wood Elves can still use the worldroots to reach lands as distant as chill Naggaroth if there is sufficient need.

ARRANOC, THE SUMMERSTRAND

Ruled by Lord Amadri Ironbark

Winter never comes to the verdant reaches of the Summerstrand. Here, the glades are ever dappled by brilliant sunshine all year round. Likewise, night seldom falls in this part of the forest and, even when it does, the hours of darkness are few and fleeting. Thus are the spirits of the Summerstrand eternally vibrant, for the passage of the seasons affects them not. The



Elves of this realm are generous, and given to holding lavish feasts at the slightest provocation. They are also, unlike many of Athel Loren's denizens, welcoming to peaceable outsiders, and waste no time including interlopers in the festivities. Many such 'guests' are resistant at first, but the first mouthful of sprigwine swiftly overcomes most resistance.

So it is that many outsiders have bided for long centuries in the glades of the Summerstrand, eating, drinking, making merry and seldom marking the passage of time. Few notice that their Elven feast-partners change as the hours and days pass, or that their hosts are more measured in the sampling of delights. Even fewer notice when their fellow guests, insensate with indolence, are carried from the feast by silent Dryad attendants. These gluttoned creatures are left at the entrance to the Vaults of Winter. Those ancient caverns are the work of a civilisation older than the Elves, and are home to beings that feast on reeking and pleasure-sodden souls. Thus do the guests of Arranoc pass from this world, sacrificed to sate creatures that would otherwise prey on the Elves of the Summerstrand.

ARGWYLON, THE MOONSPRING GLADES

Ruled by Lord Thalador Doomstar

Argwylon is a land of light and wonder, where the rivers are alive with naiads, and the waterfalls sing with ghostly voices. This is a realm of mages and magic, of daily deeds that would be thought miraculous in other corners of the forest.

This is the only corner of Athel Loren in which many of the old traditions of Ulthuan endure and detailed historical records are maintained. It should therefore be of little surprise that the Elves of the Moonglades consider themselves superior to their fellows – an attitude that endears them neither to others of their kind, nor to the spirits of their realm. Indeed, only the naiads of the Grismerie, who are famously unchoosey in the company they keep, can even bear to talk with them. By contrast, the Eagles of the mountains rejoice in their fast friendship with Argwylon, for nowhere else in Athel Loren can the Elves speak their ancient tongue.

MODRYN, THE NIGHT GLENS

Ruled by Lady Morlanna & Lord Arias

Modryn is a land that lies ever in shadow. Sunlight never reaches these glades, and the only light is that emitted by the flickering spite-creatures that quarrel and frolic as they flit through the upper branches of the trees. Shaped by the perpetual gloom, the Elves and spirits of the Night Glens are spiteful even by the standards of Athel Loren. They practise magics and customs that are forbidden in other realms, and worship gods most other Wood Elves shun.

It was not always this way. The Night Glens could once have been accounted the brightest and most glorious of all Athel Loren's realms, and its inhabitants



amongst the most welcoming. All of that changed during a dark time in Athel Loren's history, when a darkness in Ariel's spirit spread throughout the forest. In time, the Mage Queen restored the balance in her soul, but the Night Glens never recovered.

THE SKYMARK REACHES

Ruled by Lord Edrael of Equos

Skymark is the land of the meadow glades, the sparsely-wooded grassland plains that lie on Athel Loren's south border. The Elves of Cavaroc are horsemasters as fine as any in the world, and the first to march when the war-horns are sounded. They are swift to act, and swift to anger as well – if ever the Elves of Athel Loren overreach themselves in some matter of war, it is all but a certainty that the Glade Riders of the Skymark Reaches will be found at the head of that mad charge.

It is little wonder that the Elves of Cavaroc are more brash than others in Athel Loren, for their plains are always the first lands assailed if a greedy Bretonnian duke seeks to expand his territory. In the past, they have countered this threat by terrifying the humans into submission, but have since turned to the subtler means of substituting many of the Damsels of Quenelles with shape-shifting forest spirits who then sabotage the Duke's plans from within...

ATYLWYTH, THE WINTERHEART

Ruled by Sceolan of the Hooked Blade

Atylwyth is a realm locked in the icy embrace of winter; its boughs are ever covered in a thick rime of frost, its glades always heavy with snow. Pale statues line every path, and mark the entrance to every hall. Some of these works are exquisite ice sculptures, shaped by an artisan's patient touch. Others are frost-caged mischievous naiads or spiteful kelpies, imprisoned by Elven magics in punishment for past misdeeds or to prevent future ones. These statues flow and reform when the eye does not rest upon them, the creatures inside ever seeking to escape.

Few forest spirits awaken in this land, for the biting chill lulls them and keeps them slumbering. Most sleep willingly through the centuries, waiting for the arrival of a glorious dawn that will never come. As a result, the connection between forest and Elves is weaker here than in any other part of Athel Loren. Those spirits that do rouse to wakefulness seldom talk with the Elves, and instead prefer to influence their allies' thoughts and deeds through dreams.

Unlike other regions of the forest, Atylwyth's defence has ever relied upon the bravery and battle-skill of the Elves alone – even the threat of extinction cannot rouse the realm's forest spirits from their torpidity. Thus do the Atylwythi practise the arts of war with an obsession that is wholly alien in other realms. Nowhere else in Athel Loren can Eternal Guard be found in such numbers as they can in the halls and holds of Lord Sceolan.

CYTHRAL, THE WILD WOOD

Ruled by Lady Draya the Nighthawk

Not all the spirits of Athel Loren dwell in harmony with the Elves. Even now, thousands of years after the first great council, there are those beings who actively seek the Elves' destruction. Some revel in malevolence purely for its own sake, others would war against the Elves with all the cunning and might at their command, were they free to do so.

It was to guard against this threat that the first Wood Elves planted a fence of waystones in the southeast of Athel Loren, creating the Wildwood – a prison for the most malevolent of forest spirits. Thus can the Dryads and Treemen found elsewhere in Athel Loren, cruel as they are, be considered the most benign of their kind. Yet the waystone fence alone is not sufficient to indefinitely cage the creatures of the Wildwood. There are Treemen and other elemental colossi within, and their power is more than equal to the task of toppling a few menhirs. Losing one or two such stones has little effect on the cage's efficacy, but if several adjacent waystones were felled, the breach would be enough to allow an escape.

It is the endless task of the Elves of the Wildwood to ensure that the waystones are maintained and thus the prison kept whole. They do not live in the Cythral itself, and indeed only enter it at times of great need, but instead maintain their halls on the outside of the waystone fence. No realm in all of Athel Loren is so unwelcoming of outsiders, and with good reason. Not all the creatures of the Wildwood are monstrous of form. Some are seductresses steeped in fey glamour, easily capable of luring mortals into their shadowy embrace. Few of such victims emerge from the Wildwood unharmed. Most of those that do are mortal creatures no more, their own souls having been devoured and replaced by those of shadow-naiads or deepwood fetchlings. The Rangers of the Wildwood must be ever on guard for such imposters, and so many outsiders are beheaded and burned for their trespassing. Better that the innocent perish than a changeling escape and insinuate itself into the courts of Athel Loren.





WYDRIOTH, THE PINE CRAGS

Ruled by Lord Findol & Lady Evelyne

The Pine Crags is an embattled region, ever beset by the Dwarfs and greenskins of the Grey Mountains. From the outside, its steep slopes appear to be no more defensible than any other part of Athel Loren. It is only when an invader is drawn beneath the eaves that he discovers that the Pine Crags is in fact a sprawling fortress. Here, the Elves have shaped citadels and strongholds from skycrown oaks, and endless leagues of gnarled and tangled walls from rockbriar. A maze of walkways and root-braced tunnels bind the various outposts together into a single living defence-work capable of repelling a full-blown Waaagh! Many rising warlords have met their doom amongst the glades of Wydrioth, for bringing an army into the Pine Crags is a much simpler proposition than that of its extrication. Findol and his court are famously bloodthirsty, and take great joy in slaughtering those who intrude upon their domain.



F'YR DARRIC, TRICKSTER'S WOOD

Ruled by Lady Heggria of the Masque

Fyr Darric is Loec the Trickster's holy ground within Athel Loren, the site of many shrines to his anarchic glory. Here too can be found the Feast Halls of the Wardance – the closest thing that the nomadic Wardancers of Athel Loren have to a home. As a result, the glades of Fyr Darric always resound to the sound of laughter, though much of it is mean-spirited. Every deception requires a victim, and the consequences can range from wounded pride to a slow death. Never is this more true that at the Festivals of the Equinox, when captives are promised their freedom, if only they can slay a Wardancer in single combat. None succeed, of course, for the Devotees of Loec are peerless duellists. The true contest is not for the victim's freedom, but to see how many wounds the Wardancer can inflict before his foe expires. Any captive who dies to fewer than a hundred cuts is thought to be poor sport indeed.

TIRSYTH, THE ASHENHALL

Ruled by Lady Arda of the Parted Veil

The Elves of Athel Loren's other realms consider the Ashenhall to be a drab and sombre place. As proof, they point to the lugubrious character of its inhabitants and the cinereal colourings of their raiment. There is no joyful song in Ashenhall, they say, just the dirges of Elves who live ever under the shadow of death.

In truth, the Elves of Tirsyth are no more fatalistic than others of their kind - they simply revere life's end as fervently as they do its start. So do Ashenhall's Elves fill their glades with intricate moonstone statues of the departed, so that they might remember and honour the deceased even if their kin elsewhere in the forest do not. The forest spirits respect this gesture for reasons of their own, and groves of Treemen have sprung up around statues of those Elves beloved of the forest. Woe betide he who interferes with such a shrine.

TORGOVANN, THE FORGE OF STARLIGHT

Ruled by Lord Daith

The Forge of Starlight is the domain of makers and craftsmen, of the artisans and smiths who create all Athel Loren's many tools of wonder and war. In the very centre of the realm lies Vaul's Anvil, the shrine to the Maker God, and every night, the beech trees of that glade bask in the light and warmth of the mighty forge-temple. Inevitably, the rippling heat from Vaul's Anvil draws forest spirits from the nearby groves, who watch the striking of hammer upon anvil with childlike fascination. Such creatures love the flame for the warmth and life it gives, but are also wary of it for the harm it can wreak if left untended.

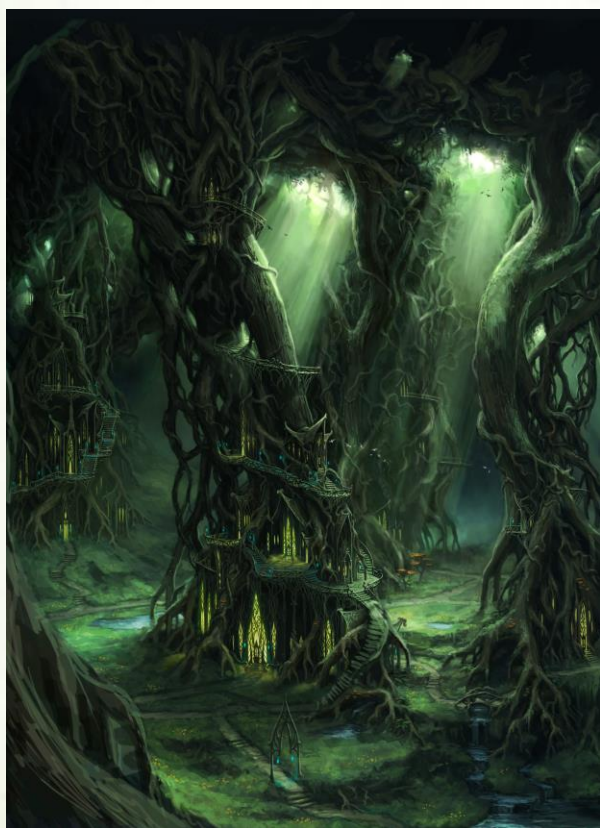


Lord Daith, most celebrated of all the Elven smiths, is the master of this realm, and has been for as long as any Elf can recall. Indeed, some whisper that Daith is older even than Ariel and Orion, that he fled Ulthuan with the first colonists; others claim that it was he who forged Aenarion's Dragon armour. For such to be true, Daith would have to be many thousands of years old – something that would be considered near-impossible in any realm other than timeless Athel Loren. If Daith is truly as old as the rumours tell, he bears little of his great age, for his aspect is that of an Elf in his middle-years. He is blind, and has been so as long as any have known him, but none of this slows his craftsmanship at the forge. He performs his works by touch, and by the way hot metal changes the taste of the air. Nor does his lack of vision still his tongue, which is just as fiery as his forge.

ANMYR, THE WITHER HOLD

Ruled by Lady Tevaril & Lady Delynna

Anmyr is a realm in desperate decline. Many years ago, the foul beast Morghur was slain in the heart of the region, and his blood corrupted the land for many leagues around. Indeed, Addaivoch, the mighty elm that once served as the halls of Anmyr's rulers, was reduced to a blighted and atrophied husk during that battle, and its shadow falls now only on barren and lifeless soil. Ever since those days, the Elves of Anmyr have been fighting a losing battle against Morghur's taint. Each year, the Beastmen warherds grow larger, increasing numbers of forest spirits are lost to madness and whole groves of trees wither and perish. In Athel Loren, the loss of even a single tree is a tragedy, so the ongoing legacy of Morghur's blood is cause for sorrow beyond words.



Witherhold does not stand alone in its battle against corruption. The lords and ladies of other realms know only too well that Morghur's taint will spread all throughout Athel Loren if it is left unchecked. Therefore, Elves of all the forest's domains can be found in the glades of Anmyr, fighting running battles with rampaging Beastmen. Yet the blight upon Witherhold cannot be fought with blade and bow alone. The doom overtaking Anmyr is as much spiritual as physical, for the Beastmen are the Children of Chaos, and their deeds are fuelled by the will of the Dark Gods. Nothing short of divine intervention will see Witherhold's peril finally ended and its former glories restored, but the gods of the Elves are weakened - perhaps too weak to intercede.

THE GLADES

Within the Forest of Loren the wooded landscape varies greatly. The forest runs from the plains of Bretonnia up into the foothills of the Grey Mountains. It extends along the banks of two of the great rivers of the Old World for many hundreds of miles. Over this vast expanse, the nature of the vegetation changes from one part of the forest to another. In some places the ground is high and rocky with crags and pinnacles of rock and booklets strewn among the trees. In other places the ground is boggy with lakes within the forest itself. There are even huge clearings which are like meadowlands where the long grass predominates over the trees. Some areas are characterised by an abundance of a particular species of tree.

Most of the forest is a strange, almost twilight world bathed only in the muted sunlight or moonlight able to penetrate the canopy of leaves. Dotted around the forest there are natural clearings where one can look up and actually glimpse the blue sky or the stars at night. The Wood Elves call these clearings 'glades'. As well as being areas open to the sun, they are often places where magical currents flow close to the surface. Other glades are vast tracts of land that could easily accommodate the largest of the Old World's cities, and that many a Bretonnian duke would claim as a proud domain. In fact, some have, though never for very long.

Each of the kindreds of Elves that first wandered into the forest settled in a different part. Some kindreds felt an attraction for one area rather than another. Once a kindred had chosen a glade as the focus of its settlement, the Elves belonging to it began to adapt their way of life to their immediate surroundings. Each glade had a subtle influence on the kindred who settled there. Some kindreds did not settle for long in one place but roamed in a nomadic way of life through the vastness of the forest. Wherever they settled for a short while they chose the same kind of glade among the same kind of trees.

The lore of the Wood Elves tells of several glades within the Forest of Loren, each with its own distinctive character and settled by a particular kindred. Some glades are shared by all the kindreds, some



others are shunned. The glades can be quite large areas, and each one is better described as a group of interconnected glades scattered over a wide area. Over time, the focus of settlement of a kindred may shift from one to another, but usually remains within the same area of the forest, except in the case of the nomadic kindreds. But these always search for the same kind of glades wherever they go within the wood.

THE KING'S GLADE

The King's Glade is a cast and awesome clearing, surrounded by great oak trees of immense girth and antiquity. When the Elves first penetrated into the depths of the forest they came upon this glade and decided to hold their councils and rituals here. It was undoubtedly a sacred place pervaded by magic. Not far from the glade itself is the vast Oak of Ages in which Orion and Ariel were found transformed into the King and Queen in the Wood. Thus the glade became known as the King's Glade.

Over the centuries Elven mages skilled in the arts of 'tree singing' have created a city among the trees in the King's Glade. Tree singing is an art by which means the growth of trees is accelerated and trained in particular ways. The branches of the great oaks were induced to entwine into walkways and canopies, galleries and vaults. Thus are the buildings and chambers made entirely of lining trees, branches and foliage. Beneath the earth, the same methods have been used to create great hollow chambers walled by the interwoven roots of the trees. Access to these vaults is made through the hollow trunks of living trees.



Although vast in its extent, this city is virtually invisible to the untrained eye. It merges into the forest and is easily missed by the idle traveller and foe alike. Much of it is either above his head or beneath his feet. Furthermore it is disguised by magic. An unwary traveller in the forest can thus walk through the King's Glade hardly aware of what is all around him or that he is being watched by Elven eyes. This is assuming he ever finds it at all. Most strangers will have been distracted away by magic. Others wander aimlessly for miles until they mysteriously emerge out of the forest again.

It is from the King's Glade that Ariel and Orion preside over the realm of Athel Loren and hold court. They are revered as incarnations of the gods Kumous and Isha. The King and Queen in the Wood are immortal, but each year towards midwinter they appear to die as does the vegetation of the forest. Then they are entombed within the first signs of spring. Thus they endure from age to age, deep in wisdom and magical power.

They do not rule alone, but with the aid of a council. There are currently fifteen lords and ladies upon this council, drawn from the hidden realms that blossom beneath the trees. To hold such a seat is a great honour, one which has been handed down, generation to generation, since the very founding of the forest. In most matters, decisions are reached and decrees issued only by full agreement of the monarchs and the council. However, this holds true only whilst Ariel allows it. No one, not even Orion, can gainsay the Mage Queen if her mind is set. This is at once the Wood Elves' greatest strength and their most telling weakness. Whilst it grants a unity of purpose that the rulers of Naggaroth and Ulthuan sorely desire, it is a boon only when Ariel's judgement is sound, and has cost Athel Loren greatly when her steps have faltered.

"They took me to the high realms of Athel Loren, to the place that guards the approaches to the enchanted glades and when my blindfold was removed I stood under a gigantic tree.

My wards told me that this was Ironheart, the great guardian oak of the King's Glade and a fortress of the Elven kindred in the wood. It was a wondrous thing: a living fortress that was untouched by axe or hammer. A hundred archers sheltered within the leafy bower of the majestic tree. In the spread of its branches nested a dozen Great Eagles, their keen eyes scanning the horizon for any sign of intruders.

The castle was as strong as any I have seen in the whole of the kingdoms of the Dwarfs and Elves, and yet an enemy caught pass it by, thinking it to be nothing else but an old and gigantic weathered soak."

- From the Travels of Irathian the Swift



THE ASH GROVES

The Ash Groves are to be found along the banks of the great river that flows through the eastern part of Athel Loren. Here the ash trees grow very thick and are almost impenetrable. Groves of dense ash have been 'sung' into particularly labyrinthine dwellings and galleries by the Elves that live here. The kindred that settled here learned to cut the long and straight ash staves to make spears which they use for hunting and fighting.

THE MEADOW GLADES

These glades are located in the southern part of Athel Loren, between the river and the mountains. Here the trees are often sparse, opening out into broad clearings of meadow grass. It is a place where wild horses roam and rare Unicorns may be seen.

The Kindred of Equos, who were master horsemen and horse breeders, settled here when they migrated from the coastal colonies. They brought with them their Elven steeds and mares and let them loose in the meadow glades. They could not bear to take ship to Ulthuan with the last remaining warriors because it meant leaving behind so many fine horses. Instead they led their herds eastward into the wilderness. These were the ancestors of the Elven steeds which the Wood Elves now ride. The Kindred of Equos provide all the charioteers and horsemen of Athel Loren.

THE GLADE OF WOE

The Glade of Woe is dominated by a single huge blasted oak. This hulk of a tree stands blackened and scorched. Its gnarled branches claw the sky like hands raised in anguish and outrage. The trunk is hollow and the void extends deep into the earth. For the Elves this is an awesome place of dark ritual.

Here mages gather for their secret councils. It is a place towards which the vilest of invaders are lured to be ambushed and slaughtered by the Elves. Their bones are entwined in the roots of the tangled thorn bushes. Despite all this, the glade is not such a grim place as one might think. The trees and bushes around about are laden with purple and blood-red berries which the Elves gather to make drinks and potions and the ground is carpeted with earth-hugging forest plants and flowers. It is an area rich in fungi, lichens and mosses of all kinds, indeed all the ingredients needed by the mages for their magical potions.



THE GLADE OF PINES

The Glade of Pines is to be found on the slopes of the Grey Mountains where the forest envelops the foothills. The crisp cold air favours pine trees rather than any other species. There are many different types and some individual trees are extremely old and gnarled. These entwine their roots around the high pinnacles and crags of weathered rock. The cliffs have caves and crevices which provide lairs for many kinds of wild beasts. The Elves have 'sung' both trees and rocks into fine dwellings where both tree trunks and stalagmites act as pillars of the many halls and galleries.

The kindred who settled here learned to use the pine resin for many things including wine and magical potions. The region is abundant in wild animals such as bears, wildcats and birds of prey. The Elves dwelling here developed a strange affinity with the beasts and birds. The Kindred of the Pines includes warriors who have learned to ride on the backs of giant Warhawks.





THE YEW GROVES

There are many dark and eerie groves of old yew trees scattered throughout the forest. Yew wood is excellent for making bows and magic wands or staves. The yew groves were therefore sought out by kindreds seeking to make new bows and also by mages. The vast age of many yew trees means they have absorbed enormous amounts of magical energy drawn up through their roots and stored in the heartwood. The Kindred of the Yew includes many nomadic clans and wandering mages who move from one yew glade to another, dwelling for a time in each.

THE BEECH GLADES

The Beech Glades cover the gently sloping hills that rise in the very midst of the forest of Loren. Because the land rises between the two rivers that encompass the forest of Loren it can be seen from a long way away across the heathlands. These hills are wooded with huge beech trees of immense age. The branches of these trees have been sung by the Elves into intertwining vaults which support their galleries and chambers. The trunks of the trees are thus like a vast pillared hall through which a traveller could wander without ever knowing that Elven folk were close. The only thing he would be aware of would be the strange and enchanting sound of Elven singing and laughter apparently coming from all around him and yet from nowhere in particular.

CHASM GLADE OF BEITHIR SEUN

In the northeastern corner of Athel Loren, along the wooded slopes of the Grey Mountains, lies the Chasm Glade of Beithir Seun. This massive crack runs for more than thirty miles before plunging into the darkest

depths of the Old World. It is a primordial place haunted by woodland spirits and serves as the sanctuary of Athel Loren's most mighty of protectors: the Forest Dragons. Roused only when the forest is in dire peril, these voracious monsters spend most of their long existence in a forest-induced state of hibernation.

This area serves as both an entry and egress point to the Realms Below. The dragons serve as guardians, but some stealthy creatures avoid the monsters and surge into the forest only to be repelled and followed into the lightless depths and destroyed by their pursuers. Even the Wood Elves don't know how far the chasm plummets before it terminates, if at all.

THE WILD HEATHS

The Forest of Loren is surrounded by vast tracts of open heath and scrub. Here the stunted trees and occasional groves mingle with open stretches of bracken and heather. Rocky crags and boulders emerge from the tangled brambles. Here and there are standing stones, ancient burial cairns made of huge boulders and stone circles. Some of these may have been built by savage tribes of men in remote antiquity, the origins of

THE GLADE OF YRILLIATH

*"Three mighty tied as one are bound.
Around thorn many vines entwined
Unseen the halls of Yrilluth amid the leafy
boughs
Seven score the bows that feast in Elm Hall"*

- From the legend of the Kindred of the Elms

WOOD ELF STRONGHOLDS

Wood Elf strongholds typically consist of several gigantic hollow trees joined together at branch level by walkways. The branches are trained to intertwine into platforms and walkways by the Wood Elf skill of tree singing. Foliage continues to grow on these trees and branches further hiding the stronghold from sight. The tree trunk towers are often so vast in girth that many Elves can live inside one tree.

Doors and windows are disguised as cracks and knotholes in the trunks of the tree-towers making them difficult to recognise. From these, Elf warriors are able to sally out and then retreat into their stronghold quickly without the foe knowing where they have appeared from or gone. The upper platforms can also be accessed by rope ladders and vines.

Tree walls are often created by treesinging. This particular process can create a latticework effect similar to wattling, but which is far stronger. Since it is created from the living wood it continues to grow stronger as the tree grows older.

others are a mystery. Hidden within them are unknown treasures and perils. Most outward of all are the waystones planted by the first Elves of Athel Loren. Even then, they knew the power of the forest, and sought to contain its fury.

This, then, is the Wild Heath; the landscape that forms the borderland of Athel Loren. Looking across the heaths, the vast green forest can be seen. Anyone who dares venture towards the forest risks being ridden down by the Kindred of Equos in their war chariots or being chased by Glade Riders with their lances and bows. These warriors tirelessly ride across the heaths searching and tracking intruders. Sometimes rival champions will race chariots or steeds between great standing stones. By night they camp in the groves of stunted oaks or return to the forest itself, to be relieved by another troop riding out from the meadow glades.

It is a boundary ever in motion, with the trees forever straining against the waystone fence that pens them in. On occasion, when summer is at its highest, the trees can even overwhelm the waystones and spill into the lands beyond. When this happens, the Spellingers and Spellweavers of Athel Loren quickly loose their magics in order to coax the trees back to their proper home. They do this not to save the Bretonnian peasantry of the surrounding lands – though countless lives are doubtless preserved by these actions. Rather, they do it to maintain the tenuous balance by which Athel Loren exists. Though the instinct of the trees is to spread their roots across the world, the Elves seek to preserve the unity from which the forest draws its strength. Were its trees and spirits permitted to roam the world beyond,

many would perish. Worse, those that survived would do so only by becoming as cruel and bloodthirsty as the most terrible servants of the Chaos Gods. Thus do the Wood Elves preserve the forest from itself by first preserving outsiders from the forest.

At one time this land was disputed between the Wood Elves and Bretonnian barons. There were many brisk and bloody encounters. The Wood Elves would often feign flight into the forest pursued by reckless knights who never returned. Eventually the barons learned to respect the power of Athel Loren and the Bretonnian king himself recognised the dominion of the King and Queen in the Wood over this disputed land.

Some of the tallest of the great standing stones were chosen to mark the boundaries of the realm, beyond which no man may pass without leave of the King and Queen in the Wood. These are marked with carvings and painted designs of the Wood Elves. These are charms to ward off enemies by magic and encircle the realm with protective enchantments. To go beyond the stones is to bring doom down upon oneself!

ATHEL CAIELLIN, THE DREAMING WOOD

Athel Caiellin is not so much an area of Athel Loren as it is a wholly separate region that sits alongside the entire forest. It is a realm of grim prophecy and stark terror, of endless magic and daemonic malice. The Wood Elves enter the Dreaming Wood only at times of greatest need, for they know well that there is no surer way to draw thirsting Slaanesh's attention. The Dark Prince's servants ever prowl Athel Caiellin, searching for errant Elves, and battling with others of their kind.





Athel Caiellin can only be accessed in places where magic lies heavily upon the land. Many of these sites fluctuate with the passage of the seasons, and only serve as portals at high summer, or in the darkest depths of winter. Most of these locations are marked by archways of vine-tangled white stone, placed as warning to the unwary that the Dreaming Wood lies beyond. Others are given away only by dark whispers on the breeze and a slight shimmering of the air, beyond which the glades take on a strangely sinister or unwelcoming aspect.

YN EDRIETEBNOS, THE OAK OF AGES

The Oak of Ages is the spiritual heart of Athel Loren. It was here that the Wood Elf realm was truly founded, and it is here that the yearly rituals of Orion's death and rebirth see their completion. The Oak itself is a mystery to all save Ariel, the Mage Queen of Athel Loren. The Elves tell how she passes the winter months and times of great hurt within its embrace. However, they do not know whether she does so literally within the body of the tree or in grand halls woven into its roots – certainly, none have the temerity to ask.

It is here, beneath the Oak's ancient boughs, that countless generations of Athel Loren's Spellsingers have learned their sorcerous craft. Magic lies heavy about the Oak of Ages, and its aspect subtly changes as the Winds of Magic rise and fall. It is at its most glorious when Ghyran sweeps through the forest, and at its most twisted and sinister when Shyish is ascendant. Few artefacts forged by mortal races contain as much magical power as a single acorn from the Oak's branches. Many a Spellsinger that travels the lands beyond Athel Loren does so with such a treasure bound tight above her heart to serve as a protective



charm, a lodestone to hearth and home and, at desperate need, a reserve of power.

Many Elves believe that the fate of the Oak of Ages governs not only the rest of Athel Loren, but of their entire race also. For this reason, no matter how terrible the times become, or how dire the peril facing them, the Wood Elves will never suffer invaders to despoil the Oak of Ages.

THE MAGICAL HALLS OF THE ELVEN LORDS

The inhabitants of Athel Loren rarely have a cause to traverse the lightless tunnels deep beneath their strange forest home. However, there are some circumstances that will draw the Wood Elves' attention downward into the twilight depths.

Even though the Wood Elves' hidden magical halls lie in caverns deep beneath both tree and turf, these strongholds are self-contained cities filled with ethereal music, ghostly lights, and mirth. They have no tributary passages into the deep, wild, and silent realms where Dwarfs toil and furtive creatures gnaw at the roots of the world above. To have such tunnels would undermine the relative security of Wood Elf halls.

However, on rare (and often disastrous) occasions, this lightless world makes itself known to the Elves of Athel Loren. The feral Skaven, forever burrowing and scheming, have attacked the Wood Elves from beneath their very feet. Whether planned or not, these incursions set the rat men against the Elves in a furious combat. With the survival of their families and homes at stake, the wardens of Athel Loren can be devastating in their retaliation.

In the rare case that the invaders (whether they are Skaven, Night Goblins, or something all together new and terrible) are routed but not cut down to a man, the Wood Elves pursue with every resource they can muster. To allow the enemy to escape with knowledge of the Elven halls' existence would spell disaster. The Wood Elves follow their attackers deep into the earth, destroying the trespassers until not a single creature remains standing.

"I'd left the camp for a few moments to gather dead wood from the ground. One can never be too careful 'ere in the woods. I never gather timber what ain't been dead for at least a season. I always tell these merchants I guide never to touch the live trees. But they got more gold than sense, those ones. When I got back to the camp, there weren't no one left. Not a soul. Someone 'ad tried to start a fire usin' green wood, an' the trees swallowed 'em all up. So, of course, I grabbed all the gold from their packs before I left, for safekeepin', you see. It's not like the trees got any use for it! The trees took 'em! I swear it!"

- Gerhardt Hamburg, Forest Guide, on trial for the murder of a client



From across the heath, a mile or two to the south he could hear clumsy movement. A foul wizard and his personal bodyguard of undead moved insidiously out of their hiding place under the cover of twilight and the approaching darkness. He had been tracking their movements for nearly three days. He'd already concluded the necromancer was searching for some of the larger burial cairns from which to raise as many 'willing' servants as he could, but to what purpose the elf was still unsure.



He was a scout; a Wolf Clan scout and had been all this life. He had been chosen for his natural aptitude and his skills were honed by his elders till his instincts were sharp and clear. His sense of smell was almost as good as a wolf and was always alert, watching, listening, measuring and calculating the next move of his prey. He could distinguish the cries and calls of every creature that lived in the forests and the craggy foothills of the nearby mountains. He had always spent large amounts of time by himself and the solitude of the life of a scout suited him. The urge to panic and the usual effects of fear were no longer known to him but were simply indicators used in weighing up a course of action. To fight or to run was always a conscious decision. His duty to others, his responsibility to bring warnings and information, more important than saving himself. Like the wolf that was his totem, he existed for the pack.

This night was clear and the light from the north grew colder. He drew his fur cloak around his shoulders and prepared himself for a long, quiet and motionless night. They would come this way and pass his position moving relentlessly through the dark. He still wasn't sure where they were ultimately headed and so far the wizard had used no real magic. He would sleep a little once they passed knowing that an early frost would make them easy to track. Until he had word or something happened, he'd do no more.

A warm smile graced his face as he picked up the sweet smell of pine floating down from the foothills on an uncertain wind. He could distinguish three or four voices, harsh and evil. Their language was unknown to him. They dropped into distant echoes before rising again, brought toward him then carried away on the same restless breeze. In another hour they'd be well past him, the necromancer, and two figures in dark hooded cloaks and ten long dead warriors, their bones re-animated by the sorcerers corrupted will.

"How fair Conghal." he whispered.

The young wolf scout laughed to himself and dropped out of the tree, landing softly beside his leader. Twenty miles he'd travelled this day and he was glad to see his friend. Further, he knew the message he bore would please the veteran scout.

He smiled contentedly as he sent Conghal to alert the rest of the troop. What the necromancer and his group were up to was no longer of concern to him. The whisper of arrows in the night would be the last sound these invaders heard.





THE GREAT SEASONS

Time flows strangely under the eaves of Athel Loren; a day can pass in an eye-blink or stretch away into eternity. Indeed, it can do both at once, for the passage of the seconds is never as subjective as it is within the forest's timeless glades. As a result of all this, the time within Athel Loren rarely overlays precisely with that of the outside world. This is compounded by the fact that time is not even uniform within Athel Loren. Winter never leaves some of the ancient glades, and there are places where the sun burns bright all year round.

Despite the challenges posed by the nature of their realm, the Wood Elves manage to maintain surprisingly accurate records of their own histories. They instinctively balance their perceptions with the forest's ever-changing flow of time, and find it remarkable that other creatures cannot master something so ridiculously simple. In this, they are aided by the fact that the King's Glade and the Oak of Ages – the twin hearts of Athel Loren – are always in perfect harmony with the outside world. This therefore means that the yearly cycle of Orion's rebirth ties too with the summers and winters of neighbouring lands. "Yet, all the while, there are still regions of Athel Loren where the first incarnation of the King in the Woods has never died.

The Wood Elf histories are rarely written down. Instead, they are preserved through the ages by the stories and songs of courtly skalds, and within the ornate ritual performances of the Wardancers – devotees of Loec, the teller of tales. Of the two methods, the latter can be considered the more reliable. Though the Wardancers are servants of the Trickster God, their dances speak the truth even when their words do not. Skalds, on the other hand, maintain favour with the lords and ladies by embellishing reputations and diminishing failures, and so their songs are prized more for their entertainment than their scrupulous accuracy. Indeed, the most popular songs are those that take a historical event and weave it into allegorical ballads whose messages are meaningful to all.

THE TURNING OF THE LEAVES

The chronicle of Athel Loren is most commonly broken down into a series of 'great seasons': the Season of Rebirth, the Season of Redemption, and so on. Each great season marks the passage of several centuries, and therefore many hundreds of the 'lesser seasons' that pass over the Oak of Ages: Ice, Rebirth, The Hunt and The Fade.

There is no set trigger that determines when one great season ceases and another begins. The end of an old and the onset of a new is heralded by unfolding events, and it may be that the shift between great seasons goes

unmarked until many years after the fact. In a more rigid society, laxity of this kind would throw all manner of bureaucratic systems into disorder. In Athel Loren, this is simply the way things are done.

In those rare halls where written histories are preserved, they are recorded using a similar method to that used in the Ulthuan society from which the Wood Elves sprang. The great season is given first, following in sequence by year, lesser season and day (though the last two are often as subjective in Athel Loren as to render them confusing, at best). Thus III, 251, 2, 87 would be the eighty-seventh day in the lesser season of Rebirth, in the two hundred and fifty first year of the Season of Revelation.

Of course, Athel Loren existed long before the Elves first settled there, though it is doubtful as to whether any of the spirits of that era even marked the passage of time. Certainly, no records remain if they did, and the surviving Elders are little given to discussing times past. The years before the arrival of the Elves are referred to as part of the 'Forgotten Season'. Some Elves maintain that these must have been the time of Athel Loren's glory, before the Elves sullied it with their presence. Most believe, however, that only with their coming did the forest truly know magnificence. The truth, as ever, can be found somewhere in between.

The legends of the Wood Elves relate in detail how the world was born, and where the great beasts came from. Before time began, all was chaos. On the other side of the sky the gods, imprisoned in eternity, fought and jostled with each other. Their terrible anger the thrusting of their spears and the hacking of their swords, eventually weakened the sky, and caused it to split open.

The void below the sky, which was nothing, eagerly sucked at the rent between the worlds. First came the air, filling the void with swirling wind. Then came water, and the void swelled with clouds and humid mists. The weight of water was so great that it caused the rent in the sky to tear open even further, pulling rocks, earth, trees and plants from above, and so was formed the world. Many strange and terrible beasts were sucked down to the new world too, and these were the ancestors of all creatures that live on the world today.

As the land buckled and tilted beneath the gods' feet, they ceased their fighting and worked to repair the rent. It was a dangerous task, and many toppled into the new world below, which still sucked greedily at the source of its life. The gods mended the rent with a huge needle made from a lightning bolt, and thread made from pain, but they were warriors, and didn't pull the thread tight enough, so that it still leaked.

The fallen gods, trapped in the world below, scattered and set about recreating the form of their home: raising tall mountains, clothing the rocks with fertile earth, swaddling the land in warm seas. When they had finished, the world had been made, and, with a tremble, the heartbeat of time began.



From his high vantage point, Fynyr had a clear view of the battle. He was looking down onto a wooded river valley. To the east rose the jagged grey shapes of the Grey Mountains; to the west the valley flattened out as the river continued its course to the plains of Bretonnia and beyond.

The Skaven force had been detected in the dead of night, when a lone Warhawk rider had seen an explosion of purple green fire by the ruined tower of leis Kilyn. When he flew closer to investigate he saw an endless procession of shadowy black shapes scuttling out from a gaping hole in the earth. A Shaven invasion force had blasted its way into Athel Loren from one of their ancient tunnels that criss-crossed the Old World. As the Warhawk rider circled the tower, trying to see more, the Skaven spotted him and drove him away with their foul magics.

By the first light of morning, the Skaven army had marched nearly twenty miles north-east, into sight of the foothills of the Grey Mountains. Here their progress across the valley was interrupted by a shallow river, along the north bank of which was arrayed a small force of Wood Elves, banners fluttering in the breeze.

There were three times as many Skaven as Wood Elves. The bulk of their army was in Bretonnia, fighting Orcs and Goblins with their human allies, so this small force was the best the Wood Elves could assemble in a hurry.

For the Skaven, the only way forward was through. The Skaven commander, Warlord Ricket Stench,

ordered his ratmen to charge the Elves. Emboldened by numbers, the Skaven raced forward, chittering with fury, bloodlust glinting in their beady red eyes.

Showers of arrows flew across the river from the archers on the other side. The front line of Shaven tumbled and fell, but those behind jumped over the bodies of the fallen and carried on, forced along by the pressure of those behind them as much as the fanatical exhortations of their leader. The warlord squealed encouragement as his ratmen rushed down the slope to the river. He knew that if his troops could just hold their nerve till they got into hand-to-hand combat, the battle would be theirs.

Despite losing over a third of their number to Wood Elf bowfire, the battle-crazed ratmen raced down to the river and started to splash across it. The Wood Elf commander rode his steed forward into the water to meet them. Drawing their swords, the other Elves joined the fray.

The fight quickly turned in favour of the Skaven. The Wood Elves were outnumbered by over two to one and the Skaven were soon able to encircle their enemy. Fynyr could see that the Wood Elves were doomed unless he acted now. He had been ordered not to rouse the Treemen except in the most dire circumstances, the ancient magic of the woods was not to be treated lightly. As he started to intone the invocation of wakening, a twig brushed gently across his face, and a deep, creaking voice spoke to him. "We see, tree friend. We are already awake." The branches heaved beneath him as the Treeman tore its rooty feet from the ground and lumbered down towards the river to help the beleaguered Elves.





THE FORGOTTEN SEASON

(Imperial Calendar c.-10.000 to -1501)

Long ago, before the coming of Chaos, before even the rise of the Elves, a great forest took root upon the world. Like much that came to exist in that halcyon time, the forest was the work of the mysterious Old Ones, who planted its seeds and saplings as part of their grand experiment. This was no magically tainted arborea, as the jungles of the south would one day become, but a form of life utterly unique in all the realms of the world. Of course, other forests had existed before that time, and would exist again, but they were pitiable things in comparison, populated by trees that possessed neither voice nor thought and were unable to protect themselves from the predations of those who sought their boughs for fire and shelter.

This great forest was different, for powerful spirits dwelt within and amongst its trees. It is impossible to say whether this was part of the Old Ones' design, the work of the Elf gods or caused by some other influence that seeped into the trees' souls, but as time went on, the trees came to think in a way that trees were never meant to, and learned of feelings such as anger and hate. Before long, the great forest became aware of itself, and of the blooded life that crawled upon the world like insects. The great forest treated some races with tolerance, and even friendship. Others, especially those greedy folk who saw the trees only as a ready source of fuel, were met with ruthless fury, sparking legends of remorseless tree-daemons that would last for millennia.

By this time, the Oak of Ages at the great forest's heart had spread its roots across many lands, creating a web of worldroots that the spirits of the wood could traverse to reach faraway places. So did the great forest first discover the summerlands of Avelorn, and encounter the Elves of Ulthuan. No race grew closer to the spirits of the great forest than the Elves, who in their innocence, marvelled at its wondrous nature, and whispered with its ancient spirits so that they might learn their secrets. One of the spirits in particular, Durthu – or Oakheart, as the Elves named him – grew fond of Avelorn's folk, in particular of their Everqueen Astarielle. Soon, he consented to teach them how to shape the trees without harming branch or bough, and blessed them with many other secrets his kind possessed.



For a short time thereafter, Avelorn knew a golden age that would eclipse any that followed. Under the combined stewardship of Elves and forest spirits, the woods and meadows blossomed into incredible life. Many of the great forest's spirits forsook their home for Avelorn's paradise, for they were determined to awaken those trees as they themselves had been awakened. Yet, though Avelorn became ever more wondrous and beautiful, its trees remained silent.

Then the Daemons came.





THE DAEMON INVASION

With the collapse of the great polar gates, Chaos swept across the world. Everywhere, civilisations burned and madness overtook order. Ulthuan suffered greater than any other land, for many amongst the daemonic host thirsted for Elven souls above all others. Had great heroes not arisen to meet the challenge, the Elves would have been utterly destroyed and their land made over into a court of pandemonium.

Greatest of these heroes was Aenarion the Defender, first of the Phoenix Kings. It was he who rallied the Elves to hold back the daemonic tide, and his example ever spurred others to greater deeds. In time, Aenarion took the Everqueen Astarielle as his wife, and she bore him two fine children: Morelion, and Yvraine. As the Phoenix King fought to preserve Ulthuan, the Everqueen withdrew into the hallowed woods of Avelorn to raise their children as far from war as those days would allow. Avelorn had so far been spared the horrors of the invasion, for the Daemons sensed that Durthu and his kind were not dissimilar in nature to themselves, and were wary of attacking their domain if easier prey was close at hand. Such a state of affairs could not last, however. One fateful day, when Aenarion's army was campaigning far from Avelorn, a daemonic host greater than any yet seen descended upon Avelorn, and the slaughter began.

As Avelorn burned, Durthu and his kind fought alongside the Elves – they could have fled back to the great forest, but chose to stand with their allies. Many were destroyed, others were driven mad with despair, yet still the spirits of the forest battled on. But Avelorn could neither be saved by valour nor by strength of arms. Hour by hour, the Elves and spirits were driven deeper into their heartlands, until finally there was nowhere left to retreat to.



ASTARIELLE'S PLEA

It was late on that last day that Astarielle came to Durthu with a desperate request: that he rescue her children from the coming doom. For a time, Durthu stood silent, as the forest burned around them, the tears and pleas of his petitioner seemingly unheeded. To carry blooded creatures along the Oak of Ages' worldroots would no doubt be seen as a dire transgression, and he was minded not to invoke the wrath of his peers, let in his time in Avelorn, Durthu had seen how the Elves and forest spirits had been far stronger and wiser together than they had been apart – if either survived the darkness, that strength would surely serve the great forest well in whatever world followed.



So it was that when Durthu spoke again, he agreed to Astarielle's request. But, he cautioned, there would be a price to pay. If he saved the Everqueen's offspring, the great forest would one day claim many Elves as its own, so that they might serve and protect it as they had tended the land of Avelorn. Was the Everqueen, he asked, prepared to sacrifice the future to preserve the present? Now it was Astarielle's turn to fall silent, for there was something ominous in Durthu's tone. Yet she had little choice – if Yvraine died, the line of the Everqueen would die with her, and the Elves would soon after fade forever.

It was then that a colossal Daemon broke through the Elven lines, bellowing in triumph as it swept aside the last of the Everqueen's bodyguard with its four mighty arms. Even in a day beset with horrors, this was a cruel fate. No mere foot soldier of the Daemon host was this, but mighty N'kari, foremost servant of thirsting Slaanesh. He was not merely a despoiler of bodies, but a devourer of spirits; his cruel embrace brought not death but the oblivion of the soul. Kissing her children once last time, the Everqueen now gave them hurriedly into Durthu's keeping. As the spirit led Morelion and Yvraine away, Astarielle summoned what little of her magic remained unspent and went calmly down into the battle to meet her destiny.

When Durthu returned to the great forest, his wards deep in charmed slumber, he was dismayed that his home had fared little better than Avelorn. The great greenwood that had once sprawled across the world was now but a fraction of its former size. The land



where it had flourished bore the scars of fire and wild magic that had driven it back, and even then its borders were assailed by Daemons beyond counting. It seemed he had exchanged one hopeless battle for another, yet appearances were deceptive. As the great forest's battle for survival had become more desperate, the natures of some of its spirits – particularly those of the striplings – had changed. Many were now wilder and more aggressive, perhaps even cruel, and their lithe and slender forms had grown much more suited to battle. It also transpired that much of the forest that had been destroyed in Durthu's absence had been lost many years ago. The outpost that remained, nestled between the shoulders of two great mountain ranges, had held its ground for more than a decade, and was even now spreading outward once more.

Yet if Durthu had been wrong about the forest's plight, he had been correct about his fellow Elders' reception. Adanhu, wisest of the tree lords, was greedy displeased that the sanctity of the worldroots had been breached. Coeddil, who had for long centuries directed the great forest's wrath against its despoilers, was consumed with bitter fury and demanded that the interlopers be slain.

At first, Adanhu agreed with Coeddil, but eventually relented. Eldest he was and fearful of change, but so too did he fear that the forest's survival might have come only by sacrificing the gender and peaceable side of their nature. Unchecked, the spirits of the great forest would become an enemy as dire as that which they had fought, and Durthu's bargain presented some



small hope that such a destiny could be prevented. Though Coeddil railed angrily against the decision, Adanhu agreed that Astarielle's heirs could remain within the great forest until their homeland was safe once more – provided that they never awakened from their magical sleep whilst within its bounds.

Thus did Morelion and Yvraine slumber through the last terrible deeds of that war. Avelorn was cleansed, and in time would become beautiful once more, but it would never recapture the glory of its heyday. The spirits of the great forest fought on as best they could, knowing that they could not end the onslaught, only endure it. As for Aenarion, he was driven to madness by the loss of his wife and children. Soon after, he fell into darkness, only to redeem himself at the last. In the end, the world was saved not by force of arms, but by the cunning of an Elf mage, whose great ritual of banishment cast the Daemons from the world.

With the passing of the Daemons, Durthu was finally able to keep the promise he had made to Astarielle. Journeying through the worldroots once more, he brought Morelion and Yvraine to Ulthuan's beautiful Gaeon Vale, and there left them to be discovered. Neither sibling ever recalled anything of leaving Ulthuan, only that Oakheart had rescued them on the night of their mother's sacrifice. Yvraine soon became the next Everqueen, and Morelion a stalwart protector ever at her side. As for Durthu, he longed to rebuild the glory of Avelorn, but knew that the great forest needed his guidance far more. Gathering to him almost all of the spirits that had survived the invasion of Ulthuan, he returned home.

Many centuries passed. Little by little, the spirits of the great forest and the lessons they had taught passed from the tales of the Elves, remaining only in half-remembered tradition and folktales. In time, Ulthuan grew in power and glory, establishing many colonies overseas. The world was riven by earthquakes, and the worldroots were severed, isolating the great forest from the wider world. Through it all, the Elders watched with patient eyes, awaiting the opportunity to collect on Astarielle's debt. It would be millennia before the destinies of the Elves and the great forest became entwined once more.

ELDERS OF THE FOREST

The Elders of the great forest are the oldest of the Treeman Ancients. The Wood Elves tell that in the time before Chaos, there were hundreds of such beings. Alas, the Elders knew naught of war and, by the time the Daemons were banished, only three Elders remained: Adanhu, who held the gift of prophecy, Durthu strong of heart and limb, and Coeddil the cunning. They were not entirely alone, for many thousands of other Treemen had survived the coming of the Daemons, but they were but striplings of mere centuries, and remembered not the days of the forest's glory.



Shafts of muted, golden sunlight, shot through with sparkling motes of breeze-born pollen, pierced the thick canopy of leaves, bringing an almost magical luminescence to the all-pervading green twilight of the forest. Between the endless legions of trees one huge and ancient oak stood in a small clearing on its own, surrounded by a ring of younger trees. The gnarled and cracked surface of the wizened tree was covered with rashes of lichen and fungi. Tendrils of ivy and woody vines hung down from the crooks of great branches before these in turn became lost in the dense leafy canopy.

Apart from the occasional rustle of leaves as birds moved within the branches, or noises in the undergrowth made by small woodland creatures scampering around the boles and exposed roots of the oak, this stretch of forest was still.

Above the chattering of the birds and the rustle of ferns brushed by grazing deer, another altogether more out of place sound disturbed the tranquil heartwoods: the sound of battle. The harsh, guttural cries of foul greenskins rang through the trees, answered by the shrill voices of Wood Elves and the whinnying of the Glade Riders' steeds.

There was a sudden movement in the thick undergrowth at the edge of the ring of oaks. Sensing danger, squirrels and wood mice scurried away to their holes and burrows under the roots of the trees, while birds ceased their singing. It was then that the Dryad entered the grove.

Despite being twice as tall as an Elf, the forest spirit moved swiftly and gracefully across the clearing. In its lithe and alluring female form, its pale green flesh glowed radiantly with the inner light of magical energy. The Dryad reached the ancient oak and ran a long-fingered hand over its rough, knobby bark. With a darting gaze the peculiar creature took in the whole of the grove's perimeter, the green orbs of its eyes apparently focusing on knots in the trees and twisted shapes within the thickets around it.

As the spirit continued to caress the wizened tree, others like it began to emerge from the shadows at the edge of the clearing. In the strange emerald half-light it almost seemed that some of the Dryads actually emerged from the trees themselves, their sylph-like bodies melting out of the trunks as if they were woody cocoons. They too began to stroke the huge oak until it was surrounded by a harem of affectionate females with bare flesh the hue of virgin sapwood. However, between the tender caresses, as if agitated, the sylvan women constantly glanced over their shoulders in the direction of the armed conflict.

All at once, without warning, the Dryads' attitude towards the ancient oak changed. Rather than caressing the woody exterior, they began to strike at it with

unbridled savagery. And as their attitude changed, so did their bodies, as the Dryads started to shape-shift. In their sudden fury the tree spirits began to magically assume the aspects of birch and willow, slender fingers transforming into lending talon-like thorns or extending, with a perceptible stretching sound, into Long, lashing twigs.

A whisper passed through the leaves of the old oak as if they had been caught by the breeze or some small animal, disturbed by the Dryads' attack, had decided to look for a safer refuge. Relentlessly the tree spirits kept up their onslaught, hands like masses of sharpened twigs cutting into the woody skin of the trunk. With creaking groans the branches of the tree began to sway as if they were caught in a howling gale, although the oaks encircling it suffered from no such disturbance.

With a furious buzzing sound, a swarm of tiny winged humanoids poured out of the mass of ivy and from cracks in the oak's thick bark. At the same instant as the sprites appeared to deal with the tree's assailants, with a great heaving rumble the trunk of the ancient oak rose upwards from the forest floor.

Slowly, dim awareness spread through the sleeping Treeman's vegetable consciousness like persistent autumn rain until, irritated by the bee-sting attacks of the Dryads, Durthu awoke from his sleep of years. Sap-blood coursing through his fibrous veins, woody limbs stretched and flexed, showering the Dryads with acorns. The Treeman's tough hide rippled as muscles moved beneath the gnarled exterior. A deep crack in the bark near the top of the trunk split open even further as Durthu yawned and the sprite swarm, seeing their master mused, returned to the sanctuary of his ivy beard.

It was then that he heard the desperate shouts of the Wood Elves and the bestial roars of the Orcish defilers. He could also hear the cries from his treebrothers as axe and fire took their toil. Centuries-old memories and emotions rose to the surface of his mind like bubbles rising to the surface of a pool. Rage built within him in an unstoppable tide, and, with slow, ponderous movements, Durthu lifted first one great, trunk-like leg from the nutrient-rich earth and then the other.

The Dryads, having ceased their activity as Durthu stirred, stood by waiting for their lord to lead them into battle. Splayed root-like feet dripping soil, the gigantic plant-humanoid took a huge step forward over moss-covered rocks and knotted tree boles, moving half-way across the grove in one long stride. With the faster Dryads racing wildly between his massive lumbering steps, Durthu the Treeman strode off through the trees ready to protect his beloved forest from the Orcs who would otherwise profane the sacred realm. No desecrating greenskin would escape from the Forest of Loren that day.

THE SEASON OF REBIRTH

D) 1-406 (Imperial Calendar -1500 to -1095)

For over 8,000 years of recorded history, the long-lived and graceful Elves have lived on their island home of Ulthuan. Over this time they have explored much of the world, sailing far from their home and discovering many new and unusual lands. For thousands of years they did not view any of these far away shores as places to settle, for their bountiful and varied island home provided all that they could wish for. It was only after Ulthuan was wracked by the forces of Chaos, and after the death of the first Phoenix King, Aenarion, the fiercest Elven warrior ever to live, that the Elves began to look at the lands beyond their coast as places to settle.

During the reign, of the Phoenix King Bel Shanaar, who ruled Ulthuan more than four thousand years before the birth of the human hero Sigmar, the Elves began to colonise the world. While the barbaric ancestors of humans fought amongst themselves, the Elves became the undisputed rulers of the seas. Their elegant, white-sailed ships cut across the globe, and they mapped the oceans, charted the lands, and set up many settlements. Most were founded along the shores, but a great many Elves headed inland. The largest concentration of colonies were based in a land they named Elthin Aryan, which became known by the younger races as the Old World.

When the Elves of Ulthuan first set foot upon the Old World they discovered a wilderness in its natural state. Colonies were built on the coast and the surrounding

lands were cultivated. A few Elf explorers ventured inland into the forested interior. Some went far up the great rivers in sleek Elven boats. Others reached the foothills of the Grey Mountains. Merchants followed in their wake and brought back strange and wonderful things to the coastal colonies where they were transported to far Ulthuan as exotic luxuries.

From the east came Dwarf explorers and merchants. They arrived in the Grey Mountains around the same time as the Elves, if not earlier, and began prospecting for precious metals. They had little reason to descend into the dense forests between the mountains and the sea. However, they did encounter Elves from the west and began exchanging artifacts and trading. They established contact with the Dwarfs, and a great era of trade and friendship began between the two races.

In the lands that would one day be known as Bretonnia, the Empire and Kislev, the Elves built tall, delicate towers of marble and gold. Many of the Elven colonists became strongly attached to their new homes, happy to make a new start and forget the unhappiness and strife that had plagued Ulthuan in the previous millennia, slowly recovering from the horrors that they had witnessed when Chaos had overrun the fair isle. While most of the Elves retained strong connections to Ulthuan over the following thousands of years, the first generations of Elves born within Elthin Aryan felt little attachment to their ancestral homeland. When strife once again began to assail Ulthuan, in the insidious guise of the Cult of Pleasure, many Elves chose to return to Ulthuan, but there were those who believed that the Phoenix King and his rule had little to do with their lives, and many of these Elves moved themselves further inland. Some were guided by dreams and visions, or by urges not easily explained. Others were driven by wanderlust that set their feet on paths that had lain untrodden since the dawn of creation.

THE FOREST IS FOUND

It was these Elves who first encountered the strange and frightening forest that spread from the foothills of the Grey Mountains and the Vaults, which in those days was far greater in extent than it is today. The forest was filled with all manner of life, and the Elves constantly felt eyes upon them. At night they saw strange lights dancing in the darkness beneath the bows, and huge shapes lingered on the outskirts of the glades. Intrigued by what they saw, the Elves attempted to push deep into the dark forest, but the landscape was so vast and wild and the Elves were so few that they found themselves thwarted at every turn by shifting paths. Despite this resistance, the Elves never once considered settling elsewhere. The forest's magic was in their blood, a legacy of Astarielle's long-ago pact, and it could not be denied.





Three times did the Elves send expeditions into the forest, each numbering nearly a thousand warriors. Of the first expedition, seven hundred Elves came out the wood scant hours after they had departed, with tales of many fruitless days spent travelling along shifting glades and pathways that curved back on themselves. The second expedition vanished without a trace. Of the third foray, only a single Elf returned, her face ashen and drawn, and her body lacerated and bloody. She died a day later, driven witless by her dreams. It was clear that the place perceived the Elves as a threat, and was actively resisting their attempt to dwell within its depths. The Elves realised that this magical forest was sentient – like one giant, all-encompassing living creature, and those that it saw as a threat, it would resist.

The Elves named the forest Athel Loren, which in their tongue means the 'Wood of the Dawning of the World'. They retreated to the outskirts and planted great magical waystones about the boundaries to contain the spirits within. Despite these precautions, folk occasionally vanished into the forest, driven by strange visions or lured by beautiful, ghost-like nymphs. None of these were ever seen again. However, on the whole, Athel Loren seemed able to tolerate the Elves so long as they did not attempt to venture too far into its dark interior. Nevertheless, the Elves were inexplicably drawn to Athel Loren, and learnt to treat it with great respect.

The reason for this was that the forest had remained almost untouched since the beginning of the world.

Orcs and Goblins had never found their way into the wood and monsters were only encountered in its margins and the wooded foothills of the Grey Mountains. Beastmen had never profaned its glades with their uncouth rituals. Dwarf prospectors had passed it by and later were warded off by Elves who took it upon themselves to guard the wood. The forest had thus remained a place where Treemen and Dryads could dwell undisturbed. Benign currents of magic seemed to pervade the forest causing it to flourish.



THE SUNDERING

Far away, an age of tragedy and resentment was dawning. The Phoenix King Bel Shanaar met with his death after being shamed by the insidious machinations of the black-hearted prince Malekith, who secretly desired the Phoenix Throne for himself by force, and in so doing, split the Elven race forever.

Malekith's madness became publicly known after he was horribly disfigured when trying to prove his claim for the throne by stepping willingly into the sacred flame of Asuryan. The Elven nobles rose against him, and drove him and his followers back to the prince's homelands of Nagarythe, in the north of Ulthuan. A new Phoenix King was elected and a bloody campaign ensued against the hate-filled Malekith and his followers. No longer was there one race of Elves – now there were the Dark Elves loyal to the traitor Malekith, and the High Elves who were true to the Phoenix Throne.



This was the time known as the Sundering, the time of great divide, when millions of Elves lost their lives and the Elven nation was ripped apart. Thus the Elves became a divided people, splitting to become the Dark Elves and the High Elves. The Dark Elves made pacts with daemons, and literally tore apart the realm of Ulthuan. With dark magics they shattered the land, and created the mighty floating fortresses known as the Black Arks. Filled with bitterness and hatred, the Dark Elves turned their backs on Ulthuan, swearing vengeance, and sailed west the chill land of Naggaroth, the shattered nation of Ulthuan but a shadow of its former self. Never again would the High Elves know peace.

THE WAR OF THE BEARD

More strife was to come in the following centuries, when the relationship between the increasingly arrogant High Elves of Ulthuan and the greed-filled Dwarfs was shattered, and another war began. Fatefully called the War of the Beard by the High Elves, it was those Elves living in the Old World who bore the brunt of the war. Many of the Old World Elves resented this war, launched by the new Phoenix King, Caledor the Second, from thousands of miles away on Ulthuan. The mighty armies of Ulthuan landed at the Elven city ports to face their enemies, and the Phoenix King demanded that the Elthin Aryan Elves fight alongside them. Most did so, but many of those living on the borders of Athel

Loren refused to become involved. The resentment of the Elthin Aryan Elves grew, for it was the lands they called home that were being burnt and ravaged, their homes that were being razed to the ground and their children that were being slain.

Both races would exhaust themselves in bitter warfare and suffer strife in their own homelands. While the war raged, Dwarf armies marched down from the mountains to besiege Elven colonies on the coast. This meant that Dwarf warriors had to march through dense forests. As they did so they put their axes to good use felling timber for fires, strongholds, bridges, and fuel for steam engines and furnaces. When they discovered that this outraged the Elves, they did it all the more.



The Elves were shocked and angered by this wanton destruction of living trees by a harsh race who loved only fire, metal and hard stone. Many Elves took upon themselves the task of guarding the forests and ambushing the Dwarf armies as they struggled through the wooded landscape. Dwarfs were deterred from



marching through vast tracts of wilderness by the threat of sudden surprise attack. The Elves proved to be especially adept at fighting in dense forest because their archers could shoot without being seen and also because they were so naturally swift and agile. As the war raged on and on for two centuries, these guardians of the wild wood became permanent forest dwellers and earned the trust and friendship of the Treemen and Dryads. The Dwarfs were indeed deterred from penetrating too far into the forests and the Forest of Loren in particular was saved from their axes. The Forest of Loren was perhaps the best guarded of all the forests.

EXODUS OF THE KINREDS

The High Elf realm had been battered now by thousands of years of warfare and, after the death of Caledor the Second, the new Phoenix King Caradryel knew that his people could not sustain such conflict for much longer – especially as Malekith the Witch King was preparing his armies to invade Ulthuan. The Phoenix King could not fight a war on two fronts, so it was that he made the difficult decision to retreat from the Old World and abandon it to the Dwarfs and the rising race of Men. Word came to the Old World of the Phoenix King's decree – that if the colonists wanted the protection of his armies, they must return to their island homeland. Though this was greeted with uproar, the next decade saw the long retreat from the Old World, and the fledgling cities and towns of Elthin Aryan were abandoned. If they stayed in the Old World they would be at the mercy of three foes – the Dwarfs, the Orcs and the Dark Elves of Naggaroth.



The Dwarfs, it is true, were in retreat themselves, but the tales of abandoned Elf colonies full of wealth were a temptation to many freebooters with bands of warriors. They were also a temptation to roving bands of Orcs and Goblins who had migrated into the wilderness from the distant east. Worse still, the seas were unsafe. The evil rebellious kindred of Naggaroth were raiding the seaways plundering ships returning from the colonies and threatening the undefended coastal cities. It was therefore not safe for Elves who remained in the Old World to stay in the colonies. Those who could not bear to go resolved to join their kindred hiding in the forest rather than linger amid the empty courts and pillared halls of the cities which would be sure to attract foes bent on pillage.

The Elves living in the shadow of Athel Loren never considered returning to Ulthuan, for not one of them any longer felt ties with that land, and they declared themselves independent of the Phoenix Throne, taking the name Asrai for themselves. Within a generation all the kindreds that refused to return to Ulthuan made the great trek inland in small kinbands into the vast Forest of Loren where they felt safe and were received by the guardians there as welcome reinforcements. Their kin were already knew the secret ways and the safest places for settlements.

Each kindred who found their way into the forest settled in a glade or grove which appealed to them in some way. Some were attracted to settle where the forest was made up of a particular species of tree or where they found springs of fresh water or in places which their mages divined as fortunate for settlement.

The number of kindreds which settled in the forest was only seven in all, so few were the Elves who refused to return to Ulthuan. Gradually the seven kindreds made themselves known to each other. Among the seven were the original guardians of the forest who formed a kindred of their own. The kindreds began to meet in a regular council which gathered in the most hidden and secret glade in the depths of the forest. This was surrounded by a grove of exceptionally great and ancient oak trees. This grove was to become the ritual and political centre of the realm of Athel Loren.

The Wood Elves had dwelt in the forest in their separate kindreds for many years before the first council met. In this time they had warily contacted each other only occasionally. Already most of them had begun to adapt their way of life to the forest and allowed many of their old ways to lapse. None felt any allegiance to Ulthuan or the Phoenix King. Most were free from ties and obligations to the Elf lords who had sailed away to the west with the departing armies.

Marriages occurred between kinbands and new bonds were made among themselves. Those who had gone into the forest long before became guides and mentors to the newcomers. Craftsmen and mages adapted their skills to the forest seeking new ways to shape living trees instead of metal or stone as before.



The mages began to find new sources of magical energy welling up through the earth and within living things. They became aware of seasons which did not occur in Ulthuan and eagerly gathered a new lore of the forest. Subtle changes were even to be heard in the Elven tongue as spoken in the forest and the art of writing or the need to read began to lapse. Indeed it took on an arcane and ritual significance. The arts of speaking and storytelling, dance and ritual became far more important to the Wood Elves as a means of remembering their past and worshipping their gods.



DARK ELF RAIDS

The Kindred of Equos, who were breeders of Elven steeds, were the last to leave the coastal plains. They were reluctant to move their horses away from the coastal meadows and determined never to abandon their herds. Events persuaded them to follow the trail into the forests. A great black Ark – a sea vessel of the Dark Elves – was seen on the ocean horizon. Watchers on the clifftops saw its huge dark silhouette against the sunset. All along the coast for hundreds of miles its progress was observed with feelings of horror and apprehension. Few knew the exact nature of the strife in the Elven homelands but there had been rumours of the evil Elves of Naggaroth. Now it seemed that they had come to plunder the abandoned colonies or perhaps to enslave the kindreds who had stayed behind.

The Kindred of Equos hurriedly began rounding up their scattered herds and leading them far to the east. Fortunately they had almost all gone inland before the Dark Riders came ashore. Smoke was seen rising above the abandoned colony of Tol Ibrion upon the ruins of which place Brionne now stands.

The Dark Riders followed the tracks of the horse herds of the Kindred of Equos far Inland. Eventually the Dark Elves came upon an open heathland which stretched eastwards towards the Forest of Loren. Here the Kindred of Equos had gathered to defy them. Row upon row of chariots and horsemen stood upon the hillsides, ready to charge. Their chief was Equoth the Fearless who had been elected to lead them in battle.

The Dark Riders had marched by night and so the Kindred of Equos planned their attack for the dawn, as the rays of the rising sun appeared over the trees of Loren and shone into the eyes of the Naggarothi. The ensuing battle was a slaughter. Many of the Kindred of Equos fell, but the dazzling sun spoilt the aim of the Dark Elves and many of their wicked darts failed to hit their mark. The Dark Elves were surrounded, overwhelmed and wiped out. Their remains now lie beneath one of the many stone cairns to be seen in the region. As for the rest of the Naggarothi aboard the Black Ark, having lost their advance party, they ransacked the coastal colonies and sailed home with the spoils.





A STRANGE ALLIANCE

Athel Loren is not as other forests. Its ancient trees long ago found vigour and voice, and they learned to hate the lesser beings who swarmed about the forest's eaves, gnawing at their verdant majesty with axe and flame. Few intruders survive unbidden within Athel Loren's bounds, for its tree-spirits' vigilance is matched only by their intense loathing for interlopers. That the Wood Elves were not consumed by the vengeful spirits of Athel Loren is one of the peculiar accidents of history, for the alliance between Elvenkind and living forest was born out of a shared peril.

As much as they could, they had kept themselves out of the War of the Beard. However, now that the Elves had abandoned their cities, the Dwarfs were unopposed. As the first snows of winter began to fall, the Dwarfs of the Grey Mountains pressed hard upon the forest's borders and descended into Athel Loren hacking and burning, felling trees to feed hungry furnaces and slaying Elves as payment for past grudges. This callous action drove the forest into a fury, but its spirits had ever been sluggish during the months of frost. The Dryads were soon scattered or slain, and Durthu, the only ancient not yet at slumber, was wounded near to death by keen Dwarfen axes. Realising that the forest could not defeat the Dwarfs alone, Durthu bade it draw back from the encroachers, and open up pathways that thrust them onto the fringes of the Elven settlements. However, the Elves of that region were few and the

Dwarfs many. Only through combining their forces could the Elves and tree-spirits hope to survive for long.

Thinking themselves under attack, it was then that the Elves intervened and they descended on the Dwarfs, filling the air with volleys of deadly arrows. As the forest had twisted the advance of the Dwarfs so too did it now guide the footsteps of the Elves. Whenever the Dwarfs turned to face this threat, the Elves slipped away into the trees, only to emerge impossible distances away moments later, circling back around the slow and cumbersome foe to attack them once again from a different angle. In this manner, the Dwarfs were slowly whittled down, and their advance parties slaughtered without a single Elven life lost. After countless running battles within the trees, the remaining Dwarfs began to retreat, having learnt to distrust the ancient and magical place.

One dreadful night a tremendous battle raged by the flickering light of the logging fires. Outnumbered now by the combined forces of the Elves and the thorn-limbed forest spirits defending their realm, the Dwarfs fought with desperation. Elven arrows whised from the shadowed shelter of the trees, finding marks in Dwarfen throats and eyes, their aim precise enough to seek the gaps in armour even in that ruddy twilight. Lithe Elf warriors flitted through the trees like ghosts, running sure-footedly through the upper branches





before launching themselves at the Dwarfen battle lines below. Landing cat-like, the Elves braced their feet upon Dwarfen shield and helm, stabbing their long blades through eyeslit and corslet before vaulting away before their foes could react. Time and again, the Dwarfes charged into the woods, hoping to catch the Elves before they could reach safety. The woods that had parted before the Elves closed around the Dwarfes, binding the interlopers with vine and root, bludgeoning them with bough and branch. When dawn came, only shattered Dwarfen shields and patches of scorched ground remained to show that a battle had ever taken place. For weeks thereafter, in the deep holds of the Grey Mountains, Dwarf sentries looked westwards for some sign of pioneering armies that would never return. In Athel Loren, the battle against the Dwarfes had forged an alliance that would forever endure. So it was that the Wood Elves were born from the fires of battle.

From that day forth, the fates of the Elves and those of Athel Loren were intertwined. What began as an alliance of survival has become something far deeper and more pervasive. With every passing generation, the Wood Elves become in character more akin to the forest they inhabit, wrathful and vigorous during the summer months, torpid and somnolent with the onset of winter.

So too have they taken on the tree-spirits' capriciousness and distrustful nature. One can never be entirely sure how a Wood Elf will react, for his thoughts and reasoning, bound as they are to the forest's peculiar consciousness, are unknowable to an outsider. Where once they lived for the joy of exploration, the Elves became extremely hostile to the outside world, leaving the borders of their realm only to wreak bloody retribution upon those who have earned their displeasure or to defend ancient groves in the Empire, Bretonnia and lands even further afield, places to which Athel Lorers blessing of sentience has been brought. As time marches on, these groves are ever more assailed and plundered, and so the Wood

Elves become ever more vengeful. Their desire for solitude has been sacrificed to ensure the sanctity of their race, and indeed the world at large.

So it is that the great forest of Athel Loren is now not merely the Wood Elves' dwelling place. It is their ally, their protector and their ward, and the Elves are bound to it, body and soul. Those outsiders foolish enough to set foot within Athel Loren risk not only the wrath of the trees, but also the predations of the keen-eyed Elves who watch every path and stand guard over every glade.

THE BIRTH OF THE WOOD ELVES

Following their victory, the Elves began to dwell deeper within the borders of Athel Loren, now fearing reprisals from the Dwarfes more than they did the capricious nature of the forest. The forest did not resist, and the Elves wondered why. The wayward children of Ulthuan never heard the harsh words that raged between Adanhu and Coeddil as they argued over their fate. Durthu, instigator of the current situation, remained silent through it all. He had suffered greatly from the Dwarfen axes; his once-kind nature had all but fallen away, and he no longer fully trusted his own judgement.

Ultimately, Adanhu's will prevailed, and the forest now opened up many of its secrets to the Elves, though the Dryads and Treemen took care never to intentionally reveal themselves. At the very heart of Athel Loren, Ariel, foremost amongst the Elven magi, spoke with the forest for the first time and before long, many Elves learnt this art of treesinging. It was then that the Elves, always respectful of all things natural, truly embraced Athel Loren as their home. More than that, the Elves treated the forest with the awe and reverence it deserved and demanded, seeing the essence of their ancestral gods in its seasonal cycles. They vowed never to take from the forest without giving back equally in service and sacrifice. When the Elves needed wood to burn in order to survive the icy winters, they would take only fallen branches, and in the spring they would nurture and tend to new saplings, encouraging them to shape graceful halls above and below the ground. When the Elves hunted the animals of the forest for food and clothing, they used all that they took, and gave thanks to Athel Loren in ceremonies of blood.

In the years that followed, the Elves divided into different groups, called kindreds or kinbands, each individual seeking out the company of others with whom their ideals were in accord. With each kinband driven by different views and ideologies, it was only a matter of time before quarrels and disagreements broke out, and the Elves of Athel Loren began to separate and go their different ways. Each group pushed on deeper into the forest, deeper than any had previously gone. Strangely it seemed that the forest did not now resist them, indeed it seemed that Athel Loren now chose to open up many of its secrets to the kinbands.



At the very heart of Athel Loren, a wandering kinband of mages happened upon the Oak of Ages, a mighty tree, incredibly ancient and gnarled by the passage of time. It was here that one of their number, Ariel, truly spoke with the forest for the first time. Before long, many of the Elven magi were able to communicate with Athel Loren itself, and reasoned that the forest was slowly recognising the Elves as a beneficial force. This was particularly apparent in the icy winters of Athel Loren, for during these cold months, Athel Loren became virtually dormant.

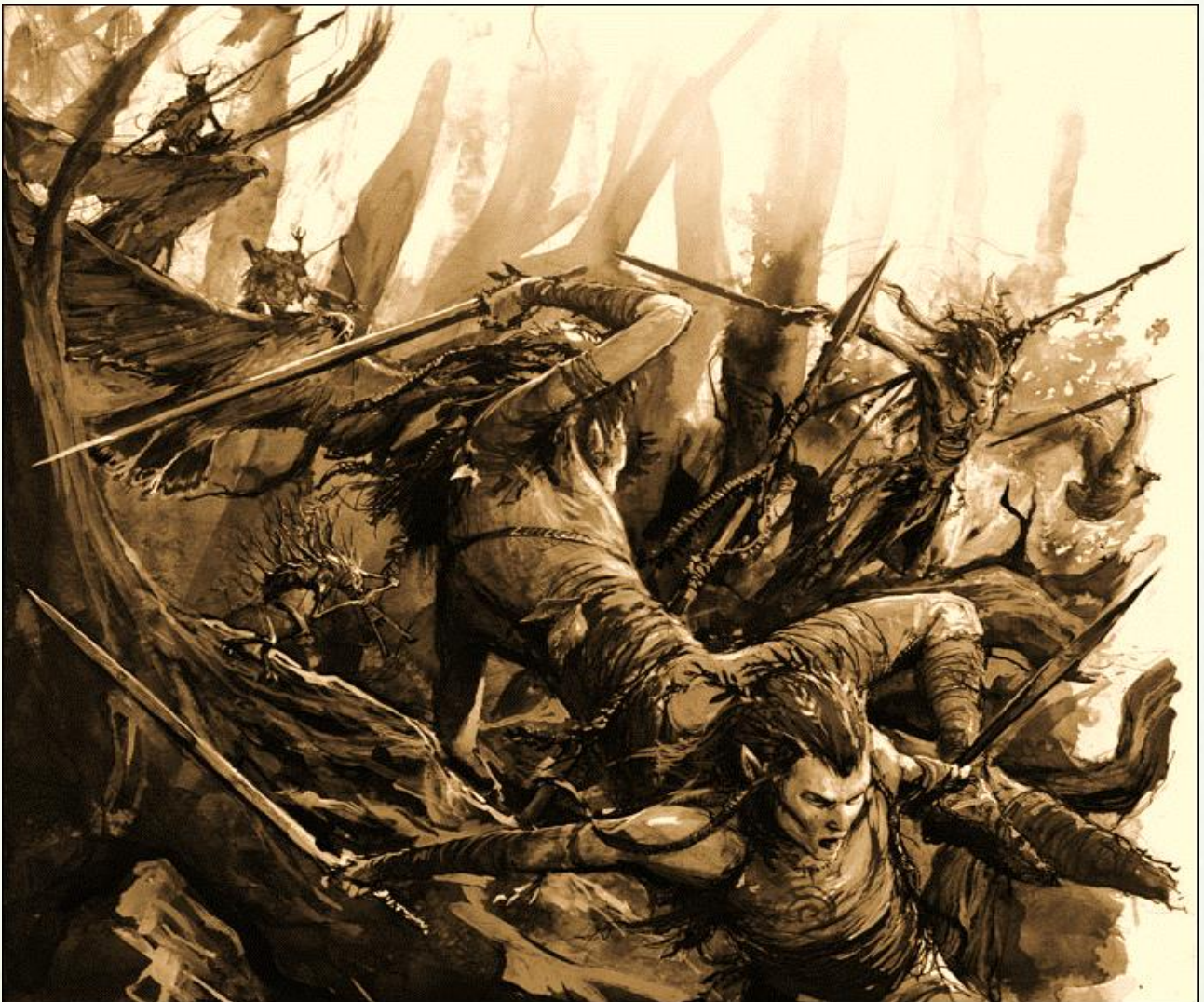
It was then that the Elves, always respectful of all things natural, truly embraced Athel Loren as their home, for that was when Athel Loren truly embraced the Elves. More than that, they treated Athel Loren with the awe and reverence it deserved and demanded, seeing the essence of their ancestral gods in its seasonal cycles. They vowed never to take from the forest without giving back equally in service and sacrifice, and in this manner they slowly gained the trust of the forest. When the Elves needed wood to burn in order to survive the icy winters, they would take only fallen branches, and in the spring they would nurture and tend to new saplings, encouraging them to shape graceful halls above and below the ground. Though they would hunt the animals of the forest for food and clothing,

they used all that they took, and gave thanks to Athel Loren in ceremonies of blood.

Yet even now, some tension remained between the Elves and their woodland home, for they were still two separate parts and not a single whole. The south-east corner of the forest, a shadowy and foreboding place, remained sealed to the Elves and all who attempted to enter it were lost forever. The great tree lord Durthu, scarred forever by the axes of the Dwarfs, treated the Elves, at best, with distrustful neutrality that bordered upon hostility. Yet the fates of Athel Loren and the Wood Elves would soon become irrevocably joined.

KURNOUS AND ISHA

The longer they dwelt in the forest, the greater became the Wood Elves' awareness of their oldest ancestral gods. These were Kurnous and Isha, the wild hunter and the earth mother. The spirit of Kurnous is manifest in the beasts of the forest and the untamed savagery of nature while the spirit of Isha pervades the vegetation and the springs of water welling up from the earth. In Ulthuan, their worship had become somewhat eclipsed by the newer cults of civilisation, wealth and decadence. In the wild wood however, these old powers felt near at hand.





Kurnous and Isha were already being invoked by the first Elf guardians of the forest to help them in their struggle against the Dwarfs. They discovered sacred places throughout the forest where magical energy flowed close to the surface. These places were nearly always recognised by the grove of immensely ancient or exceptionally beautiful trees which grew there. Sometimes the Elves set huge stones into the ground to direct the flow of these magical currents to certain glades to concentrate the magic. These places became shrines to the gods Kurnous and Isha.

All the kindreds who later found their way into Loren embraced the worship of Kurnous and Isha. Their elaborate rituals and dances performed at the equinox seemed to awaken something in the forest as if the primeval spirits of the gods themselves were being called forth from the earth and the trees.

THE GREAT COUNCIL

Eleven hundred and twenty-five years before the coming of Sigmar, the Dwarfs came once more to Athel Loren in the autumn months, marching down from the Grey Mountains and deep into the Pine Crag. This time they came in a throng many tens of thousands strong, with warriors drawn from dozens of holds. With winter fast approaching, the spirits of the forest were rapidly becoming lethargic and could offer little resistance. Worse, the Elven kindreds of the Pine Crag were small and disorganised. Though the first Dwarven incursion was halted and repulsed, warhawk riders brought tidings that the rapacious tree slayers were assembled in even greater numbers in the high reaches of the Grey Mountains. So dire was this threat considered to be that a council of the kinbands was

called – the first such gathering since the Elves had taken up residence within Athel Loren.

The great lords and ladies of the Wood Elves held council at the foot of the Oak of Ages, and even the trees of the glade crowded close, as if paying attention to what was said. Though not all the kindreds had sent representation, it remained an assemblage of great power and wisdom. In the first council it was decided that no kindred should rule over any other. This could only lead to ambition and jealousy and ultimately kinstrife.

This was no ordinary council with wise men sitting in debate. The ways of the wood had already taken hold over the Elven folk bringing forth strange and wild aspects of the Elven psyche. Kurnous and Isha were invoked. The devotees of the trickster god, Loec, performed their ritual dances, and the seers and prophetesses read the skeins of fate in the stars and patterns of flame. The elders expressed their views in mysterious dramas and the Mages revealed new wonders which they had found within the wood and there were already Wood Elves skilled enough to merge minds with many kinds of beasts and birds.

In the firelit glade, the Elven sorceress Ariel found herself drawn to the lord of the greatest of the hunter kindreds, Orion. He was the bravest and most handsome of his folk as Ariel was the wisest and fairest of hers, a cunning hunter in whom thought and instinct melded as one. Whilst the council debated how best to oppose the Dwarfs, Ariel and Orion were deep in a conversation of their own, seemingly oblivious to the great matters that were discussed around them.



After many hours of debate and feasting, the Elves were dismayed for, even assembled and united as they were, their numbers were not sufficient to meet the Dwarfs in battle. Worse, the seers had determined that the Dwarfs were but the lesser of two nascent threats – a great horde of greenskins was but a few days from launching their own assault. It was then that Adanhu, greatest and eldest of the tree lords, strode into the glade, though not even the most keen-sighted of the assembled Elves had been aware of his presence until that moment. If the Elves were to strike the Dwarfs now, spoke the ancience, before autumn faded into winter entire, the forest would fight at the side of the Elves, for this danger threatened them all. Emboldened by Adanhu's words, the Elves prepared their plans anew and, in their enthusiasm; were heedless of the ancient one's warning that a great sacrifice would be required of them.



As Adanhu addressed the council Ariel and Orion slipped away, apparently unnoticed by all as they left the glade and entered the deep wood. Making their way through the grove of massive and ancient oaks they came upon a tree of truly enormous size, a tree that had been growing since the beginning of the world. Its roots had cracked the rock and its branches created a shadow world beneath them penetrated by narrow shafts of sunlight.

They walked around the great girth of the trunk feeling the gnarled bark with their Elven fingers. It took an age to walk only half way around. Suddenly they came to a crack in the trunk like a narrow door into the tree itself. Their curiosity led then to step inside the tree.

It was not until many hours later, when the feast was over, that their absence was noted, an absence that provoked great anger from the assembled Elves for it was unheard of that an Elf would choose one from another kinband as lover. Enraged, the lords of the Asrai demanded that the two errant lovers were found and brought before the council. When they did not appear their kin began searching for them around the grove, but found no trace. They became anxious that some wild beast or worse, some foe or monster had taken them. Scouts took up their bows and searched a wider arc, on the lookout for invaders in the forest. Mages took up their divining wands and tried to follow their trail. It was all to no avail.

The Elves hunted Ariel and Orion in the forest about the Council Glade for many long hours, until the golden rays of dawn pierced the leaves. Skillful as they were, the hunters could find no trace of their quarry's passage and, slowly, the lords' anger faded and their

thoughts became suffused with concern. As the search wore on and hope became ever bleaker, the Elves sought Adanhu's aid, yet the great being remained silent in the face of their pleas. Mages attempted to converse with the trees, yet received no answers. Dryads were sought, yet none could be found.

Days passed and Orion and Ariel were not found. The searchers could not even find the slightest trace of them. They found the awesome Oak of Ages, and rendered due and proper reverence to it as a sacred tree. They saw the great clefts in its gnarled trunk, but the crack through which Orion and Ariel had entered was now mysteriously closed. The council dispersed. All the kindreds returned to their home glades. There was much sorrow for Ariel and Orion. Reluctantly, and with great sadness, the Asrai nobles accepted that the lovers were lost to them and turned their thoughts to the battle ahead.

As autumn faded from the world, the Wood Elves marched into the mountains above the Pine Crag and brought the Dwarfs to battle. As Adanhu had promised them, the Asrai did not fight alone. To the Dwarfs it must have seemed as if all of Athel Loren had emptied, for mighty Tree Kin strode amongst the Elven lines, and great hosts of Dryads swarmed about their flanks – all of them preceded by the enraged form of Durthu, who strode ahead like an unstoppable force of nature as he sought to revenge himself in full upon the Dwarven race that had scarred him. Against this attack, even the stubbornness of Dwarfs could not endure and they retreated to their Holds, leaving the mountainside heavy with their dead. They did not trouble Athel Loren again for many hundreds of years, though the Book of Grudges contains numerous references to the battle they call Karaz-Zan.

THE WINTER OF WOE

Alas, scarcely had the last arrow found its mark in Dwarfen flesh when an icy wind whistled through the boughs of the forest and a chill gripped the land like never before as winter fell upon Athel Loren. The forest grew still and the spirits of tree and earth slept away the long, dark nights, but this was to be no silent winter spent in slumber while awaiting the joyous return of spring. The cold only hastened the greenskin onset. The Old World had gradually become infested with nomadic tribes of Orcs and Goblins migrating from the east. No doubt they were driven onward by tribal feuds among themselves. There were now no Elven troops or Dwarf warriors in the region to keep them out. Few of these newcomers ever knew that the Forest of Loren was inhabited by Elves. The winter was unusually harsh that year, and in the depths of midwinter, as the sun hung low on the pale horizon, the Orcs came.

Following the War of the Beard, the Wood Elves realized they needed scouts patrolling the borders of Athel Loren to catch any Dwarfen attacks early. The Hawk Lords volunteered their Warhawk Riders for this





duty, especially along the Grey Mountain border of the forest. Soaring high between the peaks, these vigilant Riders kept their sharp eyes searching for Dwarfs. However, one of their winter patrols once stumbled upon an entirely different threat: an Orc scouting party trudging through the snow.

The Orc scouting party was merely the vanguard of a much larger greenskin horde that was slowly making its way down from the Grey Mountains toward Athel Loren. The sheer size of this force made it unwieldy, so the Orc Warboss was able to coerce a few Boyz to form a few pickets in advance of the main group. Unbeknownst to the Warboss, one of these pickets had surged forward (in normal Orcish brashness) and burst into Athel Loren. If the Wood Elves didn't know the Orcs were there, they sure did now.

Driven by hunger and bloodlust, hordes of Orcs and Goblins poured down from the mountains, burning the trees of Athel Loren in great bonfires and hunting its wild beasts. Their raucous and uncouth cries echoed through the bare trees. The Elves fought bravely but the spirit of unity that had been forged to oppose the Dwarfs was lacking and they were forced to yield ground. In an orgy of destruction, the Orcs built great pyres in order to warm their calloused hides, and pillars of smoke stained the sky with the ashes of the living wood of the forests.

News of the massive tide of greenskins pouring out of the Grey Mountains spread through the Kinbands of Athel Loren like wildfire through a dry forest. Fear, despair, and uncertainty gripped the Wood Elves. How could they possibly stand against a threat this large and savage? Would any of them survive such a battle? Would the forest help them again as it did against the Dwarfs? Questions like these gnawed at the minds and souls of the Wood Elves night and day. Midwinter

came and went, the ground turned as hard as iron. Dark wolves hunted through the forest as the Orcs pushed deeper and deeper.

Every day the Elf scouts kept watch, and skirmishes broke out between them and Orc warbands. Many Orcs were shot with arrows by unseen hands. Nevertheless the Orcs remained undeterred. All the magic of the mages seemed impotent to ward them off. The Elves fought with all their might under skies stained with the ashes of living wood, but the Orcs were too many and their forest spirit allies addled by intense cold. Little by little, Athel Loren fell to the invaders. Steadily they approached the sacred groves and the home glades of the kindreds.

Soon, what little unity the Kinbands felt had abandoned them like the sun's warmth in the cold of winter. Each group of like-minded Elves turned inward to focus on their own survival. With tempers running high, two neighboring Kinbands turned on each other in a squabble over territory boundaries. This petty spat was the last thing the Wood Elves needed. While the Wood Elves squabbled among themselves, the greenskin onslaught began in earnest.

Desperation overcame pride, and several Kinbands set aside their differences to form a small force to try to blunt the Orc advance. Now, they stood before the lead elements of the horde with heavy hearts. The Wood Elves knew they would die against a massive force like the one they face, yet the Asrai hoped that their lives would buy enough time for a solution to present itself.

It was decided to fight the Orcs in pitched battle. All the warriors were mustered. The Wood Elves attacked but the Orcs could not be defeated. Many brave Elves were slain and still the horde continued deeper into their realm. Some kindreds abandoned their home



glades and hid in caves; others vowed to die were they had lived, should the Orcs come.

The Winter of Woe dragged on. Frost made the ground as hard as iron. Howling winds drove snow across the heathlands and through the trees. The forest was transformed into an endless vista of white and grey. Wolves prowled the forest. Food was scarce. The Orc horde was encamped dangerously close to the Council Glade. Elf mages struggled day and night to draw them away with enchantments and false trails.

Despite their best efforts, the scattered Wood Elf defenders was pushed back all the way to the twisted roots of the Oak of Ages itself, a place which was regarded as strange and eerie even by the Elves themselves. A sea of Orcs encircled what remained of the Wood Elf forces, who prepared their last stand. Orc campfires burned throughout the night as the Elves readied themselves for battle, for the Asrai feared that the fate of the Oak of Ages would rule that of the forest. They did so with heavy hearts, for they did not believe that they could stand before the horde that opposed them, but knew there was no choice save to fight and resolved to die to the last in defence of their home. Then, at dawn, they saw that the forest was transformed. The snows were in retreat and blood-red blossoms had pushed through the hard ground. They also noticed strange disturbances among the birds and whispering in the branches. The animals of the forest roused from their hibernation and a restlessness could be felt on the air, as of a mighty force awakening.

Even as the Orcs prepared for battle, they too saw the signs of the forest's rebirth. As the sun rose, the haunting cry of a mighty horn echoed on the wind out of the depths of the forest, accompanied by the baying of hounds and the shrieks of birds of prey as they flocked from their roosts. The Orcs heard it too. They froze awestruck and rooted to the spot. Then a mighty form crashed through the woods, a pack of shadowy hunting hounds at his heels. Tall and muscular, the Elves recognised the awesome form of Kurnous himself; twice the height of an Elf, brandishing his mighty spear and bellowing his challenge to the Orcs. He bounded between the trees with the speed and agility of an antelope. From his head sprouted a vast span of antlers. Around his face hung masses of ivy and moss. His flesh was green like the spring leaves, his eyes glowed amber like a feral beast. A fierce, primal energy swelled from Kurnous and all the Elves who looked upon him were filled with furious energy and power. The horn was winded a second time, and the greenskins met their doom.

Kurnous smashed into the Orcs, slaying all before him in a whirlwind of destruction that was terrible to behold, his wild hunt sweeping forwards on howling winds, newly awakened Dryads swarming in his wake, eager to bestow their cruel mercies. Kurnous bellowed and charged the Warlord Grotfang, impaling him with his spear and tossing him over his head with his antlers. The rest of the Orcs shrank back in abject terror. Dark-

pinioned ravens' swooped down on the doomed Orcs and leaping hounds tore them apart with fang and claw. The Orcs stumbled over each other in their haste to get away, but now they found no easy way through the forest. Treemen and Dryads barred their way, awakened by the horn of Kurnous and his bellowing challenge.

Kurnous chased after his fleeing prey wielding his mighty spear. As the living god plunged deeper into the Orcish lines, the Elves charged forwards, rallied and rushing to join the wild hunt, their eyes afire with their god's furious power. Their arrows slew Orcs in a withering hail. Wardancers leapt forward as if in the ritual dance of Kurnous, slaying the clumsy Orcs not quick enough to get out of the way.

As the sun rose above the trees, the weak amber rays lit a scene of slaughter. A glade strewn with slain Orcs and black with ravens and crows. Buzzards circled overhead and the wolves came for their share. Their white bones were destined to become entangled in the gnarled roots of the Glade of Woe. As the sun set at the day's end, not a single Orc remained alive.



THE KING AND QUEEN IN THE WOOD

When it was certain that the last of the Orcs were slain, the exhausted Elves followed the trail of destruction wrought by Kurnous as best they could. His distant bellowing could still be heard and his huge shadow could be glimpsed running fast between the trees. Orcs transfixed by his deadly spear marked his route. They tracked him through a wide arc back towards the Council Glade and right up to the Oak of Ages itself.

Here they stopped. Kurnous had disappeared. Mages were brought up. They worked with their divining rods and invoked Kurnous, uttering incantations of praise and gratitude for their deliverance from the foe. As they called upon Kurnous the tree creaked and groaned and a deep sonorous and resonant voice spoke as if from within its very trunk: "Who summons Kurnous?"

Then the assembled Elves saw the yawning cleft in the gnarled oak's trunk; this was where the voice had emanated from. A few of the braver Scouts and mages squeezed into the crack, stealthily creeping along a narrow void within the living wood they heard mysterious and magical laughter and strange music. A dim glow indicated the end of the tunnel. When they reached this they peered into a great hollow space in the depths of the tree.

There they saw two figures sat as though enthroned, two of the most beautiful and awesome beings that they had ever set eyes on. They looked for all the world like the living embodiments of the gods Kurnous and Isha, yet with a hint of the features of the long lost Orion and



Ariel! All around them were Dryads and other strange woodland spirits paying homage as if to a king and queen.

Then high mage Athelor stepped forward and asked them if they were indeed Orion and Ariel. Orion replied that they were, but changed. Then Ariel spoke, revealing that they had both merged with the gods Kurnous and Isha and taken on their aspects. The gods had been called forth from the forest and wished to assume Elven form. They had been attracted by the exceptional beauty of Orion and Ariel, finest of Elves and filled them with but a small part of their divine spirits. This was enough to endow Orion and Ariel with the ability to shift shape into Kurnous and Isha for a brief time. Long enough to seal the fate of any invaders of Athel Loren.



Ariel had spoken with the deep wisdom of a goddess and the Elves were truly awestruck by what they saw. Athelor the high mage understood and proclaimed to the others, 'Behold, our King and Queen in the Wood!' Orion and Ariel emerged from the Oak of Ages and held court in the Council Glade, henceforth to become the King's Glade. All the kindreds paid homage to them as king and queen. The mages recognised them as now possessing magical powers deriving directly from the gods Kurnous and Isha. Orion was able to shift shape into Kurnous the Wild Hunter, chasing invaders from his domain. Ariel could shift shape into Isha wielding magic untaught and quite naturally as an aspect of her very being. She had the power to weave enchantments around the realm of Athel Loren to protect her folk and deter their foes.

Elves can live for many centuries, but Orion and Ariel had become ageless and immortal by virtue of their divine aspects. They were perpetually renewed just as nature pervaded by the spirits of Kurnous and Isha is renewed. They would preside over their Wood Elf folk deepening in wisdom and protecting the forest for all time.

In the aftermath of the battle, Ariel used her power to heal the damage that had been wrought, her touch infusing the ruined and desolate areas of the forest with new life. Throughout the summer months Athel Loren knew relative peace, for any incursions were swiftly scattered by Orion's fury. Many Elves, the vibrant song of the hunt deep in their being, were drawn to the demigod's hunts and welcomed a portion of his power into their hearts. Thus they became the Wild Riders, the equerries of the King in the Wood whose service and rituals maintained the eternal spirit of the hunter.



Summer faded into autumn, and whilst Ariel's powers of healing and rebirth remained as potent as first they had in the early days of spring, Orion's power gradually faded and his anger diminished until finally, as winter's iron grip took hold of the forest, he was all but spent.



As the snows closed on the forest, a mighty pyre was built in the centre of the King's Glade and its flames reached high into the night sky. As part of a ritual that would for evermore echo down the centuries, when midnight approached and the chill of winter was at its most biting, the Wild Riders and Orion marched into the clearing, and the King of the Wild Hunt stepped naked into the fire, the flames consuming him as he raised his arms to the heavens. All night the fire blazed, until the winter sun climbed over the Grey Mountains. In the cold light of day, no trace of Orion remained save his ashes. The Wild Riders bore the ashes away in silence and brought them to the Council Glade where Ariel, without a word, took them deep into the Oak of Ages and sealed herself and the ashes of her consort away from the outside world, and was naught but a memory while winter lasted. Many Elves wept for their lost king, for they did not understand what had occurred. Only with next spring, when Orion was reborn, did they fully understand that the nature of Ariel and Orion, and indeed the Wood Elf race entire, was now bound forever to the Weave of existence – the web of life and death that bound all living things. Just as the power of Kurnous and Isha waxed and waned with the seasons, so it was with Orion and Ariel.

In all the years since, as the snows retreat and the breath of spring is felt once more on the air, the forest has trembled with the waking dreams of Orion. The Wild Riders come for the Elf chosen to take up the mantle of Ariel's consort-king, though their selection is shrouded in mystery, even to the other Elves who hold it to be ill-luck to attract the attention of Orion's riders. The day before the vernal equinox, the Elf chosen to become the new King of the Wild Hunt is garlanded with new-blooming flowers and painted with mystical sigils before being led into the Oak of Ages. The following morning, on the first day of spring, Ariel awakens from her slumbers and the reborn Orion thunders from the trees, the wild hunt howling at his heels.

So would life in Athel Loren continue for years. Each spring Orion was reborn, only to sacrifice himself on winter's eve. Midwinter was thus to be the most dangerous time for the folk of Athel Loren, a time when their enchantments protecting the forest waned, a time for extra vigilance! As the centuries passed, Ariel grew ever more skilled at harnessing the powers of the Weave, and gradually healed the forest of its wounds. Through it all, Adanhu and the other Elders looked on with satisfaction. Under the guardianship of the Elves, the forest was flourishing and its wildness was being kept in check.

Then, one ill-starred night, the spirits of the forest cried out in agony, and Ariel wept a single perfect tear as she felt a great disruption amongst the Weave. Something terrible had been born into the world...





The warm spring sunlight flowed through the groves and copses of the Forest of Loren. The golden rays permeated the woods, chasing out the cold shadows of winter, and giving life to the first fresh green shoots that ventured up from their winter refuge beneath the ground. But despite the freshness of the springtime blossoms, a faint, rancid odour lingered in the air, carried across the thickets and hedgerows by the seasonal southerly winds. With the winter snows melted, and the mountain passes open, the Skaven from Foul Peak and Putrid Stump, south of the Forest of Loren, were once again on the move. Wood was needed for the manufacture of weapons and armour, and to fuel the furnaces that would be used to refine raw warpstone into more manageable forms. And the sanctity of the Elven glades would be no restraint for the rat men as they hacked and cleaved their way through the woodland to get what they wanted.

Deep inside the forest, the wild howls of feral dogs cried out as the first Skaven axe fell upon the tender wood of a budding sapling.

From his vantage point high amongst the Oak branches that hung over the river Brienne, Brea Everswift surveyed the damage the Skaven were wreaking on the far side of the river. Against such a numerous foe there was little that he and his small group of Wood Elf Waywatchers could do. For sure some Skaven would fall to the craftily placed traps that he and his fellows had set, but this would do little to deter them. They would press on, burning and pillaging the life force of the forest until their dark souls were sated.

As one, a thousand ravens took flight from the King's glade, stirred by the primeval energies that billowed and rolled from the great Oak of Ages.

Warlord Queevik was pleased. His force had encountered little resistance since advancing into the forest, and soon he would be able to return back to the tunnels and caves in which he felt most comfortable. Being in the open always made him uneasy, a feeling that was only heightened by the fresh spring aromas that assailed his keen nostrils.

Above the Forest of Loren storm clouds began to gather, the ominous rumble of distant thunder rolling across the woods, sending the smaller beasts of the forest scampering back to cower in their burrows and nests.

Brea watched in frustration as the Skaven prepared crude rafts to ferry themselves across the Brienne. He had already dispatched his fastest runner to keep the King's Council informed of events, but he feared that even so help would arrive too late. It was fortunate that he was where he was now - the passing of the winter months always saw a decline in the vigilance of the guardians of the forest, and he had been planning on returning north, to the Birch trees of his home glade. But all that he and his fellow Waywatchers could do for now was watch, and wait.

And with a bestial roar that was echoed back and forth across the length and breadth of Athel Loren by every wild animal and savage beast, Orion, and with him the spirit of the forest and the Wild Hunt itself, was reborn.





THE SEASON OF WITHERING

II) 1-470 (Imperial Calendar -1094 to -625)

THE CORRUPTOR AWAKENS

It was in the decades after the Winter of Woe that Ariel first became aware of a malignant and abhorrent presence that would prove to be her nemesis. To begin with, Ariel did not truly understand the blight that had risen to wakefulness – only that it posed a great threat to Athel Loren. Determined to discover the truth, the Mage Queen took council with the Elders of the forest, and sent her canniest scouts to scour distant realms. Little by little, Ariel was able to glean the nature of the creature she sought. No Wood Elf had yet seen the beast and lived to speak of the encounter, but the works it left behind were testament to its unspeakable ways. Where it finds civilisation, it tears it down, and where it finds beauty, it despoils it. Where the creature walked, the fabric of the world twisted in hateful transformation: trees writhed into terrible and unnatural shapes, blackened crops bled under the scythe, and flesh reformed like clay in the hands of some crazed sculptor. Where it passed, sanity became drooling madness, and measured nobility became wanton abandon. By these works did Ariel finally put a name to the foe: Cyanathair, she called it the Corruptor, incarnation of disorder and chaos. To his own vile kin he was known as Morghur, Master of Skulls.



The existence of this being was of great offence to Ariel, for its ruination of the Weave represented everything that she opposed. Desperate to learn how to combat this new foe, Ariel took a great risk. Adopting a spirit form, she went out into the lands where Morghur had known free rein. After long months of tracking the creature's spoor into lands no mortal Elf could tread without harm, she finally discovered the beast capering madly in the company of other abominable things. So lumpen and wretched was the creature that Ariel almost laughed to see it. She had expected some power addled Mage, or a vengeful sorcerer of the ancient times; what she beheld was a crude and ignorant beast that lacked the wit to understand its own nature. A twisted creature, a horrible mix of human and beast, Ariel recognised it as an immortal spirit of Chaos existing only to corrupt, to despoil, to cause pain, and it is this creature that the Wood Elves despise above all others. Ariel felt the taint of this creature, just as it too sensed her presence in the world and recognised her as adversary. Without hesitation, Ariel called cleansing flame down upon the Corruptor and its yowling herd. Her task complete, the Mage Queen returned home. In her arrogance, she believed that Morghur's threat was ended. In time, she was sure, the living world would heal from the Corruptor's touch and the Weave would gradually be restored.

What Ariel did not realise was that Morghur was not so easily destroyed. Even as the Mage Queen turned to leave, the beast's wounds had begun to heal. Worse, Morghur had taken her measure just as she had taken his. The beast had understood little of what he had seen, for his warped mind was a mad spiral in which thoughts and words were alien concepts; but Morghur was not so addled that he did not recognise Ariel for what she was. Having tasted a small measure of her power, he hungered for more. Slowly but surely, Morghur's meandering path began to creep southwards to Athel Loren.



THE COMING OF MAN

For generations following the Battle of the Glades of Woe, the Kindred of Equos kept watch over the heaths surrounding Athel Loren. The Glade Riders scoured the bracken covered slopes and camped in the thickets of stunted oaks on the lookout for marauding Orcs and Goblins. There were countless skirmishes. No sooner were the enemy spotted loping across the heaths towards the forest than a rider would be sent to Orion and Ariel to raise the alarm. Quickly the Wood Elf kindreds would muster their warriors and prepare an ambush. Often the enemy would be repelled or slaughtered before they had even transgressed the edge



of the forest itself. Then a great mound would be raised over their bones and a victory stone carved with the symbols of Kurnous and Isha erected upon it as a warning.

Then there came one occasion when the Glade riders observed a different band of strangers on the move. A migrating horde with wagons, or riding stocky shaggy ponies. It was guarded by armed men with metal weapons. Cattle and families trudged behind the warriors. These were not Orcs or Goblins: the Elves had caught their first sight of Human beings. These were savage tribesmen, ancestors of the Bretonnians, searching for new lands to settle west of the Grey Mountains.

The Elves had long abandoned this land, leaving in their passing only abandoned fortresses and settlements. A great many of these elegant halls had been torn down and burnt, for greenskins had overrun the land as the Elves had retreated. The superstitious and ignorant barbarians avoided these places, fearing that they were haunted, and fought hard to drive Orcs and Goblins out of other domains.

Word was sent to Orion and Ariel as usual. The council was called and it was decided to wait rather than attack. These newcomers were fair featured and bore some distant kinship to Elvenkind if only in appearance. They might prove to be friends and allies. The Glade Riders were ordered to keep watch from a safe distance.

The watchers soon saw two things which endeared the strangers to the Wood Elves. Firstly, the barbarian warriors advancing ahead of the migrating column discovered and approached the boundary monoliths marking the outer limit of the realm of Athel Loren. They puzzled over the carvings on the stones and brought up one of their shamans to look at them. Eventually the strangers placed offerings at the foot of the stones and turned away, leading their people in another direction and refusing to pass the stones. Whether this was due to their respect or superstition it nonetheless impressed the Wood Elves and marked the newcomers to be entirely different from the Orcs and Goblins.

The other thing that impressed the Elves was the battle that they observed in which the barbarians were attacked by Orc raiders and Goblin wolf riders. At first, the Wood Elves looked with amusement upon these battles between primitive tribes, content to let one set of barbarians eradicate the other. However, the barbarians stoutly defended their wagons and people. The Glade Riders watching from the hills above were so moved by their courage that they descended at the gallop and attacked the Orcs with daring and fury, despite being outnumbered several to one. Between them, the barbarians and the Elves beat off the Orcs, and the Glade Riders pursued the fleeing foe to destruction. They did not even wait for the barbarians to thank them.

Only when the fighting spilled close to the borders of Athel Loren did the Elves otherwise take action, driving back the interlopers with spear and bow before vanishing beneath the trees once more. Thus began the tradition of the Wild Hunt. Each summer, when the battles 'twixt men and greenskins were at their most sprawling, Orion led the most hot-blooded of his folk across the Wild Heath and into the barbarous lands beyond, hunting their two-legged quarry as they would any other prey. Soon the glory and terror of the Wild Hunt passed into the barbarians' legends, and they learned that to threaten the forest was to invite a swift and merciless death.

As time passed, the Elves came to delight ever more in making sport with the lives of Men and Orcs. They even began to manipulate the two sides into ever-escalating confrontation – though in truth the greenskins needed little encouragement. The Elves told themselves that they did this to control their enemies' numbers as they would with any dangerous beasts. The further afield the folk of Athel Loren plied their sport, the less credence this idea held, but they cared little and continued to foment war in all the lands north of the mountain range known as the Vaults.

Some time later it was discovered by the scouts ranging in the landscape beyond Athel Loren that the barbarians had made a settlement and were farming the land beside a river. It was clear that they intended no threat to the Forest of Loren and indeed, were driving the Orcs away by constant fighting. When the time came to harvest their crops, they heaped great offerings beside the monoliths in gratitude to the Elves.

Among the barbarians, the shamans had come to a conclusion about the Elves. They told their people that they were none other than 'the fairy folk', magical beings who lived in the wood and who would help them in times of trouble as long as they were shown the proper respect. This belief persisted among the barbarians for centuries and prevented them from invading the Forest of Loren.

After the Wood Elves settled within the forest and appeased the woodland spirits to be welcomed by them as friends and guardians, they protected the forest through the ages when wandering tribes of Men and Orcs were migrating over the entire Old World. These tribes were deterred from entering the forest and considered it to be an eerie and dangerous place to be avoided. Elsewhere Men cleared forests with their axes to cultivate the land and build their settlements. Orcs hewed down trees to build their strongholds and burn on their feasting fires. Although vast tracts of wilderness persist throughout the Old World, some of this has regenerated where fields and villages were devastated by wars while the remnants of virgin forest are penetrated by the tracks of merchants and traders.



MORGHUR'S REVENGE

Yet whilst the Wood Elves cowed the threat from without, they failed to notice the danger growing within. There had been Beastmen in the forest as long as any of the Elves could remember, great warherds that roamed beneath the boughs, hacking and despoiling as they travelled. Each year, the Elves hunted these interlopers without mercy, but each year there were always more. Some lords and ladies of the wood believed that the creatures had some instinctive understanding of Athel Loren's timeless paths, and so used them to avoid extermination. Indeed, they said, given the curious passage of time beneath the boughs, it was entirely possible that they fought only the same warherd time and again, its warriors trapped forever in a cycle of defeat. Such theories appealed to the Elves' arrogance, and so few of them noticed when the numbers of Beastmen began to increase. It happened slowly at first, so slowly that no-one noticed. By the time the Wood Elves awoke to the danger, it was too late – Morghur was upon them.

Two centuries after the arrival of the Bretonni, the cursed Beastman Cyanathair made his first attempt to claim Athel Loren. Responding to his silent call came thousands of Beastmen and other horribly mutated creatures, many of which travelled hundreds of miles to fight at his side. These creatures flocked to him, drawn by the will of the gods of Chaos. They swarmed from the vast tracts of uncontrolled forests over the Grey Mountains, crawled forth from their stinking caves in the Vaults and the Massif Orcals, and stalked out of the forests of Arden and Chalons to the west and north-west of Athel Loren.

For the passing of many seasons Athel Loren was riven with warfare as Morghur strove to break Ariel's power, leaving the forest scarred and wounded. Part of Morghur's primal nature spoke to the forest's heart, and parts of Athel Loren rebelled. For a long and terrible year, the natural order of Athel Loren was disrupted, for Cyanathair could seemingly not be slain by the weapons of the Elves and recovered from even the most heinous of wounds, be they inflicted by an archer's arrow, or Orion's mighty spear. Worse yet for the Elves, the trees and spirits of Athel Loren did not succumb to Cyanathair's taint all at once. Countless times in battle with the beasts, the Elves would be on the brink of victory, only to have it snatched from their grasp as the madness of Cyanathair seized spirits that moments before had been their allies. This madness was not always lasting, but seemed to have a deep and enduring effect upon the Dryads, whose capricious and malevolent nature had only ever been held in check by the mighty Treemen.

This terrible conflict was only ended when Cyanathair was slain at the Battle of Anguish. The site of this battle, the Glade of Woe, still bears the mark of Cyanathair's death, where Coeddil, one of the most ancient tree lords, seized the beast-demon. As Morghur attempted to free itself, Ariel summoned all of her

power and smote him a single blow. This time, the Mage Queen was determined that the creature be destroyed, so she drew not only on her own power, but that of the forest as well. Before such an onslaught, not even Morghur could endure; Ariel battered through the creature's defences and shattered his mutated form, whilst leaving Coeddil seemingly unmarked. The battle had been won, but the forest would ever bear the taint of Morghur's passing. No living being touched by the Corruptor's blood would ever truly recover. A giant blackened and twisted oak tree, with branches like claws raised in anguish and outrage, marks the place where Cyanathair was slain, the place where his tainted life-blood was spilt. The site of Morghur's death was known ever after as the Glade of Woe, for it was home only to twisted and withered life thereafter.

Alas, the tears of Isha appeared on the fair cheeks of Ariel, for as soon as the beast was slain, she could feel it being reborn in another forest, far away across the mountains. It seemed Cyanathair could not be destroyed so easily. Thus did the Battle of Anguish mark the beginning of a secret war between the Wood Elves and Beastmen, one that would rage down all the ages that followed.

Twice more in the history of the Wood Elves the vile creature Cyanathair has been slain, once by the legendary Scarloc and his scouts, and once by the ancient and volatile Treeman Durthu, yet always it is reborn elsewhere, hungering to despoil Athel Loren. If he were to succeed, Athel Loren would be transformed into a nightmare place of horror and despair that would spread like a vicious plague across the Old World.





THE LOST KINDRED

There was a kindred of Wood Elves who once dwelt among the glades of Wythel trees in the Forest of Loren. These trees were conifers of exceptional girth and age and incomparable beauty. The needles were as a green as the purest jade and the pine-cones were huge. The pine nuts could be eaten and were considered a delicacy throughout Athel Loren. The resin of the trees could be distilled into the finest forest wine. It is even said that the wood of the Wythel tree made the best longbows. In time the way of life of the kindred became dependent on the Wythel trees. They did not learn how to use many different types of tree as did the other kindreds. This did not matter as long as the Wythel trees flourished.



As the centuries passed, the Wythel trees which were already rare and the last of their kind in the forest, became harder to find. The mages of the kindred were at a loss as to why this might be. One by one the oldest trees died and fell to the ground. Fewer new saplings sprouted to take their place and the Elves, for all their skill, could not make the pine nuts germinate. Eventually the mages agreed that the trees were sickening due to changes in the flow of magical energy deep below the earth.

No attempts to restore the magical energies were effective in saving the trees. Huge monoliths, ritual dances, tree singing by perpetual choirs of Elven maidens every day year after year made no difference. In desperation the kindred despatched mages skilled in divination and Warhawk Riders to seek for the Wythel trees wherever they might be. After many years of searching, one of the mages returned. He brought with him twigs and cones of a healthy and flourishing Wythel tree. Then he told the assembled elders of the kindred where a grove of Wythel trees was still to be found.

Though they rejoiced that the Wythel trees were not lost from the world, the kindred were dismayed at the vast distance they would need to travel to find them. Reluctantly the kindred decided to leave Athel Loren forever in order to find their beloved Wythel trees and protect them. The King and Queen in the Wood understood their desire and let them depart with their blessing as well as much help and magical items.

The entire kindred set off on a long trek over the Grey Mountains and beyond into the uttermost east. Here they wandered through a forested wilderness barely inhabited by tribes of men, yet already infested with Orcs. Though Warhawk Riders and Scouts tried to

follow to keep in contact, they finally lost track of them as the winter snows covered the forests. The Kindred of the Wythel trees were never seen again.

Since that time rumours of an enclave of Wood Elves hidden deep in the forests east of the Grey Mountains have reached Athel Loren. Attempts have been made to contact them and a few Scouts claim to have met fellow scouts of the Lost Kindred. There seems no reason to doubt their word, but nevertheless almost everything about the Lost Kindred remains a mystery in Athel Loren though their survival seems certain.

THE BETRAYAL

Five hundred years after the Battle of Anguish, Athel Loren once more knew internal strife. The tree lord, Coeddil, driven perhaps by a last taint of Cyanathair's madness, and who had begun to harbour a deep resentment of the Elves, sought to disrupt the rebirth of Orion. That winter Coeddil and his Dryad handmaidens did not sleep, but bided until Ariel began her long sleep within the Oak of Ages. With much of the forest slumbering, and the Elves unaware of his intent, the ancient strode to King's Glade and slaughtered all he could find, for if no Wild Riders lived to lead the ritual of rebirth, Orion would be severely weakened, if indeed he could be summoned at all. Though the Wild Riders fought back, they were dulled by winter's grasp and their blades could not pierce Coeddil's thick hide.

Ariel was abruptly awakened from her slumbers as the first Elven blood was spilt. In a great rage she sped to where the Wild Riders fought for their lives. Against Ariel's fury Coeddil and his followers could not endure. Summoning all her awesome power, the Mage Queen scattered the ancient's handmaidens and cast down the tree lord. Though Ariel dearly wished to slay the spirits for the damage they had caused and the blood they had shed, Ariel could no more end their existence than sever a portion of her own soul, for Coeddil was still bound to Athel Loren, and Ariel was bound to the forest. Instead she banished the tree lord, and the Dryads who had followed him, to the dark and wild corner of Athel Loren, far in the south-east where no Elves dwelt. The Wildwood was then encircled with a fence of waystones, and Coeddil was imprisoned forever amongst the shadow-glades to brood upon his betrayal.



Since that day, no Elf has set foot under the eaves of Coeddil's prison, for to do so is to walk with death as their only companion. Coeddil may silently contemplate his fate, but his handmaidens have been driven mad by their exile, and restlessly stalk the glades with cruel desires in their hearts.

in defence of Athel Loren

From his perch atop the ancient bough, Brachellae's keen eyes took in every detail as the Greenskins scurried about below. The previously still forest air shook to the sound of innumerable Orcish choppas, a dull and persistent drone that sounded for all the world like some monstrous insect bent on tearing the forest asunder. To the Highborn's mind, it was tragedy enough that these primitive beasts should have been able to enter into the forest, without dwelling upon the fate of those who had already attempted to halt their advance. Reports from Scouts and Waywatchers had come to Brachellae's ears throughout the day, revealing that this warband was only one of many. Against such numbers, the Elves could not hope to stand alone, and nor would they have to. The wanton destruction had enraged the creatures of the forest to a level that even the centuries-old Highborn could not recall.

Beneath Brachellae's feet, his warriors were assembled, hidden by a glamour that crude Orc magic could not pierce. Ranks of Eternal Guard stood ready, their spears glinting in the reflected light of spites and wisps, whilst archer kinbands strung their bows and checked their arrowheads. Scattered amongst the waiting Elves, the silent and graceful forms of Dryads waited in readiness. The way they always seemed to know when a battle drew nigh was not a little unnerving to the Asrai lord, yet he welcomed their presence nonetheless. Brachellae was ready, the army was prepared, yet still the Spellsinger's restraining hand remained upon his shoulder. Not yet. Patience. Wait.

It was always the same refrain with Retala. Do not act until the time is right. Let destiny shape your actions. Though Brachellae could not deny the usefulness of Retala's precognitive skills, he still found it irksome to give up even a portion of his authority to a force he did not understand. Yet

even as he quashed his irritation, the restraining hand was gone. The hacking ceased as one of the trees on the far side of the glade sprang into sudden life and crushed its attackers with one sweep of a mighty limb, the blade still embedded in its gnarled skin.

"Now," he cried.

As silence once more descended upon the forest, Rehla's cold eyes surveyed the dead. He cared not for the lives of the interlopers, but too many Elves had fallen by far for this to be truly be counted as a victory. None of those who had assembled to face the threat of the Greenskins would be returning to their homes without injury, and some would not return at all. Even the mighty Treeman whose awakening had begun the battle, was broken and splintered in the churned mud of the glade. So many had been lost, but the sanctity of the forest had been preserved. Even as the Spellsinger contemplated, he could sense Athel Loren reasserting itself. Though there was, as yet, no visible sign, Retala felt the forest's consciousness spreading once more into the ruined grove, healing the damage caused by Orc choppas. Soon, burnt and mutilated stumps would sprout into new life, fed by the corpses of the the slain. It would take time to renew such devastation, but renew it would. Satisfied that all was as it should be, the Spellsinger turned about and set his feet upon the path that would carry him home, but halted as something caught his eye. A green light was emanating from the gnarled skin of the fallen Treeman; faint and all but invisible to eyes less keen than that of an Elf, but growing in strength. Retala's lips twisted into a wry smile. Perhaps the cost had not been so high, after all.



THE SEASON OF REVELATION

III) 1-1741 (Imperial Calendar -624 to 1116)

Athel Loren now enjoyed a golden age. Under Ariel's careful guidance, Elves and forest grew closer than ever before, and the wounds of the previous season were healed. For centuries as the outside world reckoned time, the Wood Elves ventured seldom beyond the waystones that bounded their home. Only the Wild Hunt openly rode forth, ever reminding the surrounding lands that Athel Loren was still a place of power.

Of course, there were those who took the warnings about Athel Loren as craven superstition. There always are such folk, whatever the land or the age of the world. Most such creatures were wandering seekers of treasure and glory whose dreams and bodies ended as mulch for Dryads. Every few years an Orc Warboss or Dwarfen Thane would gather enough of his followers to make a concerted foray, and in those years the trees fed well on the blood of outsiders. The Wood Elves remember this as an era of great peace, though this was not strictly accurate. More correctly, this was a time in which Athel Loren suffered few ills from the forces of the outside world, and whatever battles were fought ended in victories so glorious that the lives lost were deemed well worth the price. Fed by the spoils of war, the forest grew ever more majestic, and its dwellers multiplied as never before.



Yet such bountiful peace could not last. Morghur was reborn again, and a great warherd of Beastmen soon gathered to him. This time the wild horde did not descend upon Athel Loren, but rampaged through the human tribal lands west of the forest. According to the scouts who shadowed Morghur's trail, his destination was quite clear. If the path of destruction held true, his herd was making for a mountain known to the Elves as the Silverspire – a shining peak from which the lifeblood of the western lands flowed. Ariel knew this as a site of ancient power, and knew also that Morghur could not be permitted to befoul its waters. Though not so mighty as they once were, the roots of Athel Loren dug deep, and drew sustenance from many of the lands fed by the waters of the Silverspire. Ariel did not dare face Morghur herself, for the beast's touch had weakened her terribly when last she had confronted him. Orion had no such misgivings. Indeed, he longed for the opportunity to slaughter the beast who had dared to harm his beloved queen.

THE HUNT RIDES OUT

The Elves that travelled with Orion were swept up in his great fury, and they unleashed great ruin on the human lands that lay in their path. But the Elves cared not, for the slain were only humans, and therefore of little account. Only when the Wild Hunt reached the slopes of the Silverspire was its wrath finally slaked. With spear and with arrow the Wood Elves drove the Beastmen from the sacred confluence and into the waiting claws of Dryads. Orion himself tore Morghur limb from limb, and tossed the corrupt remains into a cleansing Starwood pyre. No other living being did the Elves encounter on the Silverspire, yet still Orion sensed another presence there, one not unlike to his queen, and whose unspoken whispers echoed through his mind.

When Orion brought word of this back to Athel Loren, none were more intrigued than Ariel. The Mage Queen had long believed that Morghur was scarcely aware of his own actions, and that the Chaos Gods guided his steps. It was they who drove the Corruptor to devour her and Orion, to consume the godly essence of Isha and Kurnous as his dark masters had all but consumed the Elven gods. Thus were the wars of the heavens echoed in the mortal realm. Seldom had Ariel given thought to the idea that there might be others like her and Orion; certainly she had not encountered them. But if there were, it was likely that Morghur would be driven to devour these also.

Many turnings of the world later, this theory seemed to be all but proven. Morghur was again reborn in the lands west of Athel Loren, and was drawn to the Silverspire once more. Again, the Wood Elves marched to thwart Morghur's advance. This time, however, they



had allies in the struggle against the Corruptor. Since last the Elves had striven with Morghur, the rough humans of the western lands had united under the banner of a mighty champion. The Silverspire was sacred ground to these primitives, and they too now mustered to its defence. It would have gone ill for the humans had Orion led this second Wood Elf host, for the King in the Woods had little fondness for such humans. As it was, the midwinter snows laid heavy on Athel Loren; Orion was naught but a memory and a hope, so cooler heads than his prevailed and an alliance was struck. Together, Men and Elves cleansed the land of Morghur's taint.

A SHIELD IS FORGED

When the Beastmen were defeated, the Wood Elves shrouded themselves in mist and slipped away, despite the humans' attempts to treat with them. The Elves thought nothing more of their brief alliance – such things had happened before, and would doubtless happen again. The humans did not so swiftly forget, and began to tell stories of the fair folk who had ridden to their champion's aid.

Many years later, that champion's son braved the perils of Athel Loren in the hope of forging a lasting accord between the Elves and the kingdom his father had founded. Orion, reborn as hot-tempered as usual, had not looked favourably on the supplication, but Ariel overruled her consort in the matter. The Mage Queen knew that whilst the spirit of the Silverspire endured, it would distract Morghur from feasting upon Athel Loren, and how better to ensure the spirit endured than to ensure that its human protectors thrived?

Thus began a tumultuous friendship between the ancient realm of Athel Loren and the nascent kingdom of Bretonnia. Orion was displeased, and vocally so. He would not, he said, hold back the fury of the Wild Hunt in service to his queen's whim. Ariel had simply smiled and bade her husband ride wheresoever he wished; if the lands he chose were those claimed by the Bretonnians, so much the better. Common cause had brought friendship, but it was only good sense that the humans should fear their superiors.



The spirit of Silverspire had, by this time, spread its influence far and wide across Bretonnia. The humans now worshipped it as their saviour, but Ariel believed she shared more kinship with it than they. The humans called the spirit the Lady of the Lake, but the Mage Queen ever after knew her as Corrigyn, Daughter of Mists. There would never be lasting friendship between the two, but neither would there be enmity; each was too wary of the other's power for that.

With a whole kingdom now slyly enlisted to serve as a shield against Morghur, it seemed that Athel Loren's future could only grow brighter. Unfortunately, the Wood Elves soon found it was harder to fade from the world for a second time. Bretonnian bards soon carried tales concerning the 'fair folk of the woods' to many lands. Such stories could not help but find the ears of warlords seeking new territory, and the Wood Elves soon found their realm assailed by a succession of armies, each greater and more determined than the last.



THE GREED OF THE DWARFS

Thorkund Axe-Crazy was one of the first Dwarf adventurers to make his way into the west after the great war between the Elves and the Dwarfs. He did not return. What happened to Thorkund is known to the Wood Elves but not to his own kin, if they ever find out it will be yet another Dwarf grudge for which the realm of Athel Loren will be called to account!

Centuries after the end of the war between the Dwarfs and the Elves, rumours that the Elves had abandoned their colonies and sailed away were heard in the great halls of the Dwarfs. Many Dwarfs began to speculate about the treasures that may have been left behind in the ruins of the Elven colonies. Dwarf prospectors began to wonder what mineral riches might be discovered in these lands once barred to Dwarf exploration. For a long time the Dwarfs had been too preoccupied with troubles at home to investigate the possibilities that had opened up.

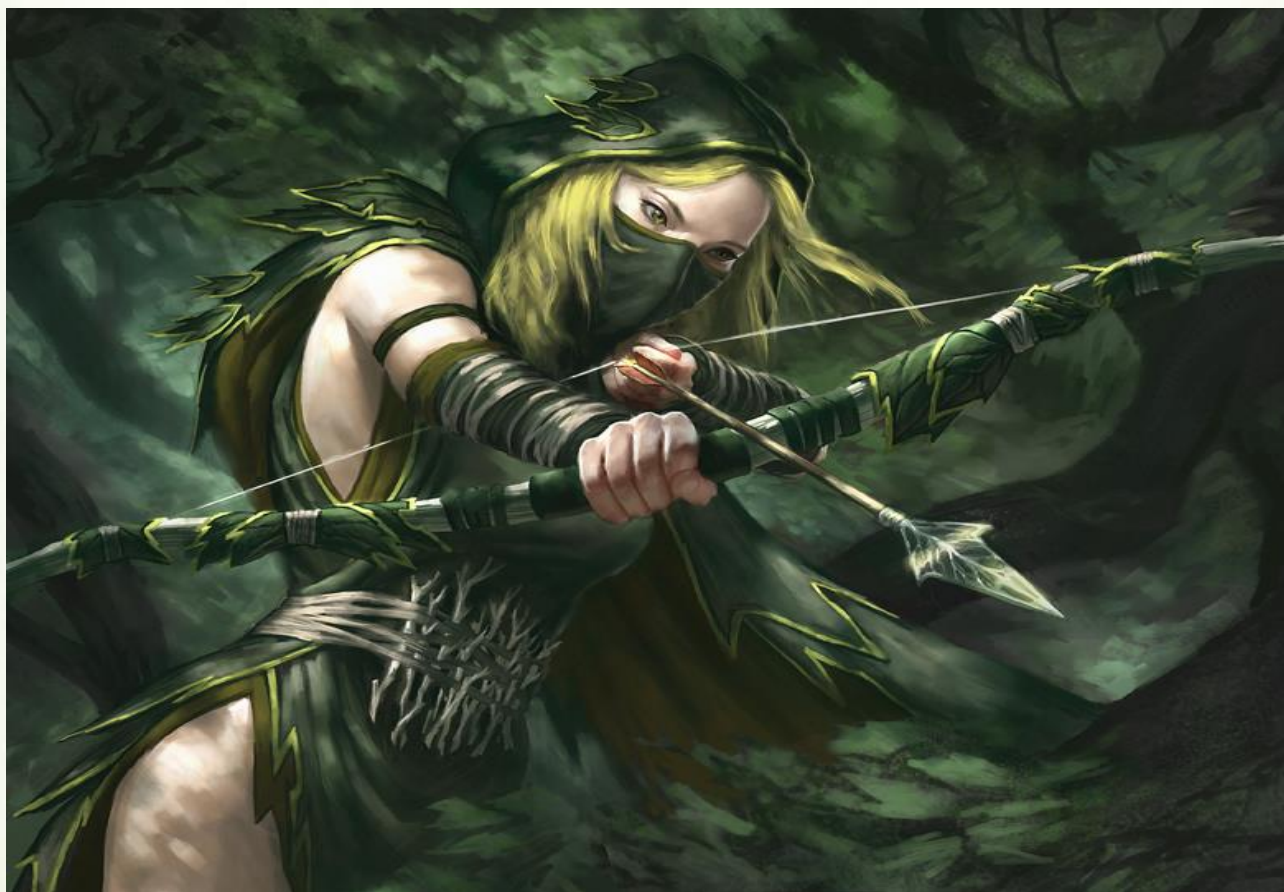


Thorkund Axe-Crazy was one of the first adventurers to journey into the west in search of treasure. He took with him only a handful of Dwarfs as rash as himself. Greed drew them ever onward across the mountains and vast forests that would later become the Empire. They crossed the Grey Mountains and looked down upon the lands later to become Bretonnia. One more vast forest lay between them and the Elven ruins on the western coast of the Old World – the Forest of Loren.

Thorkund and his band descended the mountains and went into the forest. Somehow they managed to find their way deeper and deeper into the wood. Suddenly one day, they were ambushed by unseen enemies lurking among the trees. Arrows stuck into the oaken shields of the Dwarfs and some of Thorkund's companions were slain. Thorkund and the rest charged with their axes. Soon they found themselves surrounded by the bodies of slain Elves and no others seemed to have escaped their axes.

To the amazement of the Dwarfs they now stepped into a sacred shrine glade of the Elves. The warriors they had just slain were its guardians. They saw huge gnarled trees and strange carved stones painted with arcane symbols. Quickly they began to heave over the stones to reveal any treasures hidden beneath. They were indeed experienced adventurers and knew how to ransack a sacred place.

The Dwarfs discovered treasures that even the Elves had forgotten were there and quickly bundled them up in their bags. Strangely wrought of silver, gold and copper, they were images in the shape of a creature that appeared to be half tree half she-Elf. Beautiful they were, but strangely disturbing even to the mind of the greedy Dwarfs. Thorkund would not rest easy until they were safely melted down and their magic was broken by the Runesmiths at home! No longer bothered about the ruins on the distant coast any more, Thorkund and his followers began to make their way eastwards out of the forest before any more Elves turned up.





No sooner had they left the glade than they heard eerie wailing coming from the trees themselves and thought they saw a strange shadowy shape stalking them amid the trees. They did not stop to make camp but trekked onwards seeking the daylight and the high mountains, eager to put the dark woods behind them. Eventually they reached the foothills of the Grey Mountains and made their way along the ravines and passes to the east. Still however they thought they heard the strangewailing in the distance behind them. They had now trekked for two days without sleep and fatigue was overcoming even their Dwarf endurance. They stopped by a grove of gnarled pine trees amid the rocks and soon fell asleep.

They awoke startled by a strange noise all around them. It was the weird wailing they had heard ever since the sacred glade. Now it was in the trees around their camp. Grabbing their axes they attacked the trees in a frenzy to stop the noise assaulting their ears and driving them mad. It was to no avail: as soon as an axe bit deep into a tree, a strange creature with wild hair and thorn-like claws flitted out of it and ran into another, wailing and taunting them. The creature, which was the Dryad Wythru who guarded the sacred grove and who had followed them intent on vengeance, appeared to be wailing at the moon as if calling something or someone.

Suddenly a great shadow fell over the Dwarfs. A huge bird of prey ridden by a cloaked figure descended upon them with terrifying speed. Soon all the Dwarfs except Thorkund lay dead with arrows penetrating their chainmail. Thorkund, wielding his axe, stepped back under a gnarled old tree to get a good swing at the hawk swooping down on him. At that very moment two clawed hands gripped him from behind and he was dragged to his doom down into the cracks and clefts of

the mountainside. His bones remain there to this day, entangled in the roots of the ancient pine tree. The hawk rider, Thryngol the Mage, returned to Athel Loren and hid the stolen treasures in the sacred grove where they belonged.

THE BRETONNI

For the next thousand years the Wood Elves lived in virtual isolation, healing the hurt done to Athel Loren by the Beastmen, and viciously slaying any who dared to enter its boundaries. The Bretonni tribesmen had by now claimed the lands surrounding Athel Loren. The Wood Elves were content with this unofficial arrangement, for they seemed now to have an unwitting ally protecting the western fringes of the forest. However, this time of recovery was brought to an end when the Greenskin menace, always a dangerous threat, burst forth from mountain and cave to launch a massive and destructive attack upon the Bretonni. Worse, the borders of Athel Loren became constantly assailed, so that the defences of the forest were stretched to the limit. It looked as if the Bretonni would be destroyed, for they were a divided people and were being picked off one tribe at a time. The prophetess Naieth scied into the future, and saw on many of the twisting future threads that the survival of Athel Loren relied on the survival of these human neighbours. However, so great were the numbers attacking Athel Loren itself, that the Wood Elves could not spare any warriors to aid the Bretonni.

It was then that the vision of the Lady of the Lake appeared to a young Bretonni warrior-lord – Gilles the Breton. With this vision filling Gilles with strength and fiery resolve, he united the scattered tribes and rode across the lands, slaughtering the Greenskins in every battle. Urged on by visions of his goddess, he rode across the plains to the burning outskirts of Athel Loren. There, the Wood Elves rode out of the forest to join him, and fighting as one they broke the armies assailing Athel Loren, and rode them into the ground. Thus an uneasy alliance was formed with the Bretonnians, though the Wood Elves are an unpredictable and mistrustful ally at best. King Louis the Rash, Gilles' son, formalised the alliance between the two people in a grand banquet ceremony that several Wood Elf emissaries endured. Indeed, some even believe that one of these emissaries has remained in Bretonnia ever since in disguise. It is rare, but not unheard of, for Elves of Athel Loren to fight alongside the Bretonnians in battle, only to disappear once victory has been won. Nevertheless, the Bretonnians still regard Athel Loren as a fearful, haunted place, and are right to be wary of it. There are many nights throughout the year when humble Bretonnians dare not venture out, but rather lock and bar their doors and pray to their Lady goddess to protect them, for fear that they will be caught up in the wild hunt of Orion, or be drawn into Athel Loren by malicious spirits, never to be seen again. Despite (or perhaps because of) such dangers, many knights enter its borders in order to fulfil quests or to prove their bravery, though most are never seen again.



THE FATE OF THE BARON

For many centuries the people of the Bretonni tribe settled the lands north and west of Athel Loren. During this time they seldom penetrated into the vast Forest of Loren. No doubt the rumours and myths about the mysterious dwellers in the wood deterred them from venturing far into it to hunt. Occasionally warbands attempted to cross the heathlands surrounding the forest but as soon as they passed beyond the boundary stones they would be challenged by the chariots and riders of the Kindred of Equos. Ancient legends of those times still sung in Bretonnia tell of impetuous warlords who fell, Elf-shot, upon those heaths having transgressed the borders of the Elven realm. Thus the legend grew of the forbidden realm and the secretive Elven folk.

The Bretonni settlements surrounding the Wood Elf realm soon began to regard their mysterious neighbours as friends, especially when marauding bands of Orcs or other enemies rampaging across the land, violated the forbidden realm and either fled headlong or were never heard of again. Sometimes bands of Elves would be seen, stealthily making their way by starlight to intercept invaders, just as much to the advantage of the local Bretonnians as to the Elves. In gratitude the Bretonnians would leave offerings of armour and weapons or flagons of wine beside the boundary stones. These always mysteriously disappeared, being taken by the Elves as welcome luxuries from the world beyond.



In the last centuries before the Bretonnians became unified into a single kingdom under a single king, the settlements around Athel Loren had grown into powerful feudal domains ruled over by barons and their retinues of knights. Some of these barons were greedy for more land and looking for more wilderness to conquer. Hemmed in by the domains of their neighbours, they cast their eyes on the last remaining wilderness, the Forest of Loren. They were arrogant men who paid scant regard to age old folklore and believed themselves to be invincible.

It was Baron Fulk de Berg who first led a retinue of knights into the heathlands. They passed the boundary stones casting contemptuous eyes on the carvings upon them intended to ward off invaders and merely laughed. Riding onward they were met and challenged by Eldryn, a mighty chief of the Kindred of Equos and his followers. In the battle that ensued, the Elves were defeated by the knights. None of the Elves fled the field, but were cut down upon the heath within sight of their stronghold. The baron then despatched his men at arms to attack the stronghold. Although many fell to the longbows of the Elves, including many she-Elves enraged by the slaying of their kin, the baron's men could not be stopped. The remaining Elves retreated into the forest, abandoning the stronghold to the baron.

In the days that followed, Elven Scouts and Glade Riders watched the baron's army from the cover of the trees, while the King and Queen in the Wood took council with the kindreds. They observed the baron's men constructing a castle on the hilltop where the Elven stronghold had been. The great trees had been felled and ox teams were dragging huge monoliths, which were the uprooted boundary stones themselves, up the hill to be built into the castle walls. The Elves grew angry.

Worse was to come. The knights were growing restless and eager for adventure as work on the castle progressed. Some of them penetrated into the forest and began hunting the wild beasts. When some of the Scouts ambushed the knights, the arrows penetrated their armour without slaying any of them and the enraged knights began hunting the Elves for sport as well. They succeeded in riding down and slaying several Scouts before the arrows finally began to make their mark and some of the knights fell with shafts piercing their visors.

This encounter deterred the knights from going far into the forest for a while. Nevertheless, the baron had brought peasants from his domains and these began cutting down the trees at the edge of the forest and ploughing up the land that they had cleared. It was obvious that the baron intended to keep what he had captured. Soon other barons would follow his example and the realm of Athel Loren would be invaded from all sides.





The King and Queen in the Wood held counsel with the mages and chiefs of the kindreds as to how to combat the invaders. Orion became enraged at the news brought back by the Scouts and the pitiful sight of the Elves who fled from the stronghold which the baron's men had captured. It was only the wise words of Ariel which calmed his rage and prevented him unleashing the Wild Hunt upon the arrogant invaders.

Ariel knew these foes for what they were. Her insight was inspired. She counselled that the enemy were exceptional warriors, knights who loved war and considered it beneath their honour to retreat. They were determined and contemptuous of death. They could not be defeated as easily as Orcs and Goblins. Even if the Elves slew them all, it would just be a challenge to Bretonnian knighthood itself which would attract yet more knights eager to prove their worth. Ariel counselled against outright war on the baron.

What then, did the Queen propose, asked the counsel and Orion, barely able to contain his wrath desired to shed blood immediately. The baron's men have one weakness, announced Ariel, and this was their superstition. The way to defeat them was to show them powers beyond their comprehension. This would not only cause the present invaders to go away, but would ward off others of their kind in the future. They must be shown that the threat of the stones was real, and that violating the forbidden realm unleashed magical retribution. They must be made to believe that Athel Loren was an otherworldly place which could not be conquered like any other land.

The counsel was swayed. The young warriors were restrained and Orion calmed his anger and set down his hunting spear without it having tasted blood. The remaining chiefs of the Kindred of Equos banned their warriors from challenging the baron's army. Vengeance was prepared according to the plan of Ariel.

A few days later the baron and his men awoke in the early morning within the partly built castle walls. They found themselves surrounded by an eerie dank mist. As the mist began to rise the retinue was horrified to see massive trees all around them, it was as though a huge forest had grown up overnight. The baron suspected Elven sorcery and summoned the peasants with their axes to demonstrate to his men that even these magical trees could soon be dealt with. Unfortunately the peasants had already fled, being more superstitious than the soldiers, and taken their axes and oxen with them.

Then the new foundations of the castle began to crack and crumble. The knights were thrown into panic as huge stones tumbled on their heads. Their armour was of no avail, nor was their honour or their courage. The trees, which were none other than 'freemen summoned by Ariel herself, savagely demolished the half-built keep and entombed the baron alive beneath the rubble. Barely a handful of his retainers survived and fled spreading rumours of sorcery far and wide throughout Bretonnia.

Since that time, no other baron has dared to transgress the boundary of Athel Loren. According to Bretonnian beliefs, no castle walls can be built upon this enchanted land. A great heap of tumbled and overgrown stones remains to this day as a reminder of Baron Fulk's folly and his fate.

ALLIANCE WITH BRETONNIA

When Louis the Rash was crowned as the first king of Bretonnia he inherited a realm which had been united by Gilles le Breton. The only region which was not subject to his rule was the Forest of Loren. Gilles had been careful to avoid transgressing the boundaries of the Wood Elf realm and so had really recognised its independence and separateness from Bretonnia. Even Louis was not so rash as to send his knights to conquer



the forest from its age-old inhabitants. The fate of Baron Fulk was still remembered. Instead Louis realised the value of a strong realm guarding his vulnerable southeastern border. He knew that as long as Athel Loren remained it would be difficult or impossible for enemies to invade Bretonnia from this direction. Furthermore, the Elves defended themselves and, unlike barons, looked for no favours from the king in return.

Louis therefore chose one of his most esteemed Questing Knights and despatched him into the Forest of Loren to meet with the King and Queen in the Wood. Only a Questing Knight would be reckless and brave enough to attempt this task alone. Only a lone knight would have a chance of passing through the borderlands as a messenger. If a party of knights were sent the Elves would definitely attack them, believing them to be a baron's retinue intent on invasion.

The chosen knight was Gaston de Gaillard. He rode boldly into Athel Loren observed by the watchers in the wood. None of the Elves impeded his progress and he was able to approach almost to the Council Glade itself where Orion and the mages and chiefs of the kindreds awaited him. Meanwhile Arid assuming her Sylph form decided to put the knight to the test. She used enchantments, invoked Dryads and brought Treernen to scare Gaston as he rode through the forest. Despite every strange and disturbing ploy she used against him, he remained calm and determined and his sword rested by his side. Ariel thus knew that Gaston was on an errand of peace and was also an honourable knight whom her folk could trust. She finally appeared to him in her true form and led him into the Council Glade.

Gaston delivered the message of the King of Bretonnia offering eternal friendship and alliance with Athel Loren. No barons would be permitted by the king to transgress the ancient boundaries of the Wood Elf realm if in return, the Wood Elves would ally with the Bretonnians against their common enemies. The King and Queen in the Wood accepted Louis' offer of friendship and Gaston returned with their message and various strange and magical gifts for his king. Since that time the realm of Athel Loren has been respected by all Bretonnians and Bretonnian knights and Wood Elf archers have joined forces to fight their foes on many great battlefields.



ALLISARA'S BANE

As stories of Athel Loren began to spread in the outside world, so too did word concerning events in other lands trickle into the forest. Many of the tidings were ignored, for the Elves concerned themselves little with the affairs of their inferiors. Reports concerning the ongoing vendetta between Ulthuan and Naggaroth were not so readily dismissed. Most Wood Elves were filled with disdain that such a pointless war still dragged on, but to others the news brought only


sorrow. Foremost amongst these was Allisara, sister to Ariel and once, long ago, wife to Malekith of Naggaroth. She had come to Athel Loren shortly before Malekith began his rebellion, and had ever since dwelt in solitude, seeking to still her troubled heart. In time she came to learn much of Malekith's deeds, and came to feel guilt for the path her husband had taken. So it was that Allisara pleaded with Ariel for leave to depart Athel Loren and return to Malekith's side, in order that she might soothe the rage in his soul. Ariel was loath to grant this request but, seeing her sister's determination, relented. Arrangements were made, and Allisara soon travelled west with an escort befitting her rank.

Malekith strove to keep Allisara's imminent return hidden from all in Naggaroth, but his mother Morathi flouted these precautions with laughable ease. She did not want Allisara to return, but nor did she dare act directly. Instead, she disguised herself and charmed Valedor, a disgraced prince of Ulthuan, and led him to believe that Allisara's escort was, in fact, an army of Elves who had pledged aid to Naggaroth. Blinded by Morathi's spells and his own desire to regain high station, Valedor gathered what forces he could and brought the Wood Elves to battle on the shores of Bretonnia.

Mighty was the battle that day, though it is ill-remembered by any save the Bretonnians, for whom it passed into legend as a battle between glorious and terrible gods. Though the Wood Elves fought without fear, it was a battle that they could not win. As it became clear that they could find no victory, the leader of Allisara's escort bade her flee. Alas, an ill-fated arrow felled the eagle that carried her away from harm, and she was left weaponless and alone before Valedor.

As the prince moved in for the killing blow, Allisara saw plain the madness that Morathi had placed upon him. Desperately, she sought the proper counter-charm that would set the prince free, but the Hag Sorceress was not so easily thwarted. Allisara was still trying to break the spell when Valedor's spear pierced her heart. As Allisara collapsed, her dying breath formed the final syllable of the counter-charm. All at once, the madness fell from Valedor's eyes, and he wept for his deeds that day. Overtaken by despair, the prince cast himself from the bluff and into the churning waters below.

Allisara saw none of this, for her soul had already fled. With their commander's death, the High Elves withdrew. Some thought that they had prevented a great evil; others suspected that same evil had been wrought by their own hands. Few of either group spoke of it ever again. Only a handful of Wood Elves survived to bring word to Athel Loren and, when Ariel learned of her sister's death, a great quiet fell over King's Glade, one that remained unbroken for many risings and settings of the sun. Winter came early to Athel Loren that year. As the frost hung ever heavier on the bow, Ariel's grief became bitterness, and bitterness became wrath. The Season of Retribution was about to begin.



Guiding his great white charger onwards through the trees, the horse stepping carefully over exposed roots and mossy hummocks, the questing knight advanced further into the woods. His quest was of the utmost importance and it was imperative that he succeed: none had done so before him and his honour was at stake.

It had been just after dawn five days ago when Gaston de Gaillard had reached the edge of the forest. Having passed beyond the age-worn boundary stones and crossed the tract of open heathland that made up the borderlands of Athel Loren the knight had already completed a long and arduous trek and yet the most perilous part of his journey was still to come.

During those five days the wooded landscape had varied dramatically. One day his horse was climbing over high boulder-strewn crags, the vast panorama of the forest canopy laid out below him like a sea of rippling green; the next he was riding along the banks of a mist-shrouded lake, strange croakings echoing through the fog.

As well as being a shadowy world of dark mysteries the enchanted forest was also a place of spectacular beauty. Gurgling streams splashed between mossy banks and at times Gaston found himself in groves with lush, flowerstrewn lawns. In such areas he was careful that his horse did not crush too many of the delicate blooms under its hooves.

But the knight did not let the wonder of it all overwhelm him. Instead he concentrated on watching for any signs that he was about to be challenged by the guardians of the forest. So far no Wood Elves had attempted to impede his progress but the deeper he intruded into their realm the more likely he felt it was that he would be called to account.

Passing an elm, split down its middle in times past by lightning, Gaston rode on, listening out for any sound that might belie the presence of camouflaged archers. An hour later he passed the same tree again. Another ten steady steps forwards and suddenly Gaston found himself in an entirely different part of the woods, yews and pines proliferating where before there had been sturdy ash and elm trees. It was as if the forest were distorting itself around the trespasser and time no longer had any meaning. Perhaps this disturbing effect had begun as soon as Gaston left the wild heaths for the

country beneath the leafy bowers and he had been riding for ten days rather than five. Or possibly, perceived from the real world outside, he had only entered the forest a few hours ago. Whatever the truth, the questing knight would not let this strangeness prevent him from delivering his message.

Dusk fell in the twilight realm and Gaston considered making camp for the night. And then he saw the flickering lights visible in the distance. Sure that he must at last be nearing his goal Gaston urged his steed on, putting aside all thoughts of rest. However, as he approached the lights he saw them dance away towards more densely-thicketed regions. The ground was becoming softer beneath his charger's hooves which sank a few inches more with every step.

Gaston had heard rumours of the will-o'-the-wisps that could lure travellers away from the safe paths to perish in bottomless marshes or lead them to their doom in the lairs of mighty forest beasts. Turning his horse around, the knight rode back to firmer ground.

The trees gave way to a grassy glade and something large flew overhead, slow silent wing beats sending buffeting gusts against the knight. Glancing upwards Gaston glimpsed for a moment a silhouette against the shining white face of the moon, like a moth against a candle flame – then it was gone.

A high-pitched, musical laugh echoed between the trees. Scanning the glade, the knight could see nothing. Then, like a chuckling brook, the laughter came to Gaston's ears again and this time he caught sight of a slender creature skipping through the waist-high grass. Clad only in a shimmering, gown the maiden was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen. Her waist-length hair shone like silver in the moonlight and as she turned to face him, a seductive smile playing on her lips, he saw her violet eyes sparkle.

As he watched, other Elf-women emerged from the forest into the glade. Gaston was bewitched by their unearthly beauty: their fine features, their ivory skin and their slender, alluring bodies. He started to forget who he was and where he was going.

In a sudden moment of lucid clarity Gaston realised what was happening. Forcing himself to remember the purpose of his mission the knight set his

mind once more towards reaching the court of the Wood Elves. Resisting the charms of the forest maidens by sheer strength of will, King Louis' messenger pressed on, no longer distracted by the otherworldly temptresses, not even when they brushed softly past him and he felt their fragrant kisses blowing on his cheek. Gaston guided his horse through the glade back into the all-enveloping woods and the maidens vanished like dreams with the coming of dawn.


Gaston slowly became aware of a far off crashing, like the snapping of thick branches and the sound of trees being uprooted. He reacted instantly by reaching for his sword, his hand hovering over it, fingertips touching the hilt, but stopped himself. He could not act in a hostile manner, he was supposed to be bringing it message of peace to the forest. Gripping the reins even tighter and keeping his head facing only forwards, the knight did his best to pay no heed to the sounds of monstrous things bearing down on him.

Suddenly Gaston found himself assailed from all directions by shrieking sylvan spirits. Whip-like lashing limbs cracked the air in front and behind, whirling tangles of thorn swept close to his horse's flanks and gnarled, wooden fingers, each as long as a man's arm, grabbed for him, watched by eyes staring out from knots in the bark of mighty oaks.

Gaston dug his spurred heels into the charger's sides. With a whinny the horse broke into a gallop, jumping fallen logs and crashing through the bracken ground cover in its flight. His heart beating at the same steady rate, the knight remained calm, determined not to be discouraged from his quest by the supernatural guardians of the haunted forest.

The knight's horse, however, did not share its master's resolve. A great tree trunk leg was suddenly planted directly in the path of the charger as a lumbering oak stomped towards the intruders. Gaston's mount shied and reared before bolting away from the Treeman. Hanging half out of the saddle, the knight clung on to the charger's mane for dear life.

A screen of leafy boughs parted and the Mage Queen of Loren glided silently into the arbour of the Council Glade. Her vast ninth wings glittered in a myriad of colours as the shafts of sunlight caught every gleaming scale.



Even in her terrifying war aspect Ariel was possessed of an otherworldly beauty.

She was followed by a dishevelled-looking character who staggered into the clearing, blinking in the trailing stardust shower that fell from her scintillating iridescent body. The man was obviously a human knight although his armour was tarnished with swamp slime and his once fine cloak was muddied and torn. His helmet was missing and his hair was a tousled mess. The knight also came on foot, humbled by the loss of his steed.

Ariel descended gently to the glade floor. As she did so she visibly diminished in height, becoming as tall as any other it. She-Elf. Her wings folded, shrinking as they did so, seeming to become part of her regal robes. Transformed back from her sylph-form as Isha, Ariel became again the Queen in the Wood, the most stunning of Elven women. In the shady cool Gaston took in the breath-taking scene, his mouth agape in wonder. The Council Glade itself was formed by a circle of massive, ancient oaks but they were not like any trees the Bretonnian had ever seen. It was as if the trunks and branches had twined together as they grew, forming a maze of galleries and pathways through the treetops in which the Wood Elves now dwelt. Every tree was festooned with dangling creepers, verdant foliage and wild white roses.

A feather-robed figure, who Gaston took to be a mage, stood before a young oak, singing an eerie, lilting chant, never seeming to pause for breath. It was as if he were singing directly to the tree. And as the bewildered knight watched, the oak's supple branches gently twisted and bent in response to the mage's weird melody, new green buds thrusting from the hardening, brown skin with every cadence.

Other mages and Elven nobility thronged the glade, richly dressed in incredible costumes fashioned from nothing but plant-spun threads and what Athel Loren provided in the way of leaves and soft ferns. The chieftains, as well as being adorned with jewellery of polished walnut and mahogany beads, wore badges or heirlooms marking out their status and the kindred to which they belonged.

In one corner of the great glade a band of Elven youths performed elaborate dances of the utmost physical complexity, relating the renowned fables of their

culture through their dramatic movements. Not far from them a feral-looking Elf lavished care and attention on a dozing sabre-toothed tiger. It was apparent to the knight that the Elven folk of Athel Loren lived in complete harmony with the trees, plants and animals of the forest, totally in tune with their environment. He was truly awe-struck by the Wood Elves' affinity with nature. And then his gaze fell upon the lord of this magical, unspoiled domain.

Orion, King in the Wood, sat upon a throne at the edge of the glade. The living wood had been carved with depictions of Wood Elves feasting, dancing and fighting. He was incredibly handsome, his noble features belying a wisdom acquired over generations beyond measure. Ariel took her place on the ornate throne next to her husband's. The sight of these two wondrous and awesome beings only made the knight all the more of his own failings and insignificance. Before the immaculate Wood Elves, Gaston was also reminded of his own bedraggled appearance. The Queen turned her piercing eyes on Gaston. 'My lord,' she said sweetly, addressing Orion, 'the human has been tested and found to be noble of heart and true of purpose. Even when beset by our plant-brethren he resisted the urge to draw his weapon. He requests to speak with the King in the Wood on behalf of his liege, a king among men.'

Overcoming his exhaustion, Gaston prepared to address the sovereign lord of the Wood Elves. He bowed low before the King and Queen, enthroned in all their mystic glory.

'Your majesty, let me first offer my most sincere apologies for entering your presence in such a sorry condition,' Gaston began, surreptitiously brushing the moss from his clothes.

A wry smile had appeared on Orion's face. 'Arise, sir knight, and be welcome here,' he said, his voice a rich baritone in contrast to the other Elves. 'Perhaps it is I who should be apologising to you.'

'Surely not, my liege,' Gaston interjected.


Orion threw back his head and laughed, shaking his mane of hair. 'You have been watched since you entered our realm. As you rode over the heathland, riders mounted on great birds of prey circled high in the sky above you. In the woods,

Scouts concealed themselves in the bushes to watch you, and in the forest spied on you from the trees.'

Orion's voice, deep and booming, had a certain quality about it that made Gaston think of a lion roaring. 'I know that to your kind our behaviour is not easy to comprehend but to us the ways of man seem disturbing and cruel. Man destroys where we create and nurture. You try to dominate the land, to bind it with roads and weigh it down with buildings, while we wish only to live in harmony with nature, and share its beauty and munificence. This land is our home, and we shall let none despoil it.'

'But come tell us, why did you brave such perils to gain an audience with the King and Queen in the Wood?' Ariel enquired.

'I, Gaston de Galliard, come bearing salutations from Louis, King of all Bretonnia. And as well as greetings I bring the offer of eternal friendship from my people and am charged to entreat your most royal highnesses to join in an alliance with the kingdom of Bretonnia.'



Orion and Ariel listened attentively as the king's messenger outlined the proposals for the peace treaty. His speech over, the knight bowed again.

'Thank you, Sir Gaston,' Orion rumbled. 'We shall retire to consider your proposals. While you await our decision, you may care to enjoy our hospitality. We have prepared a feast in your honour, and my people will no doubt be entertained by tales from the land of men.'

Rising from her throne Ariel took Gaston by the arm and led him out of the glade, darting a savage smile at her husband. 'When you have eaten and rested we will talk further, for it is obvious that we have much to discuss.'

As the exhausted knight allowed himself to be led away, he couldn't help wondering what had happened to all the other knights who had ventured into the Forest of Loren on the same quest as himself, never to be seen again. He was sure the Wood Elves knew, but realised it would be impolite to ask. By some combination of fate and circumstance, he, Gaston, had succeeded where so many others had failed, and his name would be immortalised in the history of his people for ever more.

THE SEASON OF RETRIBUTION

IV) 1-586 (Imperial Calendar 1117 to 1702)

Ariel was determined to discover the identity of those responsible for her sister's death, and bent all the energies of Athel Loren's seers to the task. She knew the murderers had been warriors of Ulthuan, but she sought the name of the enemy who had contrived the attack. Alas, Morathi had foreseen that such an attempt might be made, and had covered her tracks with charms of concealment. Ariel soon discovered that the even magics of the Weave, from which she drew her power, could not break these enchantments. In vengeful desperation, Ariel delved ever deeper into forbidden knowledge and mastered the very darkest of sorceries.

Using her new power, the Mage Queen restored a portion of Athel Loren's worldroots, and Orion used these pathways to loose a great host of war upon Ellyrion, the land of Prince Valedor's birth. The folk of Ellyrion were slow to respond. Kurnous had ever been the chief deity of their land, and they were slow to raise weapons against he who wore his aspect. Their hesitation was to cost them dearly. That summer, the plains of Ellyrion ran red with the blood of its people. Finally, even Orion could find no joy in this work; it was no hunt, but a slaughter. This would surely have brought Orion to quarrel with his queen, had not Ariel finally shattered Morathi's enchantments, revealing at last the Hag Sorceress and her wicked schemes.

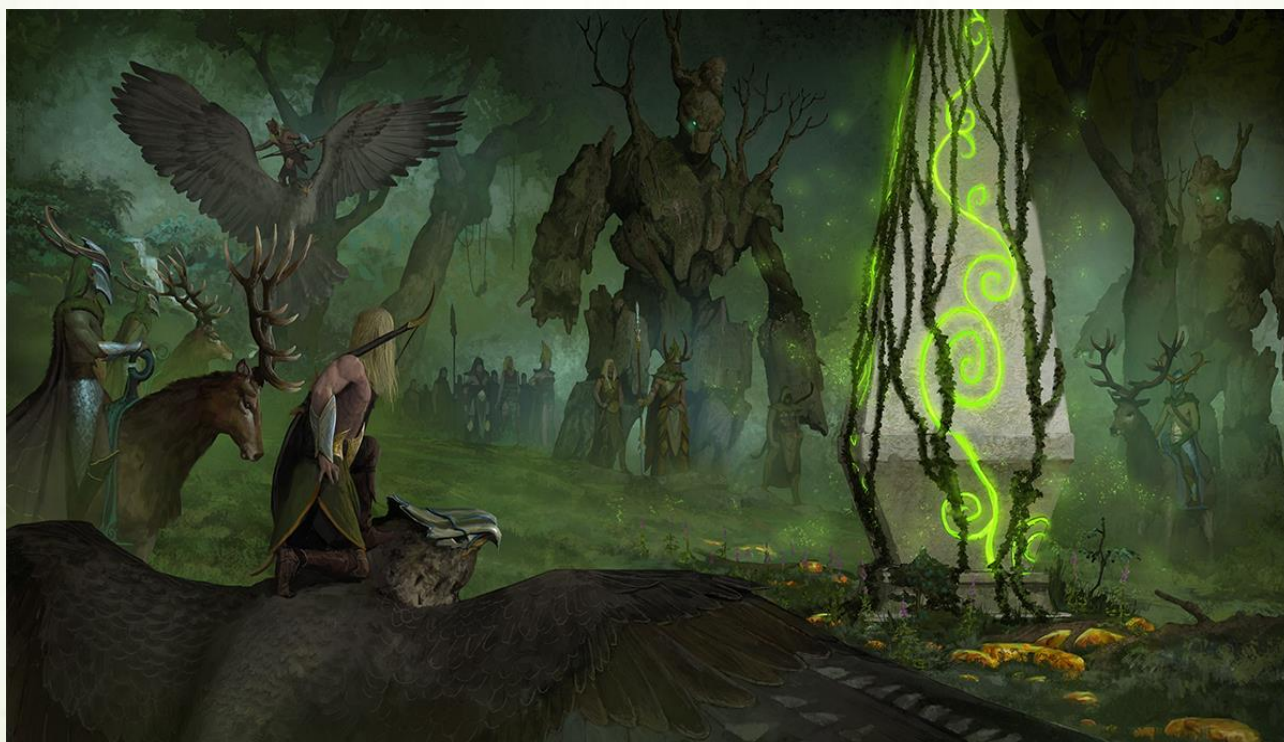
Now, the Wood Elves carried their vengeance northwest and into the bleak pine forests of Naggaroth. They had no desire to tarry in that land, for its woods were bitter and lifeless things, and the chill air sapped

the heart of even the cruellest of Dryads. They soon brought Morathi's fortress of Ghronnd under siege. The Tower of Prophecy's defences had been wrought to guard against attack from the frozen north, not one that had emerged from the forests of its own heartlands, and its outer walls soon shattered under the fists of Treemen. Desperate, Morathi sent messengers south to request aid from her son, the Witch King. Alas for the Hag Sorceress, Malekith had long since learned of his mother's role in Allisara's death. Though the Witch King had publicly forgiven Morathi her transgression, he now saw an opportunity to bring her to heel, and it was with grim amusement that he forbade any aid be sent north.

MORATHI HUMILIATED

Finally, and at the cost of many thousands of lives, the Wood Elves breached Ghronnd's inner citadel. Cornered and desperate, Morathi fell back upon deceit. Abasing herself before Ariel and Orion, she made great show of repentance. Orion wanted the business done with, and would have taken Morathi's heart had Ariel given leave. Yet the Hag Sorceress had tasted the sorceries which Ariel had woven about herself, and now Morathi's serpentine tongue offered deeper insight into dark lore, if only Ariel would spare her life.

At the last, Ariel relented and accepted Morathi's bargain; after all, without the power of sorcery, she would never have been able to restore the long-sundered worldroots, nor overthrow Morathi's dark citadel. Ariel should not have accepted that bargain.





Indeed, the Mage Queen would not have accepted it had her soul not been shadowed by the sorceries she had already employed, but the lure of power was upon her. Morathi smiled inwardly as the deal was struck; she had no intention of giving up her greatest secrets, but if a portion of her knowledge must be shared to ensure survival, it was a price worth paying. So was Morathi allowed to live, and begin the slow process of remaking her ravaged fortress.

A DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

Upon their return to Athel Loren, Ariel and Orion quarrelled greatly about the deal that had been struck. Legends tell how their arguments raged for days without meeting resolution, and of how that year the normally glorious autumn months were marred by icy cold. Next spring, the unthinkable happened – Orion was not reborn. The Wild Riders brought their supplicant to the Oak of Ages, but Ariel sent them away without explanation.

The Mage Queen now became ever more reckless. Indeed, many lords and ladies of the queen's court believed that she had gone mad. Soon Ariel's bitter nature spread to the spirits of the forest, and without the outlet of Orion's Wild Hunt to vent their spite, they began to prey on the Elves in a way that hadn't been seen for centuries. Within a decade, life in Athel Loren had shifted from symbiotic harmony to a daily battle for survival. The Elves and spirits neither noticed nor cared, for their perceptions had insidiously shifted as the forest had changed. Indeed, none could recall living another way. Only a few had a sense that the balance had shifted, and to these life now became a waking nightmare. Durthu and Adanhu were amongst those that kept their sanity, but they could do nothing in the face of the burgeoning madness.

The Wood Elves now became ever more aggressive, and at Ariel's will journeyed far and wide, avenging the hurts of previous seasons. Bretonnian lords who expanded their domains too close to the forest's bounds were driven back. Dwarf holds that had sent warriors against Athel Loren found their trade caravans slaughtered and their armies ambushed on the march.

Greenskin tribes were exterminated, or driven from their lairs in the mountains. Ariel used her sorceries to reinforce many of these attacks. Never again, she swore, would Athel Loren suffer from the greed or cruelty of primitives. What she did not realise was that the more she drew on the forbidden magics, the more damage was done to the Weave and, as a consequence, the weaker Athel Loren – and all who dwelt within it – became.

Before long, Morghur arose again, this time in the Forest of Shadows. On this occasion, Ariel resolved that the creature's corruption would be stilled once and for all – she would consume his power as he had ever tried to devour hers. The Mage Queen sent a host north through the worldroots, and they soon brought Morghur's warherd to battle. As they had before, the Wood Elves found the Corruptor all but immune to their weapons, but Ariel had planned against this circumstance. Indeed, she relied upon it. At the battle's height, Ariel directed a great convocation of Spellsingers to snare Morghur and transport him through the worldroots to the Oak of Ages. There she bound the foul creature with all the dark magics at her command, and began the ritual that would make his power her own.

She would have succeeded in this disastrous plan had it not been for Durthu. The Elder had felt the disturbance as the Corruptor had been brought along the worldroots, and was outraged that their sanctity could be so violated. Hastening to the Oak of Ages, he slew Morghur before the ritual could be completed. Ariel screamed and railed at Durthu, but dared do no more. Even deluded as she was, the Mage Queen knew better than to harm one of the Elders, so she let him depart, claiming ever after that it was mercy, rather than weakness, that stayed her hand.

THE PRICE OF POWER

Decades passed. Still Ariel refused to allow Orion to be reborn, and still the Wood Elves cruelly pursued every slight inflicted on them. Dwarfen traders entered the Pine Craggs, and were slaughtered without mercy. When the mountain dwellers took revenge, the Wood Elves destroyed several holds in the Grey Mountains, though even they could not breach the mighty fortifications of Karak Norn. Later, when a hopelessly lost Empire army blundered into the Meadow Glades, not only was it crushed without mercy, but Ariel loosed Dryads to raze the town from whence it had marched. The Bretonnian cities of Parravon and Quenelles suffered most of all, and teetered towards abandonment as peasants and nobles alike fled west to escape the cruelty of the Elves. But the Wood Elves were now dwindling. Some perished whilst warring in other lands, but most sickened and died as the imbalance Ariel had caused in the Weave took hold. Many of the newly-created worldroots withered and could not be healed, no matter what the Mage Queen tried. Yet even this disaster would not turn Ariel from her path, so utterly had the Dark Magic tainted her soul.



At around this time, the Phoenix King of Ulthuan sent ambassadors to Athel Loren in an attempt to heal the wounds of the past. Ariel scornfully rejected the High Elves' advances, and trapped them within the unseen paths of the forest. Unable to navigate Athel Loren as instinctively as the Wood Elves, the ambassadorial party remained trapped for long decades. They finally escaped only to blunder into an army of Bretonnians seeking recompense for the Wood Elves' predations, and were soon after burnt at the stake by vengeful humans.

At the last, the Elders of the forest could stand by no more. Spring came upon them, but there was no sign of renewal. Indeed, they could feel the forest withering and dying around them, and knew that disaster could only be averted if the taint in Ariel's soul could be cleansed. With the aid of a young seeress named Naieth, who had herself resisted the madness of those times, they gathered what forces they could and marched on the King's Glade. There Adanhu tried to reason with Ariel. He sought to turn the Mage Queen aside from the path she had taken, but she denied him, and saw only an army come to dethrone her. Issuing a great shriek, Ariel summoned the maddened Elves and spirits to her side, and ordered her challengers be-gone.

Battle then broke out in the heart of Athel Loren, though afterward none could say which side struck the first blow. The tide soon turned against Adanhu and his followers, for they were badly outnumbered. Thus did the Elder resort to a desperate deed. Reaching out to Ariel through their shared connection with the Weave, Adanhu drew the taint from her heart and into his own. Alas, that selfless act was Adanhu's last – the burden which Ariel had borne those long years was too great for the mighty Elder, and he perished instantly.

All at once, the madness passed from the forest. Elves and spirits awoke as from a nightmare, the cloak of vengeance and spite that had clouded their vision for so long at least melting away like snow in the first days of spring. Ariel saw none of this. Adanhu's final gift had



brought awareness of all the harm she had wrought, of the natural cycles she had put out of balance by selfishness. Weeping, the Mage Queen fled and hid within the Oak of Ages, there to atone for her sins and focus on restoring the harm that she had done.

The Season of Retribution was finally ended, and a time of healing could now begin.

THE BATTLE OF PINE CRAGS

The Dwarfs have always tended to venture westwards rather than eastwards, perhaps because they remember the fate of the Chaos Dwarfs who went into the east. The Dwarfs have also been attracted by the stories of lost treasures which are to be found in the west. Some of these were lost at the time of the wars between the Elves and Dwarfs.

Dwarf expeditions going into the west usually follow a route along the mountain chains where their progress goes unnoticed, rather than trekking across the Empire or through Tilea. When they reach the Grey Mountains however, they must descend into the lowlands in order to find the ruins and burial mounds containing the treasure they seek. This means invading Bretonnia and provoking a fight with the local barons.

Alternatively, the Dwarf expedition can choose to enter the Forest of Loren, where no knights will attempt to stop them. However, the forest has its own perils for Dwarfs, older and more implacable enemies, the Wood Elves. Unfortunately for the Dwarfs, their sagas seldom mention these secret dwellers of the forest. This is because the sagas were often written down before the Elf colonies were abandoned and thus before the Elves who stayed in the Old World migrated into the forest. Few if any Dwarfs who have encountered the Wood Elves have returned to tell the tale. So it is often the case that the Dwarfs do not know that the Wood Elves are there and march confidently through the Forest of Loren and into an ambush! The expedition of Grugni Goldfinder did exactly this in the year 1350 of the Imperial Calendar when they descended from the Grey Mountains.

Grugni, a notorious treasure hunter, was seeking burial mounds to rob. He only had old Dwarf sagas and legends to guide him, which dated back to the days before the War of the Beard. The mounds he was seeking were probably those of the wild heaths which surround the Forest of Loren to the north and west. Grugni's route would thus have to pass through Loren, which had since become the realm of the Wood Elves. The invading force was either unaware of this or recklessly overconfident.

Grugni's expeditionary force included a large contingent of Trollslayers (which says a lot about what the other Dwarfs thought about the probable fate of the expedition!). Grugni, however, was more confident of returning, especially since he was taking a cannon with him.



The Dwarfs did not find dragging a cannon through the mountains to be an easy task, especially when the ale ran out. A mutiny was only avoided when Grugni reluctantly agreed to abandon the cannon. The brass was melted down to make more armour and weapons. Then the expedition prepared for the final descent into the wild forest which could be seen from the mountain tops.

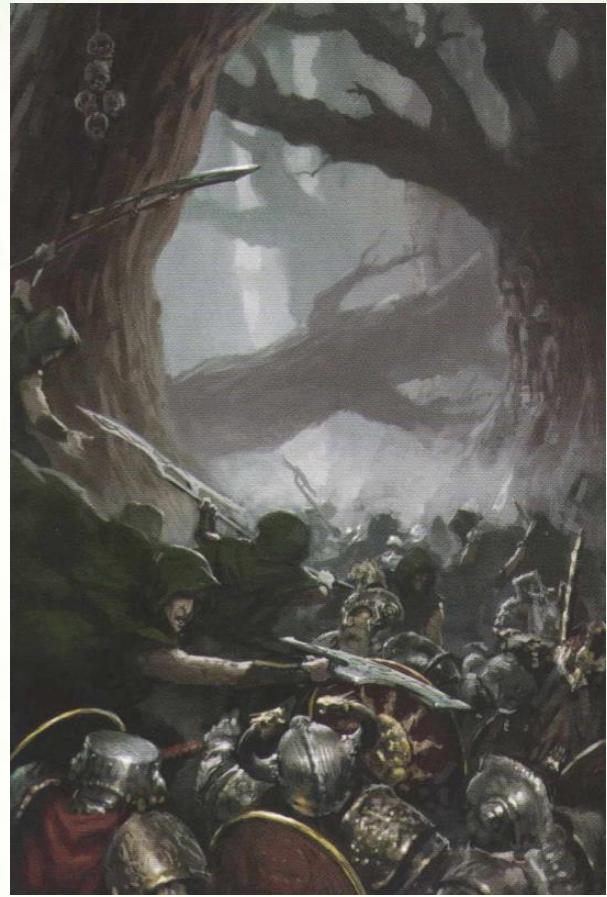
This involved trekking along a wooded ravine known to the Elves as Pine Crag. The sides of the chasm were thickly wooded with gnarled pine trees. In the tallest branches and on the pinnacles of rock were the eyries of Great Eagles and also the dwelling places of the Elven Warhawk riders. At the entrance to the ravine the Dwarfs passed an ancient tree with sacred symbols carved into its living trunk. Heedlessly Grugni's Dwarfs passed by this boundary marker and entered the forbidden realm. The Dwarfs felled trees and lit fires as they went, which alarmed the Wood Elves dwelling in the forest.

As the Dwarf expedition progressed along the chasm, the Warhawk riders flew high above towards the forest to warn the other Elves about the approach of the foe. Dwarfs were the old enemy against whom the first guardians of the forest had fought and it was known that they only ever came to steal treasures, not to trade peacefully. The kindreds therefore prepared to fight and gathered at the far end of the ravine to ambush the Dwarf column.

Grugni, always wary of Orcs and Goblins in rocky terrain, took precautions. He divided the Trollslayers and marched with a contingent of these as the vanguard and the rearguard of his column. He was after all an experienced adventurer and knew the risk of ambush. The Trollslayers could be trusted to fight their way through at the front and hold their ground at the rear. What Grugni did not expect were unseen Elves with longbows and the strange Dryads and Treemen unknown in his homelands.

The Elves were led by Findol, chief of the Kindred of the Pine Glades, into whose dwelling place the Dwarfs had blundered. The Elves regard the Dwarfs as destructive, greed-filled, ugly creatures oblivious to the beauty of the natural world, who burn the forests to feed their machines and spend their lives devoted to grubbing in the earth searching for precious metals and stones. As such, when Goldfinder and his warriors advanced along the Pine Crag ravine, the Elven Lord Findol, hatred burning within his heart, quickly gathered his forces to attack. He was not prepared to allow his sacred shrine glades to be pillaged or his beloved pines to be felled for firewood. His first plot was to tempt the foe onwards with his scouts.

The Elves peppered the Dwarfs with bowfire, infuriating the proud Grungni. Wishing to face his foe toe-to-toe, if not eye-to-eye, he ordered his troops into tight shield-walls and marched towards the Elven line. Thus the Dwarfs were drawn further into the ravine.



Brightly painted Dwarf Slayers recklessly raced at the Elves, and were led deep into the forest, where they were shot down by more Elves hidden among the rocks and pines, one by one, without ever getting close to their enemy. In these circumstances, the Wood Elves would not need to outnumber the Dwarfs and may even have been a smaller force.

Elven mages ensured that the retreat of the Dwarfs was closed, as the forest closed ranks and ensnared the Dwarfs in the trap. Meanwhile, several Treemen resembling gnarled old pine trees had been passed unseen by the Dwarfs, and these now came down from the crags and closed in behind the column. The Trollslayers at the rear of the column eventually noticed that the way they had come was blocked by trees which hadn't been there before. They frantically attacked these with their axes. The Treemen retaliated with equal ferocity and soon all the remaining Trollslayers were slain.

Grungni, realising he was surrounded, formed his followers into a solid square shieldwall around him since they were hemmed in to front and rear by foes and to each side by the steep slopes of the gorge, but their doom was already assured. The nimble Elves worked their way along the upper slopes raining arrows down upon the Dwarfs weakening the shieldwall with every volley. The Dwarfs were cut down by the withering fire from the Elves. Soon there were so few Dwarfs left that the Elves attacked them hand to hand with swords and daggers. Although the Dwarfs fought bravely, not one escaped the wrath of the Elves.



Grungni was the last Dwarf left alive, and he stood surrounded by his slain kin, swearing and bellowing in rage. The sister-twins of the Pine Crag, the legendary Naestra and Arahan, finally slew him, simultaneously sending arrows thudding into his eyes. The Great Eagles and Warhawks would ultimately use their bleached bones to build their nests in the heights of the crags.

IMPERIAL AMBITIONS

The border between the Empire and Bretonnia runs for a great distance along the Grey Mountains. Over the centuries there have been countless battles and skirmishes on this disputed frontier, usually between the forces of rival counts and barons trying to wrest lands from each other in the name of the Emperor or the king of Bretonnia.

The Forest of Loren, nestling as it does in the wedge of territory between the eastern and southern borders of Bretonnia, has sometimes become the scene of fighting spilling over from the adjacent frontiers. The Bretonnians are always careful to avoid entering the realm of Athel Loren, but their enemies are not so fussy. This is when the alliance between Bretonnia and the Wood Elves works greatly to the benefit of Bretonnia, because no invading army can ever successfully outflank Bretonnia by marching through the Forest of Loren, though many have tried!

One such attempt was made by Count Ulrich von Schloss of Reikland, a henchman of the Emperor and notorious menace to civilisation. Ulrich hired many mercenaries, preferring the worst and cheapest. This led him to strike a deal with Duke Bastinardo of Tilea to supply him with crossbowmen in return for cannons from the Empire. Bastinardo had not been told that the cannons were defective...

Having clinched the deal, Ulrich then led his motley army over the Grey Mountains via a route revealed to him by Bastinardo's men. This would take the count's army into Bretonnia from the south, through the Forest of Loren and enable him to attack his old rival the Duke of Quenelles from an unexpected direction.

If Ulrich had ever heard of Wood Elves he must have dismissed them as myth and heresy and recklessly proceeded with his doomed plan. Ulrich was however sensible enough to keep out of the deepest part of the forest. Instead he followed the headwaters of the river Brienne which he knew would ultimately lead him to Quenelles on the far side of the forested wilderness. This meant that his army would traverse the region known to the Wood Elves as the Meadow Glades, where the trees thinned out to meadows beside the meandering river. It was here that the best herds of the Kindred of Equos grazed in secret and safety.

Ulrich had brought with him a contingent of Kislevite nomads, cut-throats and horse-thieves to a man. Their job was to scout ahead of the army. They were so

drunk on vodka that they failed to catch sight of the Elf Scouts watching in the groves of trees. What they did see were the herds of beautiful white Elven steeds grazing among the sunlit glades. The Kislevites could not resist the temptation to try and capture some of these fine horses and rode about wildly with lassos. It was then that the Wood Elves shot them with their arrows.


The surviving Kislevites fled back to the count's advancing army spreading panic and dismay. Hastily the count deployed his Tilean crossbowmen but they could not see the stealthy advance of the Elven Scouts from grove to grove. Meanwhile word of the invaders was sent to the King and Queen in the Wood. Soon the forest reverberated to the awesome sound of the Horn of the Wild Hunt. Orion was approaching! With him came the cohorts of the Elven kindreds.

Even the Tileans with their crossbows were no match for the archers of Loren shooting from among the trees and after getting the worst of the volleys, they broke and fled. The count and his armoured men stood their ground until Orion himself charged like a mighty stag among their ranks. This was too much for the count's thugs who scattered in all directions. The ruters were pursued and finished off by bands of Glade Riders.

As for the count, he fled alone towards Tilea and through extreme cowardice somehow managed to escape the vengeance of the Elves. He found his way through the mountains and arrived at the castle of Duke Bastinardo of Tilea, hoping to benefit from his hospitality. Unfortunately, Bastinardo had already tried out the cannons! Count Ulrich was treated to die hospitality of Bastinardo's famous dungeons.







The treasure of Deilin cân

With a strangled roar, the huge bear keeled over and remained motionless, the Dwarf Champion's battleaxe sunk up to its hilt between the animal's shoulder blades. Thorgar Bonebreaker stood with his hands on his hips, a satisfied grin spread across his grizzled face.

'Well done, Thorgar!' Nord Copperbeard exclaimed, giving his companion a hefty wallop on the back. 'You always could handle that axe of yours.'

'Yes, that's something else they'll be able to add to the saga of the Search for the Treasure of Deilin Cân,' said Dmngol Stonehammer. 'By the time we're through it'll be as famous as the Dirge of Lingrun Runeaxe.'

Though not for the same reason, I hope,' added Norri.

'I could have killed that bear with one hand behind my back.'

Tugging Skullbiter from the bear's corpse Thorgar spun round to face the Long Beard, testing the weight of the great axe as he did so. 'Why didn't you then?' he growled.

'Now don't go getting all grudgesome on me. I'm just saying that in my day we used to kill bears just to polish our axes.'

Wulf Wulfensson teased a burr out of his luxurious snowy beard. 'Anyway, you wouldn't have had to fight it if Ordo hadn't fallen into this trap'

'How was he supposed to know it was there?' Norri spoke up defensively.

'Well I did warn you that these Elves are crafty fellows,' Wulf said, knowingly. 'It's as obvious as a seam of gold in a coal face,' he muttered under his beard.

'Is anyone actually going to get me out of this hole,' came a gruff voice from inside the pit. 'or am I going to have to spend the rest of my days down here?'

Without further prompting the Dwarfs proceeded to rescue their companion from the staked pit. Ordo had been fortunate: thanks to his reduced stature only two of the wooden stakes had done any damage, the first grating his thigh and the second puncturing his chainmail to inflict a minor flesh wound to his side.

Wulf sat down on a tree stump and took out a small keg from his pack. The cork came free with a pop and the aged Dwarf began to gulp down its contents noisily. Thorgar

turned to Skaz Grego. 'How far is it now?' he asked.

Laying down his trusty pick, Skaz took the crumpled parchment from inside his jerkin and unfolded it, spreading the map out on a tree trunk for the others to see. 'Through this gully here,' he said, tracing the route with a stubby finger, 'over this ridge and we should be there.'

Drongol had now finished cleaning and bandaging the elder Dwarf's wound, and Ordo was as eager as any of them to be on their way.

'Right, then I think it's time to' - Thorgar was interrupted by a loud belch from Wulf - 'get moving again.'

Burping loudly for a second time, the old Dwarf stowed the small keg safely back in his pack before picking up his notched sword, lightening his belt he finally joined the others in line. The party of bold adventurers set off again at a march, Norri whistling to himself as he went.

As they marched on through the forest, Thorgar's mind wandered. Karak Nom seemed a world away. For a race used to the bleak, craggy peaks of the Grey Mountains and a life underground, the endless expanse of greenery was an alien habitat. Being out in the open for so long wasn't natural but Thorgar knew that ultimately the sacrifice would be worth it. Somewhere amidst these hills and hollows the treasure of Deilin Cân was hidden.

The Dwarf Champion had first heard of the 'treasure behind the water' two months ago, in the snow-swept peaks of his homeland. Trudging through the drifts on his way back to Karak morn he had come across the human sorcerer, half buried by the snow. His body had been lacerated, as if by the talons of a huge bird, and he was on the verge of death due to loss of blood and the numbing cold. However, before he died, the wizard passed on the secret of the treasure and the map that went with it.

Mustering together a band of hardy Dwarfs willing to risk all for the greatest reward, Thorgar Bonebreaker had set out into the forest over the mountain, mystical realm of the Wood Elves.

With his dying breath, the wizard had whispered that the treasure was more valuable than gold or silver. Images of diamonds as big as anvils and priceless magic artefacts from the time of the Ancestor Gods had immediately filled Thorgar's mind, and it was all he could do not to foam

at the mouth so great was the gold-lust whipped up inside him.

Such a prize would swell the ailing treasure vaults of his family, and restore their pride and honour. Furthermore, it would make him very, very rich.

The party had already braved rapids, a swamp and the constant attentions of the forest's bestial denizens. They had also seen signs of the Wood Elves' presence in the woods. The most obvious and inconvenient example had been when Norri, Skaz and Drongol had suddenly found themselves yanked up into the air and left dangling, trussed up in a net, from a towering conifer. Thorgar wondered what other surprises the forest had in store for them.

'Shhh-Chunk!' An arrow thudded into the bark of a beech tree inches from Thorgar's nose, rousing him from his reverie as another flighted shaft was deflected by his rune-guarded armour.

'Ambush?' Norri yelled.

Thorgar keenly scanned both sides of the gully but could see no sign of their attackers. There was a cry from another member of the party and this time the Dwarf leader saw a flicker of movement in the undergrowth at the top of a bank.

'Take cover!' Thorgar shouted and in a mad scramble the Dwarfs ducked under the overhanging sides of the gully. Looking round, he saw Drongol standing over the prone form of Wulf Wulfensson, holding the Long Beard's head in his callused hands.


'They got Wulf,' Dmngol said flatly. Thorgar could see the arrow protruding from the old Dwarf's chest, his laboured breathing testifying to the fact that a lung had been punctured.

Gasping for breath the Long Beard half-opened his eyes. 'My beer,' he spluttered, tears beginning to stream down his face.

'They got my beer...' Dmngol saw the shaft of an arrow sticking out of the splintered remains of Wulf's favourite keg.

He was suddenly aware of the fact that the old Dwarf had stopped breathing. For Wulf the adventure was over.

'Quickly!' Thorgar called to his fellow warriors. 'If we hurry we can make it over the ridge and then have our revenge on these cowardly Elves by stealing their treasure! That'll show them, by Grimnie Shouting the battle-cry of Karak Norn, the Dwarfs broke from cover and pounded along the gully. Seeing a movement in the bushes



above him, Ordo pulled the trigger on his crossbow, firing his bolt into the undergrowth and hoping that it would find its mark. Hearing the twang of Elven bow-strings and the hiss of arrows the Dwarf quickened his steps.

Norri Copperbeard was the first to reach the wooded ridge Skaz had pointed out on the map. Whooping with delighted satisfaction he leapt forward through the brushwood. With a whooshing sound another trap was sprung. Norri was thrown violently backwards, over the heads of the rest of the party, as if he had been clubbed by a giant.

Thorgar was the second to arrive at the crest of the ridge and approached the spot where Norri had met with his accident.

Once the impaler had been triggered a thick, yet supple, branch had whipped back into its natural position with deadly force. Thorgar did not need to look at Norri's body to know whether the Dwarf had survived the impact of the trap, the yard-long bloodied stake protruding from the branch told him everything he needed to know.

In a clatter of loose stones the four remaining adventurers slipped and tumbled their way down the slope to the edge of the hidden glade. Drongol and Skaz were both nursing arrow wounds but were not hindered too greatly by their injuries.

When Thorgar entered the grove he was stunned by the wonder of the place. Even by the dour standards of a Dwarf the place had a matchless beauty. On the far side of the glade a sparkling waterfall splashed down into a pool at the bottom of a fern-thronged cliff. Mossy rocks lapped by the clear waters almost shone with vibrant green life while vast swathes of wild flowers filled the rarefied air with their heady aroma. For a moment's respite the Dwarf was joined by his companions in awe-struck silence.

Shrieking like banshees, the Wardancers leapt into the glade from their sylvan hiding-places. The agile fighters landed deftly in front of the doughty Dwarfs who readied their weapons to taste Elven blood. In a blur of frantic, whirling forms the Wardancers commenced battle.

To the Dwarfs, used to the tried and trusted fighting methods of hack and slash, it was like fighting the wind. Before they could land a blow on an opponent, with almost balletic movements the Wardancers lithely slipped past the falling axes and swords only to deliver swift, stinging strokes from their own weapons.

Their combat skills honed through constant practice in their ritual dances, the Wardancers were a formidable foe indeed.

In their trance-like state the Elves were not distracted by anything, their subconscious minds guiding their strokes with deadly accuracy. Compared to the Wardancers the Dwarfs appeared clumsy and ungainly; and to make matters worse, Thorgar's party was outnumbered by almost two to one.

Bellowing in anger and frustration Thorgar lunged at the nearest of the Elves, the forest-dweller's naked, taut-muscled torso painted with swirling spirals of woad. Steel rang on steel as Skullbiter was parried by the Wardancer's elegant blade.

Pivoting on its toe tips the Elf brought down the sword in its other hand and struck Thorgar across the back. The chain links of his mailed vest crackled as the Rune of Stone inscribed upon the armour protected the Champion from harm once again.

Out of the corner of his eye, amid the weaving twists and turns of the enemy, Thorgar saw Ordo crumple and fall, then he was swinging his battle-axe against a new attacker.

His ears ringing from the blow struck against his helmet, Skaz ducked the flashing, spinning blades and swung his weapon with all the force he could manage. At the last second the Elf's body twisted out of the way and the Clansman's pick buried itself deep in the stony ground. Pulling desperately on its handle Skaz could feel the pick scraping free. With one final tug the weapon slid from the ground as the Dwarf saw the curved blade arcing towards his neck.

As Skullhiter missed its mark again, Thorgar looked up in startled surprise as his opponent leapt clean over his head and out of the way. Before he could turn round to face the Wardancer he felt a shocking stab of agonising pain as the Elf's blade was thrust into his side. The blow was landed with such force that even the Bonebreaker's magical armour could not guard against it, blue-white sparks spitting from the chairman as it was sliced through by the keenly-sharp metal of the Wardancer's sword.

Thorgar dropped to his knees, an expression of stunned disbelief on his craggy features. The Wardancers had ceased their whirling movement. Drongol Stonehammer lay dead at the edge of the pool, dark blood pouring from beneath his helmet into his thick, black beard, his skull fractured. And the Champion was dying too. The Elf blade had found its mark and even now his life-blood was pumping away with every heartbeat.

The leader of the Wardancer troupe stood over Thorgar, his shock of spiky hair making him look more animal than Elven. He stared down at the Dwarf impassively.

'The treasure – the treasure behind the water,' gasped Thorgar. 'Let me at least see it before I die.' His mind giddy with pain and visions of gold and jewels, he started to crawl painfully towards the waterfall.

The Wardancer smiled enigmatically, and walked beside the dying Dwarf as he pulled himself slowly across the ground.

Pausing for breath, Thorgar looked up to see one of the other Wardancers emerge from behind the curtain of water, an ornate wooden box in his long hands. He carried the box round the edge of the pool, and placed it reverentially on the ground just in front of the Dwarf.

Thorgar's pain was forgotten as he stared avariciously at the box. What could be inside? Not gold or silver, the box was too small and light. A magic amulet maybe, a huge gem, perhaps an ancient crown. He reached a trembling hand out to the box.

In a movement faster than sight could follow, the Wardancer bent down and clasped the Dwarf's wrist in a steely grip.

'You may not defile the treasure with your touch, Dwarf,' he said. 'But it is only right that you see what you and all your companions died for.' He nodded to the other Elf, who opened the intricate clasp and raised the box's lid.

Thorgar strained forward to look. The box was full of ancient brown oak leaves. Each leaf was covered with lines of tiny script, flowing Elf runes, perfectly executed and beautiful to behold.

Thorgar was stupefied by surprise and incomprehension.

'What the...?' was all he could gabble.

'This is the treasure of Deilin Can: herbal lore recorded centuries ago by one of Loran's greatest mages on leaves fallen from the Oak of Ages itself,' explained the Wood Elf.

'Its value is beyond price... to us. Low races cannot possibly appreciate their value. For us, knowledge is worth far more than base metal.'

Disappointment beyond reckoning flooded into Thorgar's consciousness. He and his brave band had risked their lives for a bunch of smelly old leaves, and they had paid the highest price. And with that one thought on his mind, the dejected and disgraced Thorgar Bonebreaker, Champion of Karak Morn, joined his ancestors at Grimnir's golden feast table.

THE SEASON OF REDEMPTION

V) 1-305 (Imperial Calendar 1703 to 2007)

Ariel's final act before sealing herself away was to return Orion to the world. Never had his return carried such sorrow, for though queen and consort exchanged many words, few of them were joyful. Many years would pass before Ariel was seen again amongst the glades of Athel Loren. At the close of each year, the Wild Riders brought Orion's ashes to the Oak of Ages, and each spring the King in the Woods was reborn. Yet for many long years he ruled alone. Ariel, in her sorrow and guilt, could not face her people, and instead dwelt silent and alone in the Oak of Ages. The Wood Elves were distraught that they should be so abandoned by she who was at once both mother and queen to them, but no amount of prayer or pleading would bring Ariel forth. So it was that the Mage Queen's throne of silver and Starwood sat empty for many turnings of the leaves.

Despite Ariel's absence, the cycle of life continued. The boundaries of the forest were guarded against intruders, the ancient glades were maintained and roving Beastmen warherds were slaughtered. Naieth argued for the folk of Athel Loren to put aside their isolationism. Such a radical departure from tradition was little to the taste of the lords and ladies, but a compromise was struck. Were it within the Wood Elves' power to redress wrongs committed against the

humans or Dwarfs of nearby lands – in essence, the creatures whose past transgressions had been born of crude ignorance, rather than wilful malice – then they would do so. Such acts could only hasten the restoration of the Weave, and strengthen Bretonnia to a point where it could again serve as Athel Loren's shield.

RIGHTING THE BALANCE

For several decades, all seemed well. The Wood Elves held true to their council's decision, and many an incredulous Dwarf king or Bretonnian duke found a losing battle reborn as victory through the aid of Athel Loren's keen-eyed archers. Many were the battles won, but the greatest without doubt were when the Skaven emerged from their Under-Empire and besieged the cities of Brionne and Quenelles.

In the Imperial year 1813, while the plague known as the Red Pox was raging in Bretonnia, two Skaven armies suddenly emerged north of the River Brienne, the Skaven had been able to infiltrate into Bretonnia by means of their subterranean tunnels. They had no doubt unleashed the Red Pox in order to weaken Bretonnia before their onslaught. Fortunately the realm of Athel Loren was too isolated and hidden for the plague to





spread there and protected from such evils by the enchantments of Ariel. Indeed Elves are far less susceptible to plagues than men.

The mages of Athel Loren had been aware of Skaven activity deep beneath their own forest realm for some time. Using their divining rods they had tried to follow the progress of Skaven tunnels far below the ground. Occasionally when a strong presence was detected, indicating that a tunnel had come near to the surface, an attempt was made to break into it to stop the Skaven in their evil work. The Wood Elves were well aware who the Skaven were and knew about their foul plans. Scouts ranging far and wide beyond Athel Loren brought back news of their activities. They were determined to prevent these vile ratmen from ever defiling their beloved forest. If a tree showed signs of withering it was sometimes a sign that Skaven were at work deep below. Fortunately there were very few tunnels beneath the Forest of Loren, but this made them all the more difficult to find.

On rare occasions when a tunnel was found, the mages would gather to seal it by means of rituals and magic. A huge monolith would be erected above the line of the tunnel detected by the divination of the mages. The stone would be carved with arcane symbols which directed the flow of magical energy through the earth into the tunnel, creating a powerful spell to deter the Skaven.

The Bretonnians, however, were taken completely by surprise by the Skaven infiltrators. Without warning

two huge hordes of Skaven disgorged between the cities of Brionne and Quenelles and began devastating the countryside. Soon both these cities were besieged. Messengers had managed to get through to the Duke of Parravon who hurriedly marched south at the head of an army of knights.

Although the Bretonnians did not ask for help from the King in the Wood it came anyway. Wood Elf Scouts had reported the invasion of the Skaven. Orion appointed the chief of the Kindred of Equos, Caradrel the Wrathful, to lead the Wood Elf army. The Glade Riders of his kin would make up the larger part of the force and they knew he would welcome the opportunity to unleash his renowned and terrible wrath upon the Skaven!

The Wood Elf army rode out to join forces with the Bretonnian knights as they approached Quenelles. Countless Elven archers had run at breathless pace beside the Glade Riders to fight beside them in battle. They were a most welcome addition to the allied army since the Bretonnians had left their infantry at home to guard the walls of Parravon and because the peasantry had suffered so badly from the plague that few bowmen could be mustered.

The Elf archers shot volleys of deadly arrows into the Skaven horde that came to meet them outside Quenelles. When the ranks of the ratmen had been thinned, the knights and Glade Riders charged to complete the victory. The Glade Riders, unencumbered by heavy armour like the knights were able to pursue the fleeing Skaven ensuring that few survived to fight again.

Barely delaying long enough to rest or bandage wounds, the combined army set off to relieve Brionne. Here the Skaven horde was defeated by the same tactics, though the battle was even longer and more savage. For three nights and days, the fey warriors of Athel Loren fought alongside the flower of Bretonnian chivalry, and finally drove the foul ratmen back into their tunnels. In honour of the victory, Caradrel, was accorded an honorary Knight of the Realm by Duke Merovech of Mousillon. Caradrel remained carefully polite whilst in the company of the humans, but removed the gaudy decoration Merovech had pinned upon him as soon as he was out of sight. Of the Elves that set out with Caradrel, barely half returned to Athel Loren.

It is doubtful that any guessed the Wood Elves' motivation at this time, and no explanation was given. After all, outsiders would never have understood the importance of maintaining the Weave. Even if they had been capable of grasping the concept, the Wood Elves were certainly not prepared to share their secret guilt. Little by little, the Bretonnians came to look upon the Wood Elves as allies once more. As for the Dwarfs, they took what aid was offered, but never a one considered striking an entry from the Book of Grudges in thanks.



No one fought harder than Orion. He knew full well the depth of his queen's hurt, and sought to soothe it. If that meant fighting alongside filthy Dwarfs, then his soul would bear that burden. He was a god, after all, and therefore capable of feats beyond the reach of mortals. However, with each passing year Orion's campaigns became longer and bloodier. Deep within the Oak of Ages, Ariel learned of this and grew troubled. It would serve the Wood Elves poorly if Orion's unchecked fury repeated the previous season's mistakes. The Mage Queen saw now that the balance between her and her consort was crucial to Athel Loren's survival. Unfortunately, the Mage Queen was not yet ready to leave the Oak of Ages and rejoin the council – nor would she be so for many seasons. Thus she sent emissaries in her stead, two heralds who shared her power and spoke with her voice. These were strangers to all but a few, who claimed to have fought alongside them in battles long past, even though the emissaries' age belied such a claim.

THE SISTERS OF TWILIGHT

Ariel's emissaries were twin maidens named Naestra and Arahan; only by the shade of their hair and their manner could they be told apart. Dark-maned Naestra's spirit was noble and chaste. Her touch could heal the rawest wound, and it was with heavy heart that she brought harm to even the foulest creature. By contrast, Arahan's hair was as white and newly fallen snow, and belied a wild soul that rejoiced in the viscera of battle. She revelled in the thrill of life, and her conduct ever teetered on the brink of the acceptable – even in a

realm as permissive as Athel Loren. In years to come, rumours would abound that Naestra and Arahan were but one being split in twain, the better to speak for the dark and light natures of Ariel's soul. And perhaps this was true.

Certainly the twins were never seen apart. Moreover, they often finished one another's sentences – though whether the original intent was maintained when this happened, or was twisted to match the speaker's will, it was impossible to say. Initially, the council did not accept Naestra and Arahan at their word, for they were strangers to all living Elves, and the spirits of the forest remained silent on the matter. The twins were treated with cautious respect, but barred from the King's Glade. Naestra took this distrust in her stride, never once raising her voice in ire; Arahan responded with anger and impetuous threats. Only when summer cooled to autumn, and Orion returned to the forest, was the matter settled. The King in the Woods instantly recognised the essence of his queen in the twins and, though he disliked the rebuke that their presence implied, grudgingly confirmed their authority. Thereafter, Naestra and Arahan took Ariel's place upon the council. Neither took her throne, but stood in attendance on either side of it whilst the council debated. Seldom did the twins speak, except to counteract the prevailing mood. Naestra addressed the council most often in the summer months, and sought only to temper wildness, whilst Arahan made outburst only in winter's dull months, when needless caution and lethargy were rife.



ARIEL RETURNS

In all, Ariel spent more than three centuries hidden from the world. It is likely she would have tarried longer, had she not discovered that Morghur had been reborn. Ariel sensed that this incarnation was more powerful than any that had preceded it, and that all of Athel Loren would need to unite to defeat him. In truth, the Mage Queen's soul was still not fully cleansed, and she worried on the wisdom of going forth unhealed. But she knew that dire times have ever required dire sacrifice, and emerged at last from the Oak of Ages.

Great was the rejoicing that day. The Wood Elves had all but given up their queen for lost, and now welcomed her without reservation. Even the spirits of the forest, who had longer memories than the Elves and who had borne the brunt of Ariel's madness, felt joy at her return – though few would admit it. Most joyous was the reunion between Ariel and Orion, for they had spent long centuries of sadness and anger apart. The celebrations were tempered not one whit by the knowledge that Ariel's return coincided with the eve of another great battle. If the Corruptor had returned their queen to them, said the Elves, then at least the misbegotten creature had done something wholesome in his vile existence. None of them saw the dark spark of malice that still lurked in Ariel's spirit. A taint of darkness can never be fully driven once it has taken root, a burden the Mage Queen would have to bear ever after. Often its darkness would call to her in the still watches of the night, when hope seemed lost. In the ages after, Ariel would never truly know which of her decisions were made out of malice, rather than reason.

A month later, as the outside world reckons time, Morghur's warherd was brought to battle in the Forest of Arden. The beast had already annihilated an army of knights riding from nearby Gisoreux, and doubtless believed that the host of Elves arrayed before him would fall just as easily. He was wrong. Having been forced to confront the darkness within her own soul, Ariel had lost her fear of Morghur and had accompanied her folk to war. Though she was content to let Orion command the battle, Ariel matched and overcame the dark sorceries of the Bray-Shamans with her own magics. Worse for the Beastmen was the fact that Naestra and Arahan too had accompanied the Elves to war. They fought not at their mistress's side, as perhaps might have been expected, but roamed far and free upon the back of a mighty Dragon. Naestra's purity was anathema to the Beastmen, and her very presence burned them like fire. Yet the Children of Chaos did not flee her coming, for Arahan fought ever at her sister's side. The shadowed twin's dark nature was an irresistible lure to the Beastmen, and they pursued her with mad hunger. Few survived long enough to reach their quarry, and those that did had their vile throats slit by Arahan's wicked knives.

At the last, their ranks scythed down by arrows, or scattered by the hooves of the Wild Hunt, the Beastmen could take no more. As one, the warherd turned and melted away into the woods. Only Morghur stood his ground, gibbering his wild madness at those who came to claim his life. The Corruptor was gravely wounded, his hide pierced by many arrows, but still the will of the Dark Gods drove him to defiance. Then a final bowstring sang, and at last Morghur fell dead, a black arrow protruding from his eye socket.

Great was the feasting in Athel Loren when the host returned. Many heroes had made their names that day. Most lauded of these was Scarloc, the archer whose arrow had finally felled the Master of Skulls; but there was glory aplenty in which all the Elves could share. Thus passed the Season of Redemption. Ariel and Orion were at last reunited, and the Wood Elves' sundered spirits were again made whole.



Grey Seer Skreek scoured the twisted trees surrounding the glade in which the Skaven tunnel had emerged. He could see nothing untoward, but felt uneasy. The monolith that had halted their progress with its guard spell of sickly purity stood as a marker for their tunnel's exit. As the sun sank below the tree tops the glow of guttering warpstone torches cast eerie, flickering shadows along the trees.

This close to the heart of Athel Loren the Council of Thirteen's favoured agent was aware of the vibrant life force of the ancient Oak of Ages pulsing through the roots of every plant around him. The Skaven could not be far from the King's Glade. The fruition of his plan was near. With its very heart torn out, the realm of Athel Loren would fall, he the Horned Rat willing.

In the distance, an ululating cry like the challenge of a rutting stag echoed through the woods. The Skaven shifted nervously as the roar was joined by a soulful, doom-laden howling. A deep rumble of thunder rolled above them, and bolts of white-hot lightning streaked down from the clear sky. In the space of a few seconds, the evening sky had darkened to the colour of a raven's wing. Skreek began to doubt the wisdom of his plan and frantically started to think of someone to blame if things went wrong.

Leaping over rocky outcrops oblivious to the lacerating thorns of brambles, Orion put his mighty horn to his lips and blew. The mighty horn-blast reverberated through the heartwoods calling all Elven folk that heard it to the Hunt. Terrifying in his aspect as Kurnous, the wild god of nature, Orion raced through the ancient woodland, the dogs of war galloping at his heels. As the chase gained momentum the hunter and his hounds were joined by other forest dwellers. Entranced Wood Elves, resplendent in their fearsome war paint, plunged headlong through the bracken. Shapeshifting Dryads sprang over tall bushes in a single bound while forest beasts stampeded after them in their wake.

Hearing the horn, Skreek peered into the depths of the sylvan domain, his nose twitching anxiously. The crashing of bushes and snapping of branches could clearly he heard.

Whatever was coming was making no attempt to conceal its approach. The Grey Seer could sense the build-up of tension in the forest. The loathsome sensation made his coarse silvery fur stand on end and set his teeth on edge.

With a fatal whoosh the great hunting spear of Kurnous flew out of the darkness, its thick shaft skewering three struggling ratmen on its golden point.

Like a sudden storm the Wild Hunt burst into the clearing and the Skaven were hit by the full force of the fury of the forest. The first line of Skaven slaves fell immediately before the whirlwind of death and destruction that tore across the glade, unable to stand against the strength of the manifestation of the forest's primeval avenging spirit.

Phantasmal apparitions streaked past the confused and startled ratmen. Soon Clanrats and even the elite Stormvermin were suffering heavy casualties before the enraged Wood Elves.



A flock of crows swept down on the vermin in a blizzard of rending black beaks and talons. The Grey Seer squeaked shrilly in defiance as his rat-warriors were felled by the scything blades of Wardancers or cut down by the claws of wild dogs. Less distinct Elven forms appeared to fly along among their flesh and blood brothers bringing an unnerving, ethereal dimension to the hunt. The ranks of Skaven were thrown into panic by the defenders' onslaught and for a moment the mass of fleeing furry bodies parted before Skreek.

Standing on a rocky outcrop was the King in the Wood himself. Skreek took in every detail of the formidable figure from the cloven hooves and elongated legs, up past the muscular, green-fleshed torso to the terrifying antlered head. A magic cloak of leaves flapped about his shoulders, shimmering with protective power.

Orion bestrode the rock like a colossus. The majestic features of the Elf Lord showed him to be a king, while the curving horns, powerful limbs and terrible, burning gaze marked him out as the forest's vindicating avenger.

Like some feral beast the King in the Wood charged the broken verminous horde, catching the ratmen on his antlers and tossing their limp bodies over his head to be torn apart by the ravening pack behind him. Others suffered the wrath of Orion impaled on the bloody tip of his magic spear.

The Wild Hunter caught sight of Skreek and his eyes blazed. Here was the one responsible for the withering of Loren. All of nature was outraged – the foul mutants carried sickness and death everywhere they went. Orion shared the forest's disgust and repulsion. The sacred realm's anger was his anger: its vengeance his vengeance.

Utterly possessed by the vibrant, living spirit of the forest, Orion threw back his head. The muscles in his neck pulled taut and his massive antlers framed the rising moon in their jagged silhouette. From where he stood, Skreek heard the rush of wind as the King in the Wood inhaled. There was a pause, the Skaven squealing as the tension of the moment mounted, and then the Wild Hunter exhaled.

The mighty bellow that issued from his throat shook all where they stood. The ratmen writhed in agony, the pressure in their sensitive ears driving them to the brink of insanity. Some sought refuge behind the standing stone but nothing afforded any protection against the strident sound.

Paws pressed against the sides of his head the Grey Seer staggered back towards the tunnel entrance. Unable to cast his spells, his only desire was to escape the deafening roar. The tension suddenly broke as with a crack like a thunderclap the monolith shattered under the intense sonic vibrations, sending a thousand shards flying into the verminous mass.

Blood gushing from his ears and nose, Skreek fled from the field of carnage, his body lacerated by hundreds of cuts. Above the furious pumping of his heart he could hear the pounding of hooves behind him. The musky odour of Orion's heaving flanks assailed his nostrils, filling him with nauseous fear, and as he felt the hunter's hot rancid breath on his back, the Grey Seer understood the true nature of the Wild Hunt. It was more than just a Wood Elf war charge: it was the embodiment of the primeval and savage entity that was the Forest of Loren itself.

Dawn came. The morning ground mist clung to the corpses of Skaven that littered the glade, their throats and intestines ripped out. Mounds of eviscerated furred bodies sparkled in the first weak rays of the sun. At the centre of the carnage the Grey Seer's head had been impaled atop a broken sapling. Of the entrance to the Skaven tunnel nothing could be seen.

A croaking cry broke the silence and a raven alighted on Skreek's head. Ruffling its feathers in the chilly air, it cocked its head on one side and pecked out an eye. Soon it was joined by others of its kind and the raven feast began.

THE SEASON OF DOOM

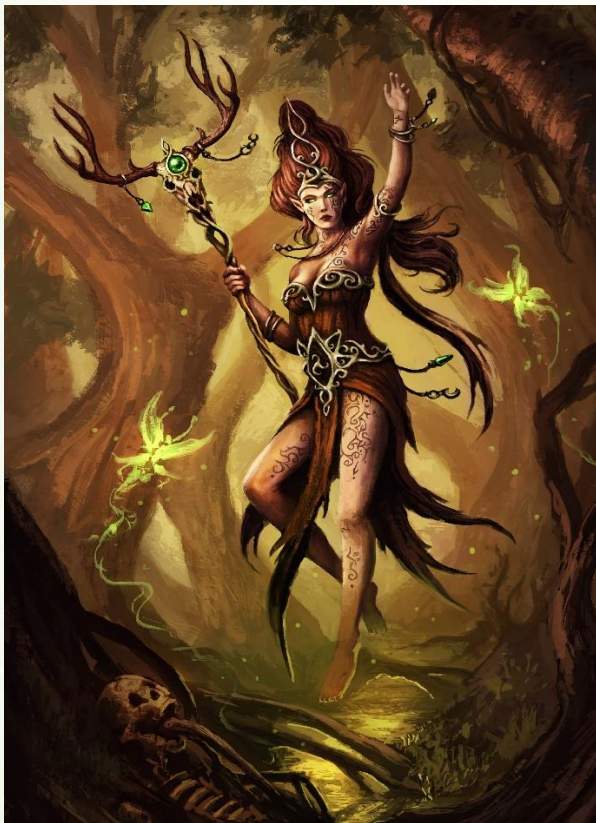
(Imperial Calendar 2008-)

A DREAM OF DOOM

As the season turned, the fate of the Wood Elves was changed forever. Naieth the Prophetess, High Seer of Athel Loren, had a vision in which the forest was drowned in fire and Chaos. The details of the premonition were hazy, as such things often are, but Naieth was able to determine that this fate awaited not only Athel Loren, but the entire world.

Naieth soon brought this news to the great council. Few of the lords and ladies believed her, but it mattered not. Of late, Ariel had experienced an unprecedented shifting of the Weave, and divined that this tremor pertained to the disaster Naieth had foreseen. Gathering together five hundred of the realm's most accomplished Spellweavers, Ariel and Naieth ventured forth into the Dreaming Wood – a perilous reach of Athel Loren whose glades opened onto many times and places. There, after many dangerous months amongst the Daemon-haunted groves, they finally gleaned some of the answers they sought.

So far as Ariel could determine, the fate of the world – and therefore Athel Loren – hinged upon the survival of beings such as herself, Orion and the Lady of the Lake. During her sojourn in the Dreaming Wood, Ariel had discovered with dismay that some of these godly aspects had already been slain – this had been the cause of the disturbance within the Weave. Some had fallen in battle – despite their power, they were not immortal.



Others had been devoured by Morghur, and these losses Ariel felt most keenly, for these were deaths she could have prevented. For centuries, the Mage Queen had used the Lady of the Lake to cheat Morghur's hunger rather than deal with the creature directly, for if the Corruptor did not threaten Athel Loren, then what concern was he to the Wood Elves? The Mage Queen found the answer little to her liking.

When Ariel and Naieth left the Dreaming Wood, they did so in the company of less than half of the Spellweavers that had set out. The others had been consumed by the horrors that dwelt amidst the glades, or driven mad by the glimpses of destiny. At the next great council, Ariel conveyed what she had seen to the lords and ladies of her court. Still they argued, for none wanted to believe the onset of such dire times. The Mage Queen overruled the dissenters and decreed that the realm of Athel Loren would not stand idle whilst the remaining aspects were slain and the world came to ruin. The Wood Elves would fight.



ALLIANCES DENIED

Deeming that the Wood Elves would prove valuable allies in their ongoing wars, both the Witch King of Naggaroth and Phoenix King Bel-Hathor elected to send emissaries to Athel Loren. Finubar, the ambassador from Ulthuan was particularly nervous of this assignment, as the last of his kind to enter the forest had vanished under mysterious circumstances.

As matters transpired, both delegations were welcomed with great civility. The Wood Elves went to great pains to keep the parties separated. Indeed, it is doubtful that either set of petitioners ever knew that the other was there. However, both ambassadors were affronted to discover that Ariel would not meet with them, and instead chose to conduct negotiations through the lords and ladies of the great council. Both ambassadors reacted with outrage, and this did little to encourage the Mage Queen to reconsider her position.

Ultimately, the Wood Elves listened, and refused, both nations. The High Elves had treated with Athel Loren as if it were still some wayward colony to be graciously drawn back into the fold, and not as the sovereign nation it was. By contrast, the Dark Elves had made many promises of shared glory, but the Wood Elves deemed that their words and hearts were hollow. Both ambassadors were bidden to leave Athel Loren, and to never return. The Wood Elves would seek their own path in the years to come, just as they had for centuries.



HORROR FROM THE VAULTS

The Winds of Magic blew strongly through the Vaults of Winter in 2079, and roused to life the Daemons frozen in its enchanted caverns. Daemonettes and Fiends flooded into Arranoc, slaughtering all who would not succumb to their wild desires. Amadri Dawnspear, warleader of Arranoc, led the counterattack. Alas, the lord's valour was for nought, and soon the warriors of his host lay dead upon the sun-dappled ground, and Dawnspear himself taken captive as a plaything for cruel Daemons.

Dawnspear's body did not endure long beneath the Daemonettes' caresses, but his spirit refused to yield. Fleeing deeper into Athel Loren at the moment of release, the warleader's soul took root in the hole of a dead tree. Thus was Amadri Dawnspear reborn as the Tree-Revenant Amadri Ironbark. When next Amadri entered Arranoc, he did so with a great host of Dryads and Treemen at his back, and swept the foul Daemons from its ancient groves. He then went alone to the Vaults of Winter and dragged enormous boulders down from the mountain peaks to seal its gates forever.

THE DEFENCE OF YVRESSE

Araloth, Lord of Talsyn, led his household guard through the worldroots to Ulthuan, and to the aid of Lord Moranion of Athel Tamarha. At this time, the kingdom of Yvresse, in which Athel Tamarha lay, was under ceaseless assault from Dark Elf Raiders. Moranion's surprise at the Wood Elves' arrival quickly gave way to grim joy. Though he and his eldest son

Eltharion had battled the Naggarothi at every turn, many of Yvresse's forces were overseas fighting the Phoenix King's wars, and those that remained were too few to end the threat. Araloth's kinbands of Eternal Guard more than compensated for this deficiency, and the Dark Elves were soon brought to battle and defeated on the Isle of Aestuniac.

In the aftermath, Moranion asked Araloth why he had chosen to intercede. Araloth simply replied that his ancestors had sprung from Athel Tamarha, and that he could not have stood idly by and seen the forests of their homeland destroyed. Strangely cheered by the Wood Elf's answer, Moranion bade farewell and returned home. It was not until years later that he discovered that Araloth had spoken falsely, and he never learned why the Wood Elf had done so.



DURTHU'S RAGE

By this time, the Errantry Wars in Bretonnia had succeeded in driving greenskins from the heartlands and into the wild comers of the kingdom. As it happened, one such wild comer was Athel Loren, and the middle reaches of the forest found themselves inundated by a tide of greenskins.



NO REFUGE FOR THE ORCS

While the Errantry Wars raged throughout Bretonnia Athel Loren remained virtually untouched by the conflict in the surrounding countryside. Most of the fighting occurred in the great forests in the north and centre of Bretonnia. No Orcs had ever been able to settle and build strongholds in the Forest of Loren.

One of the last Orc Warlords to be hunted down by the Bretonnian armies was Gorskar, leader of a small but unutterably savage warband. For many years they had been hiding in the mountains of central Bretonnia among the most inaccessible crags and ravines. Here they had fought off every Bretonnian army which had ventured into the mountains to do battle with them. Eventually it was a defeat at the hands of the Skaven from the secret Skaven lair of Black Chasm which forced them to migrate. The Skaven attack had taken the Orcs by surprise. Even the Bretonnians scarcely knew where Black Chasm was or even if it really existed.

As soon as Gorskar's warband went on the move, his presence was betrayed to the Bretonnians. An army of knights was hastily mustered at Parravon and marched out to intercept the Orcs. There was a pitched battle, with both sides claiming victory, but which cost both sides much blood. While the knights bandaged their wounds, Gorskar and the rest of his warband made a forced march by night and reached the borders of Athel Loren.

Gorskar's faithful shaman, Oddbone, examined the strange carvings on the boundary monoliths. He advised his overlord to enter the forbidden realm,

The welcome side-effect of this was that the Wood Elves needed to do little about the Beastmen this year, as the rampaging Orcs and Goblins soon crushed the Children of Chaos. So pleased were the Wood Elves by this slaughter, that had the greenskins elected to leave the forest peaceably at this point, the Wood Elves would have allowed them to do so unmolested. Alas, such has never been the nature of Orcs and Goblins. Buoyed with confidence after destroying the Beastmen, the greenskins soon began hacking and burning as was their destructive wont.

Unfortunately for the greenskins, the first groves to feel the bite of their choppas were those under Durthu's wardenship. Scarcely had the first fire been lit when a great host of spirits swept out of the deepwoods. Dryads fell upon the Goblins with vicious glee, tearing the diminutive vandals to bloody scraps. Tree Kin ground their way through mobs of Orcs, their hides all but immune to the greenskins' wild blows. Seeing his ladz on the brink of retreat, Warboss Braka bellowed and roared at them to hold the line, only to be silenced when Durthu stomped him flat with one massive, gnarled foot. Soon after, the mighty Treeman set about nursing his slighted groves back to life using the bounty of blood and flesh that the battle had provided.





rightly concluding that the knights would not dare to follow. As for any other enemies they might encounter beyond the stone, the Orcs were in no mood to be deterred. Oddbone speculated that they were Elves and therefore weak and easily defeated.

Gorskar was not deterred even when his warband was attacked by the Glade Riders and chariots of the Kindred of Equos. The Elves and Orcs fought a series of running battles as Gorskar relentlessly led his troops across the heathlands and into the forest.

As the Orcs hacked their way along the forest paths they stumbled into the concealed pits and other dire traps prepared for them by the Waywatchers. As Gorskar's horde fell into confusion and disorder struggling among the brambles and thickets to avoid the pitfalls, the Elf archers poured arrows onto them from three sides.

Within moments Gorskar's warriors were running for the open land. Here the Glade Riders had re-grouped and were waiting on the ridge tops. They galloped down and mopped up the fleeing Orcs. Gorskar himself fell to the hero Elgerth riding his chariot. The shaman Oddbone called upon the Orc gods for help but to no avail. He was cornered among the fallen stones of a huge cairn by the Elf mage Anghifyl and disappeared in a cataclysmic contest of magic between the two wizards. Some say he escaped down a deft between the boulders and found his way to the Grey Mountains. Others remark that one of the stones bears a strange resemblance to an Orc. Even so it was a great victory for the Elves of Athel Loren.

THE CORRUPTOR ESCAPES

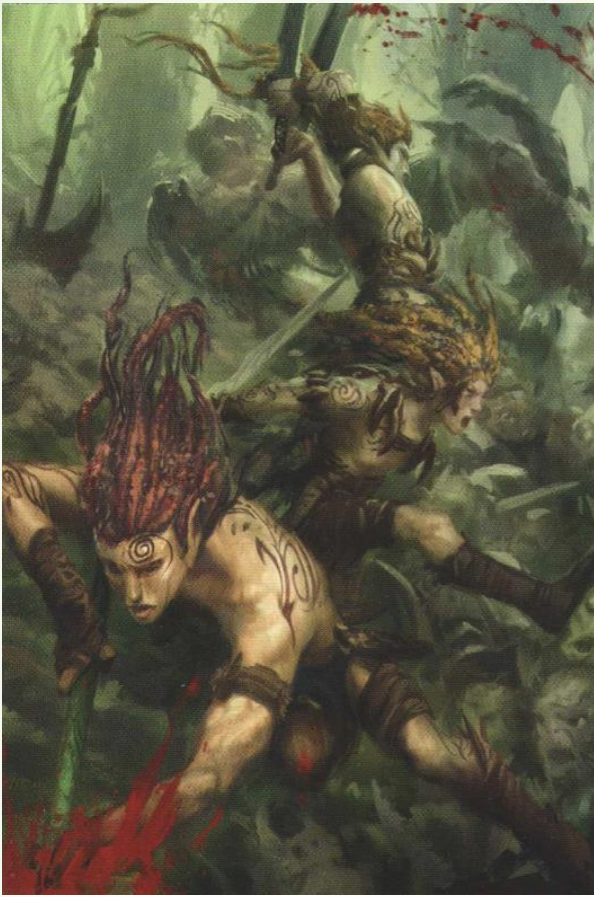
There was a great wailing amongst the trees of the Glade of Woe, and Ariel knew that Morghur had been reborn once more. Scouts soon located the vile creature in the Forest of Arden and, no longer content to let others keep the Corruptor in check, the Mage Queen dispatched an army to kill the beast whilst still young.

So it was that Araloth, Lord of Talsyn, and Naieth the Prophetess led many warrior kinbands on the hunt. They tracked Morghur and his warherd through the darkness of the forest, felling stragglers with bow and blade. At last, they routed Morghur's followers and cornered the beast. Mas, as Araloth readied his blade for the killing strike, the air rang to the blare of crude horns and the bleating of unclean beasts. So intent had the Wood Elves been on reaching their quarry, that they had not noticed the Ungor scouts shadowing their every step. Now, those trackers had led other Beastmen to Morghur's rescue and, badly outnumbered, the Wood Elves were forced to retreat.



Up until now, the Wood Elves' casualties had been light, for they had chosen the ground upon which each of their battles had been fought. Now the Beastmen took their bloody revenge. Glade Guard fired until their quivers were empty, but there were always more foes to replace those that had been slain. With a heart twisted by anger and sorrow, Araloth left a rearguard of volunteers to hold back the raging Gors, and led the rest of his force on a desperate retreat out of the Forest of Arden.





At the last, only Naieth, Araloth and a handful of others escaped the Forest of Arden. They survived only because Naieth roused the slumbering trees to form walls of branch and briar that barred the Beastmen's passage. Shamed by his failure, Araloth soon returned to the Forest of Arden as part of a far larger host, but Morghur had gone – the Beastmen had used their primitive magic to spirit the creature away. It would be many years before Araloth would have his chance at revenge.

THE BATTLE OF ARDEN

Morghur was once more revealed within the Forest of Arden, and Araloth of the Hooked Blade begged leave to lead the hunt. At first, Ariel refused the plea, for she knew full well how revenge could wound the seeker. In this she was opposed by Orion, who argued Araloth's case and, at the last, convinced his queen to agree.

When Araloth set out to hunt Morghur for the second time, he did so at the head of a mighty host. They passed overland through Bretonnia, concealing themselves from the curious eyes of peasants and knights alike by means of a sorcerous mist. They arrived at the Forest of Arden to find it heavy with corruption, and the scent of debased magic on the air – truly had this now become the lair of the Corruptor.

The Wood Elves advanced through groves of blood-red grass and trees that wept black tears. Waywatchers advanced before and behind the main host – Araloth had learnt the lessons of his previous hunt. For days,

there was no sign of the beasts they sought, but other challenges there were aplenty. Many Dryads and Tree Kin had accompanied Araloth's host, and they seethed with rage at the fate of what had once been a verdant paradise. The forest was hungry for flesh, and many Elves were devoured by gaping holes or tom limb from limb by vines. Here and there, they found the skeletal bodies of Bretonnian knights who had ended their Grail quests as mulch for the corruption. Mutated forest creatures scuttled through the undergrowth, mad eyes shining horribly in the darkness and their razorsharp teeth glistening with poison.

At last, the host of Athel Loren came upon a blasted glade, in which Morghur and his warherd were gathered. A colossal herdstone had been raised in the very centre of the clearing the rubble of its core the remains of a once-proud Grail chapel, and it was upon this summit that the Corruptor capered and yowled. Catching sight of his prey at last, Araloth nocked an arrow to his mighty longbow and let fly. The shot sped true; it struck Morghur from the herdstone, wounded, but alive. The signal for battle given, the Elves let out their war cries, and charged into the glade.

Desperate was the battle in that glade, for the Wood Elves and forest spirits did battle not only with the Beastmen, but also the twisted creatures of Arden that came at Morghur's call. Yet the warriors of Athel Loren pressed on, ignoring the gobbets of flesh tom from their limbs by frenzied mouths and the poison loosed in their veins by envenomed claws.



Dryads formed the vanguard of the attack, their blows lent greater strength by kindled rage. With a mighty roar, a colossal Ghorgon rose up out of the warherd and scattered the Dryads, but was soon overwhelmed and tom apart by the relentless Tree Kin who surged forward in the Dryads' wake. Waywatchers hung back under the shadow of the trees, their shots always seeking those whose bellowed commands directed the warherds. Doombulls and Beastlords fell dead upon the scorched glade, arrows protruding from eyes and open mouths.

In the centre of the glade, Bestigors clashed with Araloth's Eternal Guard, and fared the poorer for the exchange. Spears flashed like sunlight in the dark, and slew many of the foul creatures before their crude axes could be hefted. The Bestigors fought to the last brutish warrior, and many an Elf was hewed before the last Beastman fled. Araloth hardly noticed – he had eyes only for Morghur, and with the Bestigors eliminated, the Lord of Talsyn now had the chance to strike directly at his foe.



Before Araloth had left Athel Loren, Ariel had gifted him a gourd of sap harvested from the Oak of Ages, and he now unstopped that container and flung the enchanted contents into Morghur's face. No purer liquid existed in all the world, and where it touched Morghur's flesh, white flames rose up. Soon the Corruptor was all ablaze, his strange mewling cries provoking both pity and joy. Soon the creature was naught but ash, his threat ended for as long as it took him to be reborn.



With Morghur's death, the rest of the Beastmen were soon scattered. Araloth bade the herdstone be toppled, and a great pyre be lit in the centre of the glade, so that the corrupted bodies of the foe could be cleansed. This work done, the Wood Elves left the forest, but they did so slowly. Not all the sap had been used to destroy Morghur, and Araloth now placed a drop of what remained at the base of each corrupted tree that he passed. Each time, the enchanted sap wrought its magic, and a purifying fire sprang up. Yet the flames did not consume the trees as they had Morghur, but merely burnt away his corruption.

Thus did the Lord of Talsyn bring new life to the Forest of Arden. Ever after, it was accounted amongst the hallowed places in Bretonnia, though there was never a damsel or knight of that upstart realm who ever truly learned the reason why.

SLAUGHTER AT BLEAK MEADOW

In the year of 2253, the Beastman warherds within Athel Loren swelled to unprecedented size and laid siege to all its chief strongholds. In the east, Naestra and Araham led the defence of Pine Crag. In the west, Naieth the Prophetess marshalled her household to defend the Glade of Eternal Moonlight. Even the Wildwood came under attack, and the savage-minded spirits of that twisted place found much battle as the Beastmen descended. Yet it was in the glades around the Oak of Ages that the Wood Elves were most sorely beset; there were running battles amidst the trees as Glade Guard and Wild Riders sought to drive the Cloven Ones away from this most sacred of sites.

Great victories there were, but great tragedies also. On Carthad Knoll, Araloth, champion of the Mage Queen led Glade Guard against Ghorros Warhoof's kinherd; those Centigor the Wood Elves did not kill were soon set to flight. Gruarth the Beastmaster fought and died in the dell that was his home, his dead hands locked about the throat of the Wargor who had slain his beloved sabre-toothed tigers. Beastmen descended upon the Torgovann, roaring with joy at the carnage they would wreak, only to be stopped dead by a single warrior clad in golden armour. Daith the mastersmith had sworn never to let the vile creatures loose in his armouries; in this cause he had come forth armed with weapons he would allow no other to sully with war. In the eternal warmth of the Summerstrand, Amadri Ironbark led his fellow Tree-Revenants against monsters so foul that countless Elves had succumbed to madness with but a glance at their horrific features.





Few slept during these dark days, for there were always other battles to fight. None slept well, for the howling and chanting of the Beastmen echoed on the breeze. The only respite offered by these bleak times was that Morghur, Master of Skulls, was not the driving force behind this particular incursion - had indeed he been there, the situation would have been far more dire. Little by little, and at the cost of countless lives, the Beastmen were driven out of all Athel Lorens regions, save one. A great warherd, many thousands strong still rampaged across the tainted glades around the Tree of Woe, and there gathered under the tattered banners of Mograk, the Lord of Crows.

Weary, and burdened with grief for their lost kin, the Wood Elves mustered to fight one last battle that would drive the Children of Chaos from Athel Loren. All knew it would be the bloodiest fight of a long and terrible year, but there was no time to heal the harms of the battles that had preceded it. Winter was drawing in and, if the Beastmen were not defeated before the first frost, Orion would be lost to them and the forest spirits would fade; without them, there could be no hope of victory. So it was that those Elves still capable of battle bound their wounds and hurled themselves into the fray one last time.

It was in this darkest hour that help arrived from a most unexpected quarter. Finubar, now Phoenix King of Ulthuan, had long dwelt on how to repair relations between the two great Elven nations. On learning that Athel Loren was beset, he bade Prince Eldyr gather a great army and march to the Wood Elves' aid. Though they had been delayed by storms, the High Elves now added their strength to their cousins'.

Even combined, the Elven armies were greatly outnumbered by the Beastmen, but determination and renewed hope swiftly compensated for the paucity of numbers. Ulthuani Mages called down storms of lightning and blunted the spells of Bray-Shamans, leaving the Spellsingers of Athel Loren free to rouse and invigorate the living forest. Cothiquan spearmen fought shoulder-to-shoulder with Eternal Guard, White Lions of Chrace alongside Wildwood Rangers. Dragon Princes and Wild Riders tipped their lances and spears as one, each brotherhood of Elf knights determined to prove their superiority. Scarloc fought back to back with Ystranna of the Maiden Guard; Araloth the Brave at Prince Eldyr's side.

Mograk knew that a great victory had been cheated from him, but he refused to yield. At the shaman's command, unclean warriors hurled themselves forwards under storm-blackened skies. The ground shook as Minotaurs slammed into the Elven ranks. Left and right the brutes hacked, each blow cutting down two or three Elves. Mograk howled into the darkness, drawing twisted monsters from the depths of the forest. The dead grasses of the Witherhold writhed in revulsion as these creatures made themselves known upon the field, once-noble creatures reshaped by the dark will of the Chaos Gods.

Mograk had hoped to break the Elves' spirit, but the children of Isha remained undismayed. Arrows hissed forth to fell Ghorgons and Cygors. Wardancers pirouetted into the heart of battle, blades flashing to cut throats and sever spines. Outnumbered, but far from outmatched, the Elves began to turn the battle's tide. By the time sun fell on that fateful day, the better part of



the warherd was destroyed, and those Beastmen who remained were in retreat. Mograk had fled before the end, preserving his foul hide by abandoning his minions whilst battle still raged. This one act of desertion cost the Beastmen greatly, for without Mograk's leadership the retreat soon became a rout, and the rout a massacre.

As victory dawned, the reserve between the two Elven races returned. The High Elves had suffered greatly in the battle, and many now blamed the Wood Elves for the losses. As for the Wood Elves, they quickly took against their allies' arrogance. Each party had earned the other's respect, but friendship was still a long way off. Though kind words were exchanged by individuals, the bonds between the great nations of Athel Loren and Ulthuan were little closer than they had been before.

THE MADNESS OF ORION

After a winter full of ill omens, Orion was reborn into madness. The King in the Woods had ever been given to a wild and wrathful manner, but his behaviour now seemed to be beyond all control – only Ariel considered herself safe in his company. No one could identify whether the cause of this madness was a flaw in the ritual that granted him new life, or some incipient mania of the Elf who was chosen to bear his mantle. Worse, Orion's insanity was contagious, and soon many of Athel Loren's Elves and spirits were at one another's throats. This year, the Wild Hunt was nearly four times its normal size, and wrought great damage even before it left the forest and brought its fury to the lands of Bretonnia.



Great was the slaughter inflicted upon the domain of Quenelles that year, so great that Fredfar, the duke of that city, had no choice but to rouse a host of knights and bring Orion to battle. Other nobles of the realm counselled against such a course of action, but Duke Fredfar was a man in whom the virtues of chivalry blossomed true, and he refused to sit idly by whilst a great slaughter was wrought upon his peasantry.

Thus passed Fredfar, Duke of Quenelles, slain in battle with a force of nature that he never stood any chance of defeating. Many of the duke's finest knights perished alongside their master; so many, in fact, that the defences of Quenelles were left sorely weakened. As a result, when the Wild Hunt veered northward to the city itself, the throng of maddened Elves and spirits soon breached the walls and ran amok in the city. Blood ran through the streets as the Wild Hunt vented its fury, and neither the valour of knights nor the bristling spears of Men-at-arms could check its ferocity.

In the end, the glorious city was saved only when Orion's rampage carried him into the sacred grove at its very heart. No sooner had he stepped within those verdant bounds than a mist came down, and stillness overtook him for the first time since his rebirth. There are few accounts as to what happened next, for the skeins of mists cheated the eyes of almost all who watched. All agree that a slender figure appeared in the mists beside Orion, but none recount who that figure was, or what words were exchanged between them. At dawn the next day, Orion and the Wild Hunt left ravaged Quenelles behind and returned to Athel Loren. That year, the King in the Woods surrendered himself to the pyre many months earlier than in years past, though no explanation was forthcoming as to why.

INTERVENTION IN AVELORN

Far away from Athel Loren, the Dark Elf Age of Vengeance had begun, and Naggarothi armies raged across Ulthuan. Avelorn's ancient groves burned as the Dark Elves advanced, but their real prize – Alarielle the Radiant, Everqueen of Ulthuan – was spirited away by Prince Tyrion. In response, Malekith loosed the Daemon N'kari to the hunt, bidding him slay the Everqueen and all who sheltered her.

Great still were the ties between Avelorn and Athel Loren, and the pain caused by the Dark Elf invasion echoed through the spirits of the great forest. Ariel was determined that her people would not become involved in this latest feud between their cousins, but saw that there were greater stakes amongst the carnage. So it was that peerless Scarloc and a kinband of his finest scouts travelled the worldroots to Avelorn, with instructions to harry the Daemon N'kari with all the cunning at their command.

For weeks, Scarloc's scouts thwarted the Keeper of Secrets as it hunted. They did not seek to engage the beast directly, but paralleled its path through the forest.



Time and again, Scarloc and his comrades ambushed the Daemonettes and Fiends that N'kari used as trackers, felling them with arrows or luring them onto false trails. This was deadly work, for the Daemons were many and Scarloc and his comrades few. Worse, the woods of Avelorn were thick with Dark Elves, and many times Scarloc was forced to break from his mission to evade or eliminate Naggarothi patrols.

Only once did Scarloc face N'kari directly, and then briefly. At that time, the Daemon was but an hour's march from where the Everqueen lay hidden. With no better tactic at hand, Scarloc and his surviving scouts revealed themselves to N'kari and stung him to wrath with a swift volley. Scarloc knew that he would be hard-pressed to defeat a maddened Greater Daemon, so they did not try. Instead, they lured the beast onto an army of Dark Elves who, panicked by N'kari's onset, loosed a flurry of crossbow bolts and thus earned the Keeper of Secrets' full measure of retribution.

As N'kari tore through the Naggarothi ranks – Wood Elves and Everqueen both temporarily forgotten – Scarloc slipped away through the worldroots. That last deadly chase had cost him many of his fellows, and he judged that Alarielle must now attend to her own fate. On their return to Athel Loren, Scarloc and his comrades – Glam, the Laughing Warrior, Araflane Warskald and the Spell singer Kaia Stormwitch – were lauded for their actions. As it happened, N'kari finally discovered his quarry a few days later, only to be banished by the magics of Tyrion's brother, Teclis. Amongst the Daemon's charred remains, Tyrion found a single arrowhead, somehow come safe through the fire and lightning. It was clearly not of Ulthuani make but, though the brothers could not place the origin, it was soon forgotten in the days that followed.

THE BATTLE OF THE CAIRNS

Scattered through the wild heaths on the outskirts of Athel Loren are countless ancient burial cairns, mounds and barrows. Some of these were created by the Wood Elves as boundary stones, waymarkers or as the tombs of fallen chiefs of the Elven kindreds. Some mark the burial places of barbarian chieftains, ancestors of the Bretonnians while others hide the mortal remains and treasures of Dwarf adventurers. The huge cairns of stones often cover the heaped up bones of invading hordes: Skaven, Dark Elves, Men, Beastmen, Chaos Warriors, Dwarfs and Orcs beyond counting, slaughtered in battle by the Wood Elves. Many priceless and powerful artefacts were buried within these barrows, though the Wood Elves, respectful of such places and their long dead inhabitants, leave them as they have lain for countless centuries, slowly to be reclaimed by the forest. Nevertheless, there are many greedy tomb robbers who covet the riches within se tombs, and so the Wood Elves are constantly battling against these intruders. But sometimes interlopers seek these cairns for more sinister reasons than simple greed.

These colossal piles of rough hewn stone, covered in heather and gnarled trees, are like magnets for Necromancers and the like. The Glade Riders who watch over this region are always on the lookout for lone tramps, skulking under dark cloaks and always travelling by moonlight. Then there are the tell-tale signs of bones scattered around the monoliths, holes grubbed out in burial mounds, ash from ritual fires and arcane sigils daubed on the blocking stones and reeking with the stench of dragon's blood. Needless to say, the Glade Riders seek to hunt down these evil sorcerers before they succeed in awakening anything to serve their vile plans.



In the winter of 2495, a dark and evil being sought to claim these cairns, following the great defeat of the Undead won by the Bretonnians led by the Duke of Parravon. This hated creature, cursed and despised by the Wood Elves, was the Lichemaster Heinrich Kemmler, a necromancer of awesome power and ever an unknowing pawn of the Chaos Gods. He was glimpsed on several occasions, always around the largest of the cairns. No sooner was he spotted than he disappeared, displaying an uncanny awareness of being watched. Although the Glade Riders scoured the heaths, the wily Lichemaster managed to evade their arrows.

Cloaking himself in dark enchantments, the Necromancer ghosted through the outer defences of the slumbering forest. A cunning and devious foe, Kemmler was often sighted travelling through the forest, sometimes alone, often accompanied by a much larger, armoured, figure – the Wight King, Krell. Bands of Wood Elf Scouts would often seek to confront him, only for him to vanish like mist on the breeze. The bodies of other such sentries were found, turned to dust by the darkest of magics or hacked apart by the heavy blows of an axe.

Having made his way safely across the forest, Kemmler had found the prize he sought – an expansive barrow complex, bound and encircled with great power. At last, he had found Calmost, the final resting place of many a barbarian horde and began the sorceries necessary to raise a great army of the vengeful dead.



Great carrion birds, summoned by Kemmler from the southern deserts, began to perch upon the cairns, scrabbling and digging for the bones of the long-forgotten dead. With the forest still slumbering in winter's embrace, the Elves could not ignore such an incursion. The Glade Riders sent messengers to the far side of Loren to summon help from the Warhawk Riders of the Kindred of the Pines. Ythil the Hawk-eyed led his Kinband of Warhawk Riders against the foul creatures. With surprise on their side, the Elves descended upon the undead beings, destroying many of them before the others seemingly retreated from the forest.

The stirrings of the Undead were certain to cause great concern in Athel Loren. All the more so since midwinter was approaching and it was time for Orion and Ariel to be entombed within the Oak of Ages so that they might be reborn with the spring. Already their powers had begun to wane with the moons and the falling of the leaves.

Unfortunately, Kemmler was a more cunning foe than the Asrai gave him credit for. Whilst the Elves battled his minions, he and Krell were able to break into one of the largest of the ancient burial mounds – the tomb of a great, long-dead king. In the shelter of the ancient tomb, the Lichemaster had ample time to plan the next step of his vile plan whilst, far above his head, autumn turns to midwinter and the forest becomes ever more dormant. His whereabouts was completely unknown to the Elves, though they rode past the mound every day. Hidden from the eyes of the searching Elves in the sepulchre's dank embrace, the Lichemaster carefully counted the passing of the twin moons through the dark skies, marking them on an old Orc bone.

As no more sightings of Kemmler were reported the Asrai gradually, albeit uneasily, abandoned their hunt. As the sun waned the Elf mages gathered to the King's Glade for the rituals of renewal. Orion and Ariel were swathed in their magical robes of woven leaves and taken on palanquins to the Oak of Ages. Wardancers performed the ritual dances of the gods as the procession made its way to the sacred place. Within the tree they sat upon their carved thrones as the crack on the great tree trunk was sealed with wattle and daub and painted with arcane symbols. Glade Guards took up positions to watch over the tree throughout the winter. Orion and Ariel would remain here until the winter equinox was passed and the sun grew strong again. As it did so they would renew their waning powers from the earth magic as they had done for so many centuries before.

Orion succumbed to the flames of his pyre, and Ariel began her slumber within the Oak of Ages. This was the moment Kemmler had been waiting for, and emerged from the barrow. As he tallied the days to the winter equinox he knew that the Wood Elves were now without their mighty semidivine king and queen to lead them in battle. Under a spell of concealment, he began a timeless and terrible ritual with knowledge stolen



from the vaults of the cursed Castle Vermisace, as the Wight Lord Krell silently stood guard. Reaching into the void with stolen knowledge, he conjured dark spirits to aid him and summoned forth his undying minions from beneath Athel Loren. Everywhere in the arrow glade, tendrils of necromantic power suffused the air and pierced the earth. For leagues around Kemmler's rite, the trees withered and died, as the very essence of life itself was stolen from them and rechannelled for the Lichemaster's dire ends. Glade Riders soon spied the Necromancer's ritual fires, and spurred to the attack. Alas, their intervention came too late. Kemmler's forces were already rising and the Elves were pulled from their saddles by the grasping fingers of the long-dead.

All across Athel Loren the forest screamed in pain. Forest Dragons roared in rage and took flight, Dryads and Tree Kin were abruptly revived from the somnolence of winter. In the heart of the Oak of Ages, the still-sleeping form of Ariel unconsciously perceived the events and wept black tears, even as her mind reached out to seek aid. The royal council of the Elves summoned all kinbands to the King's Glade, yet, with the forest writhing in agony, many pathways were closed to Elves and their army was slow to muster. Meanwhile, the Lichemaster's ritual reached its height. All across the wild heath, the tombs and cairns were opened from within by cold and lifeless skeletal hands, and bronze-bedecked ancient warriors marched out to form a mighty army. With moss and lichen still caked upon their bones, the army beneath the barrows began to stir into an awful parody of life. Soon, Kemmler had a great horde of many thousands of skeletons and wights at his command.

Kemmler's plan was as always, to invade Bretonnia. This time he would raise his army from the cairns of Athel Loren and attack Bretonnia from a direction which they would certainly not expect. Goaded by a motivation he could not quite explain, the Lichemaster abandoned his initial intention to march west against Bretonnia and the upstart Duke of Parravon, and instead led his horde deeper into Athel Loren. He meant destroy Athel Loren, turning the fair forest into a wasteland; a new realm of the Undead! Kemmler immediately set out for the forest with his horde under cover of darkness. Screaming carrion birds filled the skies as the army of the undead marched through the snowdrifts and deeper into the forest. Athel Loren's shifting paths could not deceive one as knowledgeable as he, and soon the Lichemaster's feet were set upon a path to the Oak of Ages and the very heart of the Elven realm.

Kemmler's change of mind soon proved a mistake. The Elves may have been taken by surprise, but other eyes watched Kemmler. Though the Lichemaster had timed his attack to take advantage of the forest's wintry slumbers, not all of Athel Loren was yet fully at rest. Beings which not even Kemmler for all his foul wisdom could imagine were watching his every move. The forest was filled with a strange eerie rustling which



filled even Kemmler with unease. As the Undead advanced, their unwholesome presence roused Dryads from their fitful sleep. Suddenly, the shrieking forest spirits were amongst Kemmler's ranks, their talons tearing and slashing at the vile Undead. Dark Dryads of winter, crone-like and hate-filled, assailed Kemmler's army at every step. Driven wild by pain and anger, many spirits of the forest hurled themselves at Kemmler and his awakening army, all thoughts of caution abandoned. Slowed by the cold, the first Dryads and Tree Kin were easy prey for the Necromancer, who turned his magics upon them and blasted them from existence without once sparing attention from his great work. Wave after wave of Dryads streamed into the glade, only to meet the same fate and, with every moment that passed, the Lichemaster's army grew still stronger. Waywatchers arose from the snow to launch their unerringly accurate arrows, before disappearing once more. Nevertheless, their numbers were too few to halt the unliving. Yet, as all seemed lost, help arrived from two somewhat unlikely quarters.

A Bretonnian Grail Knight, Sir Amalric of Gaudaron, had been drawn ever closer to Athel Loren these past few days, guided by visions of the Lady. Even from the borders of the forest, Kemmler's handiwork was plain and, sensing a quest worthy of a Grail Knight, Amalric forced his steed to ride on through the screaming skies and writhing trees. Elsewhere in Athel Loren, the Branchwraith Drycha stood at the feet of the slumbering form of Durthu – even with the tumult around him, the Ancient slumbered as though nothing untoward was occurring. There was little love lost between the renegade Branchwraith and the venerable Treeman, yet she knew that only an Ancient could

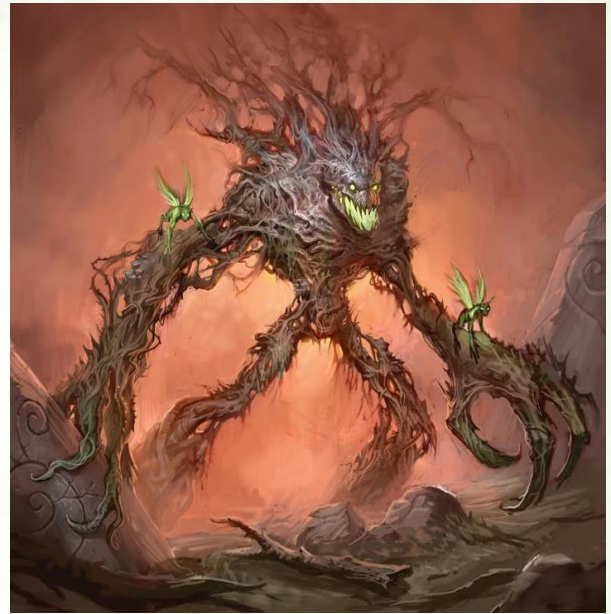


unite the disordered and desperate attacks of the forest spirits. Durthu was the only Ancient slumbering close enough to the ritual to intervene in time and so Drycha began to sing him back to wakefulness...

Kemmler's plan had now reached fruition. The enraged attacks of the forest spirit defenders of Athel Loren had done little to halt his progress. For each unliving warrior torn down by screeching Dryads, another three had arisen from the silent tombs. The ritual had now reached its peak and the skeleton legions had been joined by darker and more powerful creatures, some raised from below, others called to Kemmler's side from outside the forest.

For the Wood Elves, the situation was incredibly desperate. With so many foes assembling within their borders they could only survive this storm by killing the Lichemaster, or by grinding his army to powder. Neither course of action would be an easy one and, with Orion and Ariel dormant, their armies would be hard pressed to prevail. In a last desperate council, the warrior-elder Sceolan took command of the forces – including the remnants of Drycha's ill-fated assault on the glade – and lead them into battle against Kemmler's grave-born army. A grand battle finally took place in a massive glade, deep within Athel Loren's borders. In the battle that was to follow, thousands of Elves lost their lives, fighting against the seemingly never-ending skeletal hordes that were the Lichemaster's to command.

Durthu, greatest of the Treemen, had finally been awoken. No sooner did his spirit flutter to wakefulness than he smelt the witch-scent of Undead upon the breeze. His torpor soon gave way to wakeful wrath,



and scarcely had the last Dryad fallen when Durthu was loose amongst Kemmler's ranks, smashing and pulverising ancient bones with a vengeance. Seeing that his minions stood little chance of overcoming Durthu, the Lichemaster turned his dark magics upon the mighty Treeman. Durthu staggered under the assault, but kept coming. Had Kemmler more time, perhaps he could have brought down the Elder of the Forest. But such was not his fate.

Arrows now burst out of the trees, thudding into shields and shattering bones. Lord Arias and Lord Edrael, rulers of the glades nearest to Kemmler's intrusions, had roused their hosts to battle. As archers carved great holes in the skeletons' ranks, the Eternal Guard of these two great houses advanced into the gaps, spears flashing as they came. Glade Riders spurred around the flanks, raking the foe with volleys of pinpoint archery. Ythil the Hawk-eyed and his Warhawk Rider kin swept down time and time again through the thick clouds of crows and ravens to attack the long-dead warriors.

Kemmler now grew desperate, and committed other forces. Giving a great cry, he called a dozen bat-winged Terrorghaists from storm-laden skies. As the loathsome monsters tore into the Eternal Guard, Kemmler worked to restore his crumbling ranks. At his dusty command, sundered bones re-knitted and hurled themselves into battle once more. Seeing their foes reborn from the brink of defeat, the Wood Elves faltered, and began to withdraw. Only Durthu stood firm – if anything he fought all the harder.

It now fell to Arias and Edrael to rally their forces. Knowing his actions would speak far louder than his words, Lord Edrael mounted his noble Dragon ally, Begeir Seun, and charged into the heart of the fray. Together, Elf and Dragon felled one of Kemmler's dread Terrorghaists, and that act of victory rekindled some spark of hope in the Wood Elves' ranks. It was then that Lord Arias reached out into the noblest of

magics and fed this spark until it was a roaring flame. Almost as one, the Wood Elves found their courage anew and descended into battle once more.

The Undead ranks shuddered as Wood Elf arrows began to thud home once more. A Terrorgheist knocked Edrael sprawling from Begeir Seun's back, but Durthu wrestled the unliving beast to the ground and crushed its bones to powder. Rangers of the Wildwood carried their glaives forward, parrying the strikes of wight blades with contemptuous ease, then ripping to scatter bones and rusted armour across the clearing.

Ultimately, the battle was only won when Sceolan led a handful of Eternal Guard into combat with the Lichemaster and his bodyguard. This time, even Kemmler's sorceries could not offer salvation from the Wood Elves' onslaught. The Winds of Magic were sputtering and he could barely find the power to reknit his own wounds, let alone those of his minions.

Though Krell badly wounded Sceolan in the ensuing fight, Kemmler was also grievously hurt. Bitterly accepting his defeat, Kemmler cloaked himself in magic and fled the battlefield, sacrificing what was left



of his once-great undead army and Krell to their fates to preserve his own miserable life. Summoning the last of the Terrorgheists to his side, the Lichemaster winged his way south into the mountains. With the Lichemaster's mind no longer guiding them, the army that he had raised swiftly fell to the fury of the Wood Elves. Only Krell escaped the frozen glade, fleeing deeper into the forest with Dryads hard upon his heels. It would be many long years before he dared set foot in Athel Loren again. Meanwhile the cairns of the heathlands were resealed both with stones and magic. This was the furthest into Athel Loren any attack had ever reached, and as such the Wood Elves are hungry for vengeance against the hated Lichemaster, and are ever watchful for his return.

In the decades since Kemmler's defeat Athel Loren has known relative quiet, though great battles and desperate times have unfolded in the lands to the north. Such respite is certain not to last, for whilst those such as Cyanathair, Kemmler, and a myriad others still live and desire the power of the forest, Athel Loren will know no lasting peace.

ROCKJAW'S FEAST

The Ogre Braggat Rockjaw and his Stonegut mercenaries crossed the Grey Mountains and into Athel Loren. Instead of slaughtering the brutes, the Wood Elves welcomed them. After the Ogres had been plied with all kinds of wondrous meats and countless flagons of faerie wine, they departed the forest unmolested (though there was a brief moment of danger when one of the Ogres attempted to consume a live unicorn).

Thoroughly sozzled and stupefied, the Ogres didn't realise that the paths on which they left took them not towards the Empire, as they had intended, but into the heart of a Skaven warren on the edge of Parravon. This they obliterated in short, and drunken, order. When the battle was done, an Elf maid appeared to Rockjaw, and presented him with wondrous riches; the agreed price, she said, for the battle just conducted. Rockjaw couldn't remember agreeing to fight the battle, but took the gold anyway. Thereafter, he swore never to enter Athel Loren again.

All of the remnant Wood Elves of the Old World are noted for their amazing skills with the bow. From amongst his father's people, Prince Oreon chose the best archers and woodsmen and assembled this famous Elven band. With his company, Oreon left the Old World and took ship to the Elf Kingdoms, where he joined the crusading army of the High Elf Lord Staleor. He fought with distinction in Staleor's Southlands campaign, losing an eye in hand-to-hand combat with the evil wizard Dornbast.

The Bowmen of Oreon earned eternal fame on the occasion when a huge Giant challenged Oreon to single combat. Oreon accepted, and as the Giant strode out to do combat, his entire company launched a single volley of arrows, killing the Giant instantly. Although many people thought this a dirty trick, Oreon always maintained that the Giant had rancid breath, smelled utterly foul and deserved to die anyway.

Oreon's company wears the traditional hunting green of the Wood Elves, with full capes and hoods. In addition to his bow, each warrior carries a shield, sword, long knife and two quivers. Regimental champion Ilfrun also has a huge double handed sword, a weapon wrested from a fearsome Giant during the Southlands campaign. The company proved more than willing to get stuck in, and after their return to the Old World formed the basis of the Greenwood's defence.

Oreon himself grew sullen over the years and took to brooding over the loss of his eye and vitality, a result of a wound inflicted by Dornbast. One day he simply vanished. Popular legend has it that he went in search of his lost eye. The tale is told in some length in the 'Lay of Oreon's Folly', a well known drinking song.



MASSACRE ALONG THE WEISS

When a great warherd of Minotaurs threatened to cross the Grey Mountains into Athel Loren, Ariel bade her Spellweavers divert the swollen waters of the River Weiss and force the beasts back into the Empire. It was then that the Emperor Karl Franz did that which none of his forebears had ever done – he walked beneath the eaves of Athel Loren to seek aid. The great council were little inclined to accede to the Emperor's demands, for they perceived that his greatness was worn as a mantle, rather than flowed from a source within. Yet nor could they deny the logic of his plea.

So it was that Orion led the Wild Hunt over the mountains and to the Empire's aid. Whilst Karl Franz rallied the embattled army of Wissenland, Orion and Naieth the Prophetess led the swiftest riders of Athel Loren far afield and struck at the warherd's flanks.

Following the path of carnage left by their king Glade Riders and celebrants of Kurnous carried their spears deep into the heart of the Minotaurs' formation. Soon after, the King in the Woods slew the Doombull whose bloodrage had begun the rampage.

Decimated by disciplined handgun volleys, torn bloody by cannon fire and their most ferocious warriors felled by the fury of the Elves, the Minotaurs shrank back. Seeing their foes quaver, the men of the Empire gave out a great cheer; but they did so too soon. The wind shifted, and the scent of blood it carried drove the Minotaurs into a fresh frenzy. Suddenly beset by an enemy they had thought beaten, the brave men of Wissenland suffered greatly. Regiments of Halberdiers and Greatswords were hacked apart, filling the air with yet more blood-spoor and driving the Minotaurs ever more berserk. Karl Franz moved to reinforce the line, but was swept from the back of his horse by a Cygor's boulder.

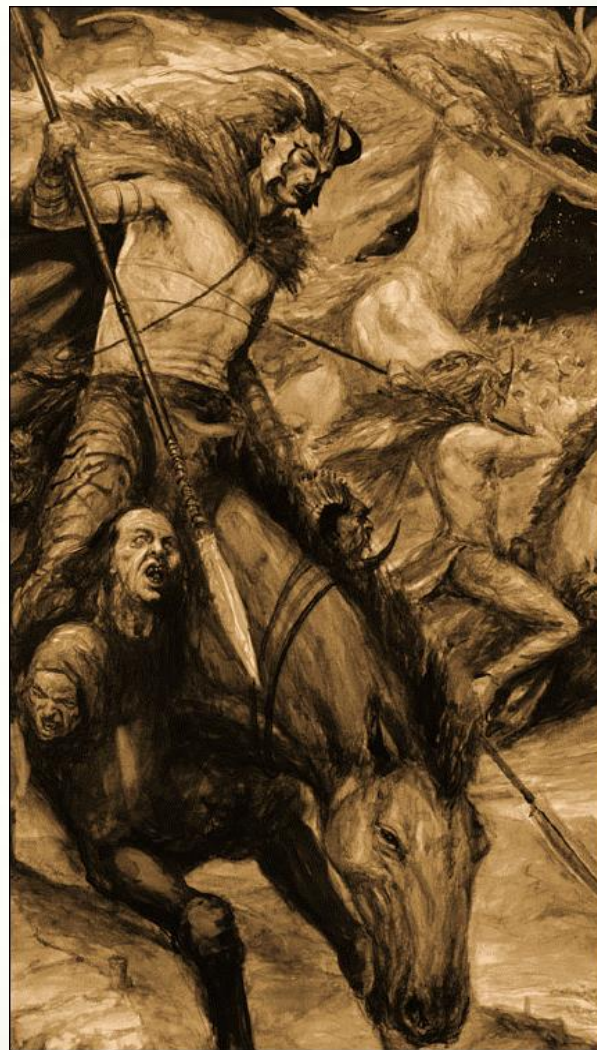
Even from the other side of the battlefield, Orion's keen eyes saw the Emperor fall. The King in the Woods was tom. He was weary, having been sorely wounded in battle with a colossal Ghorgon, and cared little for Karl Franz's survival. As far as Orion was concerned, the human's puny life mattered nought in the wider context of the Weave. Even if the Wissenlanders were routed from the field, the Wood Elves could simply withdraw behind the floodwaters of the Weiss once more. Sensing Orion's indecision, Naieth quietly reminded her liege that the fate of the world rested on more than just those born to godly mien. It did not matter, she said, if the Emperor's reach exceeded his grasp; what mattered was the nobility of his cause. Orion rounded upon Naieth with an expression so full of fury that the seeress feared for her life. Then Orion laughed and sounded his great horn so loud that its winding was heard as far away as Athel Loren.


As one, the Wood Elves charged forward once more, this time towards the human lines and the fallen

Emperor. Lost in a haze of bloodletting the Minotaurs did not realise their danger until it was too late. Bows sang spears thrust forward and the Minotaurs soon found the tide of battle turned against them.

The King in the Woods fought his way to the downed Emperor, planted his hooves either side of the wounded man, and bellowed a challenge that the bloodmaddened warherd could not deny. By the time the Minotaurs finally realised their plight and fled, near threescore of their greatest champions had fallen to Orion's spear. The King in the Woods had been sorely wounded in exchange – his godly ichor flowed freely from a dozen ragged wounds – but Karl Franz had not suffered so much as a single blow during the hours in which Orion had stood guard over his unconscious form. Not that the Emperor had any opportunity to thank his rescuer, for as soon as it was clear the Minotaurs had no stomach for further battle, the Elves retrieved their dead and left the field.

A month later, an emissary from Athel Loren was admitted to the palace of Altdorf. He gave no name, but delivered both a gift and a message. The gift was a single Griffon egg retrieved, said the emissary, from the highest peak in the Grey Mountains. The message was simple, brought in friendship, but ominous nonetheless: 'We will be watching.'





The sickly pale crescent of the moon hung low in the night sky, casting its weak light over the cairns and jagged standing stones in the forest glade below. Atop a small hill, the Necromancer scowled as the powders in the crucible failed to ignite again. Uttering a curse to his blasphemous gods the sorcerer struck the flints together one more time. A single orange spark leapt from the stones into the metal dish and the powders burst into flame. In the blinding flash that followed, for a second the Necromancer's skull-like visage was revealed in all its grotesque detail; this time a cruel smile curled the thin lips.

Thick smoke rose in great billows from the crucible and Lascar Noircouer inhaled deeply, his sunken eyes closing in darkest ecstasy. He could feel the forbidden power welling up within him, coursing through his veins, and setting every nerve-ending tingling as if pricked by white-hot needles. Enveloped in the smoke, the Necromancer began to cast his spell.

He could feel the cold touch of Dark Magic swirling in eddies over the ancient, crumbling tombs and as he spoke the first forbidden words of the incantation he sensed the vortices dance and spin faster. Letting the winds of magic take control of him, Lascar drew even more of the dark power from the graves all around him and the spell, like some evil embryo, began to take on a life of its own. His mouth and tongue now formed the dread syllables not at his bidding but at that of the rolling mass of dark energy.

'Master,' came a small, strangled voice at the Necromancer's waist, 'we are discovered'

The ceremony interrupted. Lascar opened his pit-black eyes. There, between the trees at the edge of the clearing, stood the proud frame of a Unicorn, its breath steaming in the cold night air. The shroud of magic protecting it was visible to Lascar's magically-sensitive vision as a coruscating nimbus of light. Seated on the creature's back, the leaf-clad Wood Elf watched the Necromancer with steely violet eyes. Lascar paused in his spell-casting while the shrunken head hanging from his belt continued to gibber in fear at the sight of the sylvan guardian.

'So, Lascar,' the mage addressed the Necromancer across the glade, her voice strong and unwavering, you would defile the burial cairns of Loren once again. I thought you would have learnt since the last time.'

'Overconfident words I feel, witch. If I recollect rightly, at our last encounter I gave you a token to remember me by,' hissed Lascar.

Only half-consciously, Medb put a hand to the scar that marred her Elven beauty and recalled her last meeting with the evil wizard. 'I won't make the mistake of letting you live this time,' she said coldly.

'Neither will I.'

Staring directly at her, Lascar transfixed Medb with an inscrutable gaze. At once bolts of pure Dark Magic leapt from the Necromancer's eyes at the Wood Elf Mage and her steed. Lascar froze in surprise as on reaching the barrier of magical protection radiating from the Unicorn, the deadly bolts fizzled out of existence. Encouraged by such an early success, the She-Elf urged her loyal steed forwards.

In an explosion of stones and loose soil the hill erupted beneath Lascar's feet. Silvery moonlight caught the gleam of thrusting bone as half-animated, calcified remains started to claw their way out of the burial mound. Suddenly finding herself surrounded by clutching skeletal hands Medb leapt from the back of her steed, executing a perfect backward somersault before landing in a crouch, not a feather in her head-dress out of place.

Free from the grasp of the dead Medb began to weave her own enchantment as the Unicorn trampled brittle bones underhoof. Spreading her palms over the spongy turf of the glade she felt the quickening of the magic of the heartwoods. Focusing on the amber energy that ran wild with the beasts and lurked in the untamed places of Athel Loren she let her mind commune with that of the forest, intuition shaping the spell instead of reason.

The amber energy flowed away from the mage through the earth, coalescing as it did so into probing roots and tendrils. Thick-stemmed brambles burst from the ground in the midst of the Skeleton horde and grew at an accelerated rate. Entwining with bones and twisting through ribcages the thorns wrenched the undead abominations apart or trapped them where they were.

Anger swelling within him Lascar drew himself up to his full height and let the Dark Magic take hold of him once more. A miasma of darkness played about his body. As he intoned his most potent spell,

spasms of pain wracked his frame. The smoke rising from the crucible as a thin wisp became a swollen cloud, oozing out across the cairn glade towards the mage as if with an evil sentence of its own.

Writhing, worm-like tentacles emerged from the dark mists, reaching for any living thing while its progress across the glade was marked by a blackening and withering of the grass behind it.

Medb could feel the marrow-numbing chill emanating from the cloud as it approached. The putrid stench that accompanied it made her gag and the presence of such concentrated evil so close by made her weak with dread. Yet despite the crippling fear, thanks to years of training and hours spent in meditation, she was able to put all anxieties aside and empty her mind. With all distracting thoughts displaced, her consciousness slipped smoothly into the streams of jade energy flowing beneath the ground, and the mage imagined herself to be elsewhere.

Before the inexorable path of the horrifying cloud, the Wood Elf's physical form melted in the moonlight, becoming as water which seeped away into the loam. The Necromancer stared in fury at the spot where only moments before his foe had stood. Where had the witch gone? Wildly he looked about him.

And then he saw it, sparkling like a fountain in the wan light of the moon. Flowing upwards out of the mound at the base of the largest of the standing stones, the water took on the form of the Wood Elf Mage. However, Medb's face appeared to remain liquid, her eyes swimming together into a pulsing emerald orb.

Without warning, a beam of searing green energy burst from the orb at the Necromancer. At the conjunction of the standing stone the spiralling streams of magic were channelled through the mage into a devastating shaft of pure jade energy. Boosted at the intersection of the magical wind currents the Wood Elf's spell ripped through the black cloud and segmented tentacles, straight into Lascar. An explosion of verdant light bathed the Necromancer's body, turning his robes to ashes and charring his putrefying flesh from his bones.

In seconds all that remained of the foul sorcerer and his last attempt to threaten the forest realm of Athel Loren were a few smoking remains and a soot-blackened skull.



CHRONICLES OF THE WOOD ELVES

The Wood Elves do not measure time in the same way that others do. Indeed, in Athel Loren, time becomes nearly meaningless as it ebbs and flows at various rates in different places. For the Wood Elves there are only three times: The Time before Ariel and Orion (the Past), the Rule of Ariel (the present), and The Death of the Forest (the future). For the sake of simplicity and clarity, this time line is presented in accord with the Imperial Calendar (IC).

THE FORGOTTEN SEASON

THE SEASON OF REBIRTH

c.-650

-4120

The Elves land in Elthin-Arvan, later known, by men, as the Old World. The Elven Prince Malekiith befriends the Dwarf King Snorri Whitebeard and together the armies of the Elves and the Dwarfs begin to drive the remnants of Chaos from the lands. As the colonies prosper, wealth begins to flow back to Ulthuan.

-2840

The Phoenix King Bel Shanaar the Navigator visits the newly founded Dwarf city of Karaz-a-Karak and signs the pledge of eternal friendship between Dwarfs and Elves. Malekiith remains as ambassador.

-1997

War breaks out between the High Elves and the Dwarfs and rages for two centuries. The Elf colonies in the Old World bear the brunt of the hostilities and both empires become worn out and weakened by the conflict. Tor Alessi (now the Bretonnian port of L'Anguille) is besieged many times. Dwarfs chop down entire virgin forests to spite the Elves. Elves guard the forest of Loren.

-1589

Caradryel the Phoenix King of Ulthuan recalls the High Elf armies from the Old World to combat the menace of the Dark Elves threatening Ulthuan. Elf colonies in the Old World see the departure of the armies as a betrayal. Caradryel tells them that if they want the protection of the Elf armies then they should also return to Ulthuan. Many colonists reluctantly abandon the Old World but others decide to stay.

-1501

A New Colony. The last High Elf army departs from the Old World, leaving behind a few hardy colonists who refuse to go. These include the dwellers in the forest of Athel Loren who are joined by others who abandon the coastal colonies. They declare themselves independent of the Phoenix Throne. From this time they adopt a different path from their kindred across the sea and become known as Wood Elves.

c.-1500 to 1000

The declining Dwarf empire is destroyed by earthquakes. From this time Orc and Goblin tribes pour over the lands pillaging the abandoned Elf cities and ruined Dwarf holds. Wood Elves guard the forest of Loren from intruders.

I. 374

-1125

The Winter of Woe. A huge Orc and Goblin army manages to penetrate Athel Loren through sheer weight of numbers. Ariel and Orion become King and Queen of the Wood and just as it seems all is last Orion's power manifests fully. He slaughters the Orcs without mercy at the head of the Wild Hunt.

I. 406

-1095

Ariel becomes aware of the creature called Cyanathair, sometimes known as Morghur, Lord of Skulls.

THE SEASON OF WITHERING

II. 95

c.-1000

The lands surrounding Athel Loren are settled by people of the primitive and warlike Bretonni tribe. They trade with the Wood Elves and learn many things but are too afraid to penetrate far into the forest of Loren.

II. 280

-815

The cursed Cyanathair launches a great war against Athel Loren, thus beginning the Secret War between the Wood Elves and the Beastmen.

II. 283

-812

The Battle of Anguish. Cyanathair is slain following a great battle in what will be known as the Glade of Woe forever after.



c.-700

The kindred of the Wychel Glades leave the forest of Loren and migrate over the Grey Mountains into the vast forests beyond, never to be seen again. They pass into legend as the Lost Kindred. Cyanathair is reborn in the Drakwald forest, and begins to corrupt it into a twisted and dark place.

Attempts to penetrate Athel Loren by the Bretonni leave only a handful of survivors, driven mad by the fey terrors, and the forest enters Bretonnian folklore as being a haunted, magical place.

II. 470

-625

The Betrayal. Coeddil the Treeman attacks King's Glade, slaying many Wild Riders. Only Ariel's intervention prevents a great tragedy from unfolding by defeating Coeddil. She banishes him to the Wildwood and cages him within a circle of waystones where his malign influence cannot infect other tree-kin.

THE SEASON OF REVELATION

III. 225

-400

The eccentric Spellweaver, Ranu, uses his powers to create the Tower of the Eternal Wood. After he enters, the doors are sealed and refuse to open for any other.

c.-250

Dwarf traders, prospectors and treasure hunters begin penetrating into the western Old World once again. Some enter the forest of Loren and encounter the Wood Elves. Old grudges dating back to the War of the Beard are revived leading to bitter battles. Some Dwarf expeditions are never seen again.

III. 610

-15

Sigmar unites the tribes east of the Grey Mountains and forges the Empire.

III. 1111

486

Battle of the Silverspire. Orion leads a great host to defeat the reborn Morghur. He encounters the spirit of the Silverspire.

c.700 to 900

Some foolish Bretonnian warlords invade the forest of Loren intending to carve out domains. Some disappear with their entire retinues without trace, others flee the forest in terror. Henceforth no Bretonnians dare enter the forest with hostile intent.

III. 1594

969

Return to the Silverspire. Morghur assails the Silverspire once again. The Wood Elves ally with Gilles le Breton to end the threat.



III. 1601 976
Gilles the Breton is visited by the Lady of the Lake. She blesses him and his comrades, and encourages them to band together to unite the Bretonni and rid the lands of evil. Gilles becomes the first of the Grail Knights, and the Lady of the Lake becomes the primary deity of the Bretonnian nobility.

III. 1602 to 1603 977 to 978
The twelve famous battles of Gilles the Uniter. He rallies the Bretonni and rids the lands of evil in the name of the Lady of the Lake. His fourth great battle takes place on the edge of Athel Loren alongside the Elves, saving the forest from the axes of the Orcs.

III. 1620 995
Gilles the Breton is mortally wounded, and carried to a nearby lake. There he is placed on an unearthly ship, and sails into the mists to join with the Lady of the Lake. Some believe he lives on as the Green Knight.

III. 1626 1001
The Fay Enchantress is appointed to oversee the Bretonnians. She is also set the task of weeding out those humans who display magical powers but not the skill to control it.

III. 1630 1005
Louis the Rash, first king of Bretonnia, sends envoys to the King and Queen in the Wood and recognises Athel Loren as an independent realm. In return Orion and Ariel offer eternal friendship with Bretonnia.

III. 1675 1050
The Branchwraith Drycha passes beyond the boundaries of the Wildwood and meets with Coeddil. The two remain there for several months.



THE SEASON OF RETRIBUTION

IV. 16 1132
The Sack of Ghron. Ariel and Orion lead an assault on the tower of Ghron in Naggaro. Morathi offers Ariel a portion other forbidden knowledge, and so is spared.

IV. 21 1137
The Wood Elves fight a great battle against Beastmen led by Cyanathair, within the Forest of Shadow, in the Empire. Spellcasters of great power manage to bind him with their magics and draw him into Athel Loren itself. Here he is slain by the ancient Treeman Durthu.

IV. 87 1203
The Wardancer Cirenivel travels deep into the Vaults of Winter. She defeats the guardian of the caves and retrieves many lost Elven artefacts.

IV. 220 1336
Duke Melmon of Quenelles disappears on the night of the Spring Equinox. Stories say he was caught up in the ghostly Great Hunt that is said to roam the skies on certain nights. Others say he wandered into Athel Loren, drawn there by fey lights.



IV. 234 1350
Battle of Pine Crag. Grungni Goldfinder and a throng of Dwarfen treasure seekers descend upon Pine Crag. The industrious mountain dwellers' presence is soon deemed unwelcome. Ultimately, the Glade Lord Findul lures the Dwarfs into a trap and destroys them utterly.

IV. 284 1400
The portals to the Tower of the Eternal Wood become unsealed. It is found to be completely empty – no trace can be found of the Spellweaver Ranu.

IV. 462 1578
The Bretonnian tournament of Guyenne takes place in which King Jules jousts with one of the fey folk of Athel Loren and is victorious.

IV. 485 1601
The High Elves of Ulthuan attempt a rapprochement with their estranged kin in Athel Loren. The emissaries meet with Ariel, who rejects the offer of closer ties with the High Elf court, and become lost in the forest on their departure.

IV. 554 1670
Battle of the Meadow Glades. An Imperial army invading the forest of Loren is ambushed and routed.

IV. 556 1672
At the close of the year the High Elf emissaries finally emerge from Athel Loren near Quenelles, but are immediately assumed to be evil spirits by the Bretonnian peasantry. Heavily outnumbered, they are slain and their bodies burnt.

IV. 557 1673
The Wild Hunt inexplicably rides only through the lands controlled by Quenelles. The Duke and his family are all slain, save his youngest daughter, who is spirited away into the forest by Dryads.

IV.581 1697
Coeddil Recaged. The imprisoned Treeman Coeddil, his heart black with hatred, attempts to escape the Wildwood. In the winter of this year, the warden of the Crystal Mere, Lady Elynett, and a coterie of Spellsingers, thwarts an attempt made by Drycha to disrupt the waystones of Coethil's prison.

THE SEASON OF REDEMPTION

V. 1 1703
Working under commission from Lady Findol, the master smith Daith creates the Spirit Sword. Findol refuses payment, claiming a non-existent fault with the blade, but relents when Daith rouses the forests against Findol's hall. Daith is never denied payment again.

V. 111 1813
Slaughter at Brionne. The Elves of Athel Loren come to the aid of the Bretonnians besieged in Brionne and Quenelles by the Skaven hordes. With this great victory scarcely won, the Elf army joins up with the army of the Duke of Parravon and together they inflict a crushing defeat on the Skaven.

V. 223 1925
Dwarven traders travelling to Parravon are attacked by Orcs out of the Grey Mountains. Much to the incredulity of the Dwarfs, a Wood Elf warband, led by Gwytherc the huntress, sallies out of Athel Loren and routs their attackers.

V.305 2007
The monstrous Cyanathair is once again destroyed by the Wood Elves. He is slain by Scarloc and his masterful scouts, pierced with a hundred arrows.



THE SEASON OF DOOM

VI. 1 2008
A Dream of Doom. Naieth the Prophetess has a vision of the future death of Athel Loren. The Wood Elves mobilise to prevent it.

VI. 19 2026
Drycha's Onslaught. Drycha, Handmaiden of Coeddil, gather to her a great warweald of forest spirits and rampage through southern Bretonnia. After defeating the Duke of Carcassonne at the crossings of the Brienne, she assails the walls of La Chald Abbey. By the time Bretonnian reinforcements arrive, the abbey has been torn down and its relics stolen.



VI. 195 2202
Orcs chased out of Bretonnia during the Errantry Wars attempt to escape by hiding in Athel Loren. Such are their numbers, they reach as far as Durthu's heartlands, where they are finally crushed by Durthu, his handmaidens, and Railarian, the Guardian of the Blessed Grove.

VI. 278 2285
Orion's Wild Hunt breaks through the borders of Athel Loren and rampages through Quenelles, as it does every summer solstice. However, this Wild Hunt causes absolute mayhem, levelling several villages and driving many Bretonnian peasants mad.

VI. 488 2495
Battle of the Cairns. Heinrich Kemmler, the Lichemaster, enters Athel Loren and attempts to raise the dead of the ancient cairns. He attack the realm of Athel Loren in an attempt to invade Bretonnia, but are destroyed by the Wood Elves at the Battle of the Cairns. Kemmler escapes.

VI. 202 2212
Battle at Shadow Fell. At high summer, Ogre mercenaries, under the command of legendary Firebelly Gragtar Flameheart, find their route home through the Grey Mountains cut by a sprawling greenskin horde. Fortune seem bleak for the Ogres until the trees themselves come alive and a host of Wood Elves descend from the foothills. Though they join the battle on the Ogres' side, Gragtar is greatly disappointed when they refuse to stay for a victory feast of flame-grilled Orc.

VI. 293 2300
Intervention in Avelorn. At Ariel's request, Scarloc leads a band of scouts through the worldroots to Avelorn and harries the Daemon N'kari as he seeks the Everqueen.

VI. 499 2506
Dwarfen Treachery. Ungrim Ironfist, Slayer King of Karak Kadrin, brings an army of greenskins to battle on the edge of Athel Loren. Seeing the justice of the Dwarfs' cause, Thalador Doomstar brings a host to the mountain-dwellers' aid. The battle soon turns against the greenskins but, in the hour of victory; the Dwarfs carry their axes against the Wood Elves also, seeking to repay a millennia-old grudge. Swearing vengeance for his lost kin, Thalador retreats.

VI. 329 2336
A man emerges from Athel Loren claiming to be Duke Melmon of Quenelles. Within hours he ages dramatically, and dies within the day.

VI. 333 2340
Gashrak's Fall. At high summer, Waaagh! Gashrak sweeps down from the Vaults and descends upon Athel Loren, but has the misfortune to charge headlong into Orion's Wild Hunt as it surges forth into the Parravon lowlands. After a brief but bloody battle along the banks of the River Grismerie, Gashrak's ladz are routed into the mountains. Gashrak himself is slain by Orion's spear, and his body staked out on the borders of Athel Loren as a warning to others of his kind.

VI. 500 2507
Doomstar's Revenge. The outlying workings and defences of Karak Kadrin came under assault by vengeful Wood Elves under the command of Thalador. For nearly a year, Thalador's host maintained their blockade, crushing countless sorties by the defenders, and twice repelling armies from Zhufbar that had been sent to break the siege. Only when the Lord of Argwylon was satisfied that recompense had been taken for the harms of the previous year, did he order the withdrawal.



VI. 213 2220
Archers of Renown. Scarloc and his kinband begin their three-decade journey through the human kingdoms. Acting as sellswords, they uncover much about the strengths and weaknesses of the various realms.

VI. 378 2385
Grudge of Ages. The Dwarfs of Karak Norn march again on Athel Loren, just as they have many times since the long-ago death of Grungni Goldfinder. As on previous occasions, they are bloodily repulsed for no meaningful gain.

VI. 505 2512
Naieth the Prophetess has a vision showing the Death of Athel Loren. Ariel directs the nobles of the forest to begin hunting the Beastmen in the wider world.

VI. 224 2231
Ariel weeps as the Chaotic creature Cyanathair is reborn into the world. Several Warrior Kindreds shadow-walk to the Forest of Arden, passing unnoticed through Bretonnia in order to slay the foul beast while still a youngling, yet their attempt fails, defeated by teeming hordes of Beastmen. He begins to corrupt the Forest of Arden.

VI. 425 2432
Massacre in the Reikwald. Drycha's handmaidens attack the Shrine of Taal in the Reikwald. Though the vengeful Branchwraith strike without warning a wily huntsman slips through the carnage and manages to bring word to Altdorf before dying of his wounds. Reinforcements are quickly despatched, but are ambushed by Dryads and Treemen on the Altdorf-Weismund road. By the time the battered army finally breaks through, the shrine has been levelled, its defenders slain and the holiest relic – the Fang of Taalbroth – has been stolen. Of Drycha and her handmaidens, there is no sign.



VI. 511 2518
Coeddil Unchained. After a seemingly senseless campaign of slaughter in the lands surrounding Parravon, leaving neither survivors nor a hint of motive, Drycha finally acquires the last relic she has been searching for. Stealing into Athel Loren during the height of winter, the Branchwraith unleashes the power of her stolen artefacts, and shatter the wards Ariel had placed to bind Coeddil into the Wildwood. Alerted too late, Rangers of the Wildwood rush to Coeddil's prison, only to find the Elder gone.

VI. 229 2236
Strange Aid Unforeseen. When Demons attack the pitiful Empire village of Lachenbad, the Wood Elves see fit to intervene. Under the steady leadership of Naestra and Arahan, Rangers of the Wildwood fight the otherworldly horrors to a standstill. Only when the battle is won do the Wood Elves withdraw through the worldroots, leaving awe-struck and mystified villagers behind them.

VI. 434 2441
Queen Ariel of the Wood Elves concludes that isolationism will lead to the ultimate destruction of her realm, and directs her armies to go forth in battle against the servants of Chaos in the world.

VI. 515 2522
Ariel believes that Cyanathair rallies for yet another assault upon Athel Loren.

VI. 255 2262
Battle in the Black Forest. The chronicles of Naggaroth tell of how Morathi is ambushed by Shadow Warriors as she searches for the lost Crown of Hotek. The chronicles also recount, and with some disbelief, how the Hag Sorceress and her escort knew salvation only through the intervention of a warweald of Dryads.





THE DEEPWOOD HOST

The Wood Elves consider themselves to be eternally at war, for their forest home is surrounded on all sides by enemies who seek to do it harm. There is no peace, just moments of silence between the clamour of battles. When the invaders inevitably return, then do the lords and ladies marshal their great hosts, and mighty Orion summons forth the Wild Hunt. Each battle they fight, whether upon the borders of their own realm or in the lands beyond, serves to protect Athel Loren and preserve the balance of the Weave upon which all living things depend.

In this section you will find details for all the different troops, heroes, monsters and war machines used in the army of the Wood Elves.

It provides the background, imagery, characteristic profiles and rules necessary to use all the elements of the army, from Core 1 troops to special characters, to the magic items used by their most valiant heroes.



ARMY SPECIAL RULES

ELVEN GRACE

Models with this special rule have the Dodge (6+) special rule in close combat. However, this cannot be used against enemies that attack before the model with Elven Grace.

BLESSINGS OF THE ANCIENTS

A Wizard that has this special rule, and is within 6" of a forest, adds +1 to all attempts to cast and dispel spells.

FOREST SPIRIT

There are old places in the world, places that have lain untouched and undisturbed by the tread of mortal steps since before the arrival of chaos. It is said that in some of these primordial places, the forests are conscious and willful, with minds laden with hatred and malice for the other races of the world.

A model with this special rule has the Fear, Forest Strider, Magical Attacks, Immunity (Psychology) special rules. In addition, they have a Ward save (5+) which becomes a Ward save (6+) against Magical Attacks. However, units of Forest Spirits may only be joined by characters that are also Forest Spirits.

AMBUSH FROM THE WORLDROOTS

Wood Elves invariably fight battles on the borders of woodland, where the Spellweavers can encourage the trees themselves to intervene.

A Wood Elf army can always place an additional forest no more than 12" in diameter on the battlefield. This is done during deployment, before any units are deployed, and must be placed wholly in your half of the battlefield. Declare which type of forest it is when you place it. If you cannot fit the forest on your half of the table, move other terrain features by the shortest distance necessary so that the forest can be placed. If you still cannot place the forest, or if the scenario means that the Wood Elf army does not have a table half in which to deploy, this additional forest is not used in this battle.

ASRAI LONGBOW

The Wood Elves are master craftsmen when it comes to making the best bows known in the Old World. The bow-staves are shaped over many years while still growing on the tree and the bow strings are woven from the long hair of Elf maidens. With these bows the archers are deadly accurate and their keen eyes can pick out a distant target in the shaded glades of the forest. To carry one of the famed longbows of Athel Loren is to possess the finest weapon a hunter could possibly wield. If the eye is true, there is no quarry such a weapon cannot slay.

Longbow. All shots with this weapon have the Armour Piercing (1) special rule.

ASRAI ARCHERY

The Elves of Athel Loren are the most accomplished and deadly archers in the whole of the Warhammer world, surpassing even the skill of their High Elven brethren.

Models with this special rule do not suffer the normal -1 To Hit penalty for moving and shooting.



ENCHANTED ARROWS

Some models in the Wood Elf army have the option to purchase enchanted arrows. If a model has enchanted arrows, they must use them when shooting with an Asrai longbow. All Shooting attacks made with enchanted arrows count as Magical Attacks.

Arcane Bodkins: *Whether plate, chain, or unnatural hide, no armour can shield against the enchantments that permeate these deadly barbs – if the firer's aim is true, the target is doomed.*

Shooting attacks made with Arcane Bodkins have the Armour Piercing (1) special rule.

Hagbane Tips: *Fashioned from deadwood taken from the Glade of Woe, some of Morghur's taint lingers still within these darts, a virulent and formless blight that shrivels and spasms. These arrows are tipped with the tainted shards known in Athel Loren as 'the Callach's Claws'. They are as deadly as their namesake's touch – even a scratch can prove fatal if the venom settles in the target's blood, and their target is destined to end their life in screaming agony.*

Shooting attacks made with Hagbane Tips have the Poisoned Attacks special rule.

Starfire Shafts: *These arrows glow with an unnatural light and emit a piercing wail when they draw blood, chilling the soul of even the bravest warrior.*

Shooting attacks made with Starfire Shafts forces enemies to take a Panic test if they suffer any casualties.

Swiftshiver Shards: *These arrows are crafted from a wood so light and strong that they seem to fly from the bow of their own accord.*

Shooting attacks made with Swiftshiver Shards allow the model to fire Multiple Shots even when moving that turn.

Trueflight Arrows: *There is a rudimentary sentience buried deep within these arrows, an awareness that causes them to seek the target unbidden.*

Shooting attacks made with Trueflight Arrows ignore all Shooting Modifiers that are not caused by magic items or spells.

HIGHBORN

The lords and ladies of Athel Loren have led the Asrai in peace and war since the Elves first came to the forest. Each Highborn, no matter his or her relative rank, is required to keep his domain free from intruders and has the ultimate responsibility over the area of the forest in which his followers dwell.

Most often, this is a task that is accomplished by the Highborn's Eternal Guard and Glade Guard, though in more dangerous times, he or she will entreat the spirits of the forest, or even Elves from other regions of Athel Loren, to lend aid. This one calling is held above all others, for the forest is sacrosanct to the Asrai and must be defended against those who would do it harm. Though the inhabitants of Athel Loren are as proud as any of the Elven races, they never allow their own hubris to endanger their home land. The defence of Athel Loren is the one calling that is held above all others.

Should a noble fail in his or her responsibility, it is not unheard of for them to hand their duties over to another. Leaving their great hall, they depart the safe paths of the forest and travel to the darker places of Athel Loren where the pathways twist in upon themselves and malicious spirits dart between the trees. There, the noble seeks atonement and forgiveness from the spirit of Athel Loren. Some are not seen again save in dreams and memories. Others return, within a few hours of their departure, unnaturally aged, as though many decades had passed. A very few return after many years, reinvigorated and filled with purpose by their communion with the forest.

Wood Elf nobles commonly inherit rank according to the station of their birth, though it is not unknown for a valorous individual to be elevated to higher authority – he who is claimed by the Wild Riders to become Orion is often such a one. Several nobles command small kinbands whilst the most senior lords have authority over several leagues of the forest and, by extension, the Elves that live within that land. Some follow the ways of particular kindreds, learning the way of the Wardancer or Waywatcher should it prove to be the calling of their heart.

Unlike the Elves of Ulthuan, and indeed much of the known world, the Wood Elves make no distinction between male and female when it comes to rank and duty, whether those responsibilities find their calling in war or peace. In the noble houses of Athel Loren, the daughter is as likely to inherit the family tide and rank as the son – more so, in fact, in certain families whose reverence for Ariel borders on fanaticism, or houses that culture the belief that the females make for less impulsive leaders than the males. Even so, not all Highborn are equal. Each of the twelve realms of Athel Loren is ruled by a lord or lady of impeccable standing. Answerable to each of these are countless sons and daughters of noble houses ever seeking to improve their own situation. Though Wood Elves commonly inherit rank according to the station of their birth, it is not unknown for a particularly valorous individual to be elevated to higher authority.

"There are many who would defile the sanctity of the forest. Dwarfs avariciously crave our sacred timber, while wizards would siphon the energies of our life. All will be expunged. Athel Loren will be defended."

- Lord Ethalin of the Pine Crags

When Athel Loren goes to war, the nobles direct the efforts of its armies, often commanding a varied yet lethal assortment of Elves and forest spirits. In the summer months, when the forest is strong enough to defend itself against most threats, many are caught up in the reckless abandon of Orion's great hunt, consumed by the purity of the pursuit of prey. Even so, there are always a handful of the most able war-leaders and their kinbands who remain within the borders of the wood, ready to defend their home to their dying breath.

The culture of the hunt is strong in Athel Loren and finds its way onto the battlefield even during the times of Orion's slumber. It is traditional for the Wood Elves not to launch themselves into battle until their leader, or one of his captains, has loosed a shot at the heart of the enemy leader. This duty is allocated before the battle begins, and the firer is granted the honorary title of 'Talon of Kurnous'. Seldom does the Talon's arrow kill the target, but such is not the intent. Rather it is a reminder of mortality for the foe, and a final entreaty to the Hunter God for his blessings in the battle to come.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Glade Lord	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10
Glade Captain	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery, Elven Grace, Forest Strider.





SPELLSINGERS

Like all of their race, the Elves of Athel Loren are intrinsically magical beings, their consciousness residing on the physical and magical planes in equal measure. In most, this talent is too weak to be developed, instead representing itself as occasional hunches and forebodings, but in some truly gifted individuals it can be shaped into a tool of great power. Such a boon is not without danger to the user, for raw magical energy is a fickle and destructive thing if drawn upon unwisely. The High Elven images of Hoeth protect themselves from its ravages through a process of ritual and ceremony, using structure to control the sleeping beast. For the Wood Elves, however, their protection comes from an entirely different source, that of the forest of Athel Loren – the forest's natural web of consciousness forms both conduit and shield to the Elven mages who would draw upon this potent force.

As a result of this connection, Wood Elf mages have an altogether unique relationship with the forest. In some ways they are a part of greater intelligence, much like the Dryads, Spites and Treemen are, yet they retain their individuality in a way that the wood spirits do not. This bond allows them to commune with the forest, able to entreat with it on behalf of the Elven Lords and ladies when their needs would otherwise go unnoticed – only the greatest of Tree-singers can rouse a slumbering Treeman before its time. Some particularly

powerful mages can use their bond to reshape the forest itself, whether that means changing the course of a tree's growth or, more dramatically, reshaping the pathways within the forest to slow enemies or hasten the progress of the Elves. Such a process is by no means certain though, for the forest must be persuaded, or tricked, to do so and will often refuse such requests. As with almost all aspects of Wood Elf life, the path of the mage is trod by males and females in equal numbers, though female mages, often known as the Handmaidens of Ariel, are generally more powerful than the male; made so by Ariel's unique bond with Athel Loren.



The Elves are able to manipulate the winds of magic with a grace, ease and flair unmatched by any of the younger, cruder races. Wood Elves are an exception, and there are many skilled practitioners of their own particular fey strand of magic with the bounds of Athel Loren. Wood Elf mages tend to follow the path of the ancient Elven god of renewal and rebirth, Isha, and are sometimes known as the Handmaidens or Stewards of Ariel. Skilled in the arts of spellweaving, they are able to manipulate the energies of Athel Loren in many varied ways.

They are adept at creating powerful illusions and glammers, as well as being masters in the mystical arts of healing and regrowth. They are capable of weaving spells of confusion and trickery that can ensure that an intruder will be unable to discover an Elven hall, even if he walks only feet from its majestic doors; they can cast dangerous blasts that strip trespassers of their wits and memories, and heal grievous wounds with but the touch of a hand. They are capable of encouraging trees and undergrowth to spontaneous growth, which can then be directed to create elegant and artful forms. In this manner, the Elves can create beautiful artistry, such as delicately twisting pillars of living branches that form the basis of graceful monuments and structures.



SPELLSINGER KINDREDS

Kindreds of Kel-Isha

Sometimes known as Handmaidens of the Everqueen, priestesses of Athel Loren. Spellsingers and Spellweavers are generally part of a Kindred of Kel-Isha.

The name Kel-Isha has evolved from the Elven rootword Quyl-Isha, meaning the tears of Isha, sorry, mercy, endurance, and mourning for lost children.



Trees and foliage can be encouraged, by skilful Wood Elf mages to uproot and move about, blocking off paths and creating new glades. This is often used as a subtle warning, and most will be so unnerved by this that they leave Athel Loren immediately, but those that choose to ignore such warnings are dealt with without mercy. Other Wood Elf mages specialise in learning the secret magical paths of Athel Loren, enabling them to disappear like smoke, only to reappear in a completely different location. Wood Elf mages are capable of all manner of fey sorceries and artful spells, and are rightly feared by all.



The ability to shape and guide the forest is seen as a useful skill by more than just the Elves. Though the banished fey of Athel Loren's Wildwood have little use for the Asrai, they crave the ability of the Tree-singers and will go to any lengths and make any promises to lure them into their service. It is a rare thing for a mage to succumb to the will of the shadow fey. Even so, it is an ever-present peril and mages must always guard their minds against the constant whispers, particularly in the winter months when the power of the Wildwood's otherworldly shadow glades is at its height.

On the rare occasions that the Wood Elves willingly enter into discourse with other races, it is invariably the mages who perform diplomatic roles, travelling with small entourages to the courts of foreign kings. To avoid potential danger while on such journeys, the mages will commonly focus their powers into weaving a spell of protection about themselves and their companions, moving them beyond the physical realm and mundane hazards. Such groups often appear, as translucent silhouettes and pass through physical

GLAMOURWEAVE KINDREDS

Kindreds of Yenayla

A Kindred smaller than the Spellsinger Kindreds that is dedicated to maintaining the correct balance within Athel Loren.

Glamourweaves, sometimes known as Shapers, Tree-Singers, Skein-weavers, Shadow-Walkers, Changelings, Wood-seers, Grove-kin and Wood-shapers, are very closely linked to Athel Loren, and often act as emissaries and ambassadors between the Wood Elves and the older spirits of Athel Loren itself.

The name Yenayla has evolved from the Elven root-word Yenlui, meaning balance, harmony and chaos.

"The forest speaks, to those who listen. We move and dance, anticipating the will of Athel Loren. Through us, the trees and vines talk; we paint their words onto the page."

*- Sarathai Spiritwalker,
Second Spellsinger to the Guard of Isha*

obstacles without hindrance, giving rise to countless peasant folk tales of ghostly travellers that stalk the lands about the Everwood.

Spellsingers are experts in divination and are able to communicate with trees simply by touching them. They can rouse dormant Treemen, invoke Dryads and cause trees to grow rapidly in any shape they desire by chanting their strange and arcane songs. Of all the Wood Elves, the Spellsingers are the most attuned to the forest and the wild magic that flows through its rich, verdant glades.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Spellweaver	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	1	9
Spellsinger	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

MAGIC: Spellweavers and Spellsingers are Wizards who use spells from the Lore of Beasts, Life, Light, Heavens, Shadow or Athel Loren.

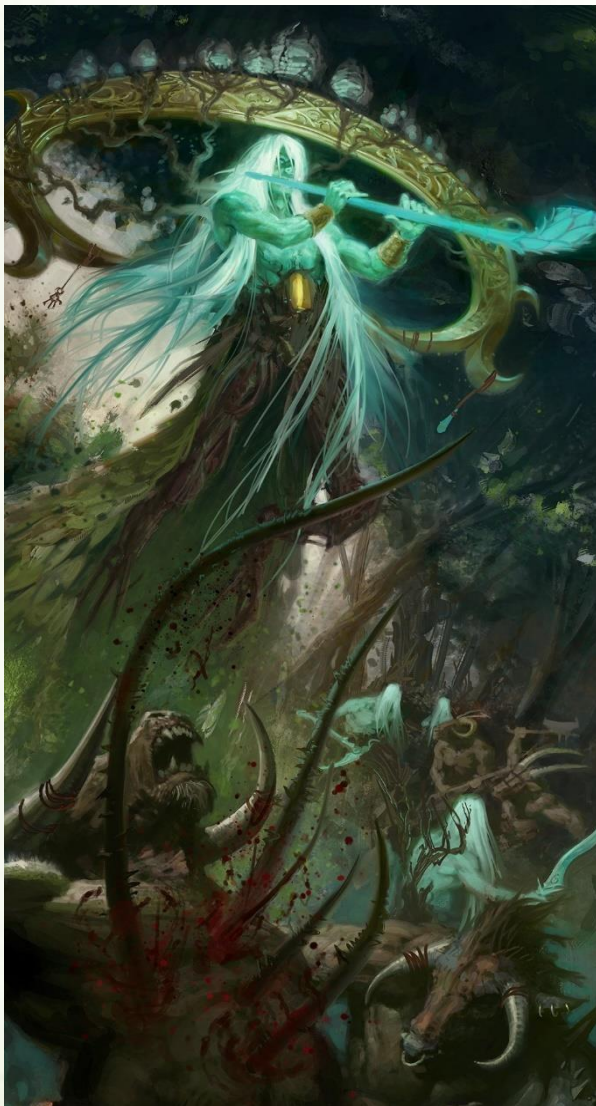
SPECIAL RULES: Blessings of the Ancients, Elven Grace, Forest Strider.



WARSONG REVENANTS

Given life by spirits held within the Oak of Ages, the Warsong Revenants has recently sprung forth in Athel Loren. Though few in number, the Warsong Revenants are a powerful addition to the ranks of the Wood Elves. The songs they play bolster the hearts of allies and demoralise enemies, while the Revenants themselves weave arcane forces with an ease that belies their youth. While seemingly fragile and ethereal spirits, the magical power of their arboreal cloaks helps defend their soul seed from harm.

The power of a Warsong Revenant stems from their mastery of the Life Magic, which they channel through an ornate flute – each of which is said to incorporate a fragment of bark from the Oak of Ages. They possess an instinctive sense for the ley lines that cross the realms, following these arcane pathways and playing their song of rejuvenation so that they may coax the lands to healing. On their travels, they are surrounded by swarms of fluttering spites and carpets of thrashing roots, which viciously lash out at any who would impede them.



The song that these Revenants play is not truly intended for mortal perception. To the Asrai, it is a stirring tune of great-vibrancy, while to their allies it is a fey and unsettling earworm that never entirely fades from the edge of hearing. Beings corrupted by Chaos perceive the ballads of a Warsong Revenant as terrifying, soul-shredding dissonances that echo weirdly from the depths of the woods; those who hear it are left staggering and insensate, easy prey for the Wood Elves that accompany the Warsong Revenants.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Warsong Revenant	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

MAGIC: Warsong Revenants are Wizards who use spells from the Lore of Life or Athel Loren. In addition, they know the following spell:

Unleash Swarm of Spites Cast on 8+
The Warsong Revenant summons a large swarm of malicious spites that spiral outwards to attack those who have displeased it.

Unleash Swarm of Spites is a **direct damage** spell that targets all enemy units within 12". Roll a number of dice equal to the casting result for each enemy unit. For each roll of 5+, the enemy unit suffers a Wound. Saves are taken as normal.

SPECIAL RULES: **Blessings of the Ancients**, **Fly (5)**, **Forest Spirit**, **Regeneration (5+)**, **Natural Armour (6+)**.

Song of Athel Loren: *To the inhabitants of Athel Loren, the sound that emanates from a Warsong Revenant's flute is sweet and uplifting. To their foes, it is a sonic assault of devastating potency.*

Friendly models within 12" of one or more Warsong Revenants gain +1 to their Leadership. Enemy models within 12" of one or more Warsong Revenants suffer -1 to their Leadership.

ARCH-REVENANTS

As the Season of Doom rages and the Forest Spirits march out on the offensive, a new seeding of hotsapped martial heroes have emerged to goad them into battle. Known as Arch-Revenants, these swift and deadly warriors are as skilled as scouts and spies as they are as war leaders. That which they cannot strike down in Isha's name they soon undermine and entangle – just as the relentless creep of roots crumbles away the resistance of the strongest stone, an Arch-Revenant will complete their mission no matter the obstacles in their path.

Where foes are in too great a number to defeat militarily, the Arch-Revenants seek ways to undermine them. They are known to be exceptional manipulators and cunning agents, and can even evade notice by other Forest Spirits should they wish. Though they use this talent predominately to spy upon, misdirect and sabotage their foes, still it does not endear them to their fellows.



Despite their obvious battle prowess and the favour of the Ancients, the Arch-Revenants are not fully trusted. Most of the Glade Lords and Ladies tend towards conservatism, so their acceptance into Asrai society has been a difficult process. The fact that the Arch-Revenants themselves have little time or respect for the traditional structures of the Kinreds works against them as well. Their ability to evade notice is so advanced they can freely traverse the Wood Elves' established territorial boundaries, and while this talent is most often used to spy upon and sabotage their foes, it has not endeared them to their fellows.

Most disturbing of all, from the viewpoint of the more isolationist Wood Elves, is the change in the spirit-song that Arch-Revenants bring with them – the mere presence of one of these warriors causes the spirit-song to swell with wrathful overtones. Even the most sombre forest spirits are stirred to belligerence and action in close proximity to one of these Free Spirits; those who have spent centuries surviving by secrecy and concealment suddenly find themselves filled with the urge to strike swift and true against their foes, no matter the cost.

Arch-Revenants are not blind to the diplomatic niceties of dealing with those they wish to rouse to war, but their essential natures are coloured by Kurnous' most aggressive aspects; they are forthright and impatient beings who see their mission as paramount, and they will thrust aside that which impedes them, be it friend or foe.

Arch-Revenants are potent warriors in their own right, descending upon their enemies with blistering speed and leaping from one spirit path to the next like quicksilver. They rarely go to battle without first having gathered every shred of information they can about their enemies, employing agents in the form of spies to aid them in their surveillance. This vital intelligence allows them to strike precisely where they will have the greatest impact.

Moreover, their symbiotic zephyrspites – dragonfly-like beings that cling to the Arch-Revenants' backs and bear them into battle – allow them to soar from one battlefield to another with lightning speed, striking at the enemy's weak spots and picking them apart with relentless precision. In this way, the warweald repeatedly strike the most vulnerable elements of the enemy force, picking it apart one swift assault at a time before finally swooping in to deliver the killing blow. Armed with elegant glaives, the Arch-Revenants deliver powerful blows that slice through armour with ease, while their crescent-shaped shields can be used defensively or to help guide their strikes. Even their zephyrspites are lethal, for the creatures possess wicked tail pincers capable of severing heads and limbs.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Arch-Revenant	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	4	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Fly (10), Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (6+).

Call to Battle: *An Arch-Revenant's fiery spiritsong incites the children of Athel Loren to attack her enemies with all of their ire.*

All friendly units with the Forest Spirit special rule within 6" of the Arch-Revenant are subject to the Frenzy special rule as long as they remain within range, and do not lose Frenzy even if losing combat.



GLADE GUARD

In times of need, every Wood Elf can answer the call to defend Athel Loren, for all are trained in the arts of the longbow as soon as they can hold one. After all, in Athel Loren, archery is not just a tool of battle but one of many hunter's skills vital to an Elf's survival.

When an Elf comes of age, he or she will be formally inducted into their household's kinband of Glade Guard, and given responsibility for patrolling of a section of the forest. Completely in tune with the rhythm of their forest home, individual Glade Guard warriors are entirely self-sufficient, able to live off the land as they patrol the forests and watch for interlopers. Should such a sentry sight an intruder, he or she will swiftly raise the alarm and await assistance. In a mere span of moments the forest will be alive with sharp-eyed Elven hunters, all focused upon seeking and slaying the intruder in their midst. Most who enter Athel Loren die without ever realising they are in danger.

When Athel Loren goes to war the Glade Guard form the bulk of the army, a deadly core of skilled archers that can often put a foe to flight before the battle has truly joined. Each Elven household fights together on the battlefield with several disparate kinbands combining to create one or more formal regiments under the command of a lesser lord or lady of the realm.



Archers almost beyond compare, Glade Guard fight in highly mobile formations. Like all Elves, they are swift and deadly, possessed of incredible dexterity and skill. The Wood Elf army can often seem haphazard and slightly disorganised to their foe, for each band of Glade Guard is expected to follow the broad dictates of the general but, at the same time, is encouraged to take the initiative when the opportunity presents itself. Such a principle often leads to an overlapping line of battle, with individual Glade Guard kindreds advancing and retreating like leaves in storm, all the while pouring a hail of deadly arrows into the foe.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Glade Guard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Lord's Bowman	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery, Elven Grace, Forest Strider.

WOOD ELF ARCHERY

The core of the Wood Elf army has always been its archers. Most of the warriors of the various Wood Elf their principle weapon. Indeed, few warriors have swords, shields or kindreds fight with the longbow as armour since the Wood Elves do very little metal working and must trade with outsiders for metal. The Wood Elves are loath to fell trees to fuel furnaces and hate the foul fumes. They dislike the dull colour of iron and try to have as few dealings with Dwarfs as possible.

All this means that metal has always been rare in Athel Loren. Instead of forging metal weapons of war, the Wood Elves made elegant and powerful longbows. They carefully selected the best trees from which to cut their bowstaves and arrow shafts and soon became expert bowmakers and archers. Soon they surpassed the skills of the High Elves of Ulthuan in the practice of archery and were certainly masters above any other race.

The Wood Elves know many secrets of how to make powerful bows from laminated strips of rare trees. The bowstrings themselves are said to be woven from the hair of Elf maidens. The flights of the arrows are chosen from the feathers of particular birds to ensure accurate flight. The arrows are tipped with copper or delicately shaped arrowheads of flint or obsidian.

As well as these skills, the archers practise their archery by hunting beasts in the forests. In the dimly lit glades they hone their keen eyesight and acquire an amazing sureness of shot.

DEEPWOOD SCOUTS

Deepwood Scouts roam the entire realm, living under the trees, watching for signs of the enemy, or simply keeping an eye on the forests. They are the most skilled and adventurous of each hall – often those well on their way to following the calling of the Waywatcher. They are explorers as well as guardians, but most importantly they are deadly warriors and the most accomplished archers in the entire land. They are some of the most accomplished archers in the entire realm and incredibly skilled in ambushing and skirmishing among the trees. In stealth and cunning they are second to none, able to advance towards the enemy behind cover, approaching close without being seen, ready to spring out and attack by surprise.

Deepwood Scouts hold the responsibility of patrolling those areas of the forest deemed too dangerous for Glade Guard to enter. To tread such paths, an Elf must be invisible not only to a predator's sight, but to his other senses also – no easy matter when contending with otherworldly creatures to whom an Elf's soul manifests as a brightly burning light.

The Deepwood Scouts' skills of stealth and concealment serve them well upon the battlefield. They are masters of ambush and distraction, the assassins of enemy artillery crews and of careless wizards who stray too far from the protection of their allies. Indeed, many an invading army has been brought to battle utterly unaware that kinbands of Deepwood Scouts have dogged its footsteps for days. Only when the battle lines clash do the Deepwood Scouts reveal themselves, sowing confusion and disruption amongst the enemy lines.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Deepwood Scout	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Master Scout	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery, Elven Grace, Forest Strider, Scouts, Skirmishers.

SCOUT KINDREDS

Kindreds of Arahain

Sometimes those of this Kindred are known as Sentinels, Wayfarers, and Hawkeyes.

The name Arahain has evolved from the Elven root-word Arhain, meaning shadows, night, stealth, secrets, and perfidiousness.

"Orcs and their Goblin kin are our enemies, for they are the defilers of glades and murderers of our folk. Beastmen, the children of Chaos and Long Night are our enemies. They fight us for our right to exist in the woodlands and forests. Skaven of the Underworld are our enemies, for they gnaw the roots of our world and bring pestilence and death to our forests. Dwarfs are our enemies, for they cut down trees to fill their furnaces and to power their infernal machines, and many times they have waged war against us. Kegh-mon, the hairy Humans are our enemies, for they are war-like and greedy, and would drive us from our homes if they could. Many, many of them have turned to worship of the Dark Powers. Halfings are our enemies, for they clear trees away for their fields to grow crops which they then consume with unsatisfiable hunger. They would eat the whole world if they could. Elves of Naggaroth and far-off Ulthuan are our enemies, for they have turned their backs on Isha and Kurnous, and betrayed their Elf heritage.

These are your enemies, child. Know them well and keep your bow and arrow ready."

- What a Wood Elf mother told her son.



GLADE RIDERS

The Forest of Loren is surrounded by open heath and downland with the occasional rocky crag, grove of stunted trees and plenty of scrub, bracken and heather. This belt of wild open land forms the outer border of the Wood Elf realm and is constantly guarded by the Glade Riders and charioteers of the Kindred of Equos.

When the Kindred of Equos migrated here from the coastal colonies they brought with them their herds of Elven steeds. They were the only one of the kindreds who stayed in the Old World who kept and bred homes. The other kindreds ventured deep into the woods but the Kindred of Equos made their home in the meadow glades and open heaths on the margins of the great forest, where their herds could graze and roam freely. In the scattered clumps of trees covering the hilltops they made their strongholds, hidden from view but dominating the approaches into the forest.

Thus the Kindred of Equos assumed the role of guardians of the borderlands. The lords of the kindred ride out in chariots to challenge all corners. Their warriors are renowned as the Glade Riders, who ride down and harass any foes who dare to cross the heath and approach the Forest of Loren. They patrol the Wild Heaths that surround the Forest of Loren, ready to chase away intruders. They ride Elven Steeds and keep herds of these swift and-highly spirited horses in the secret Meadow Glades within the forest.



The Glade Riders are perhaps the greatest horse-warriors of the Old World, their Elven reflexes allowing them to perform all manner of seemingly reckless acts that are far beyond the abilities of the lesser races. Whether firing backwards while riding full pelt through deep woods or darting through the ranks of surprised enemy outriders, Glade Riders routinely survive their escapades unscathed through a formidable combination of graceful skill and unflappable confidence.

Unlike most cavalrymen, Glade Riders do not view their horses as property or subservient beasts. Instead, over a period that can last many years, a deep and lasting connection is formed between rider and steed. This bond arcs beyond friendship and beyond family, so that horse and rider act as one being, communicating on a level that is impossible for an onlooker to detect. Where another would have to command his steed upon the path he needs it to follow, it is as though the Glade Rider need only think the command and the horse will respond as required.

When their steeds are not needed for battle, their riders pasture them in great glades hidden deep within Athel Loren. This is not because they fear that their horses will stray, for the bond between them goes too deep for that and the horse will always come when summoned, but is done for the protection of the steed. Many are the winding ways beneath the leaves of Loren, but those paths that lead to the stable glades are very well hidden, indeed some can only be reached by travelling through the Elven halls themselves. Only a very determined and lucky horse thief could find his way there safely, and none have ever made it back out again. Those rare outsiders who catch a glimpse of a Wood Elf steed at play often refuse to believe that it is truly a mortal creature, assuming instead that some strange fey beast has crossed their path. In truth, there is little more magical about the steeds of Athel Loren than any other inhabitant of the wood, merely the boundless joy of a creature born into freedom, rather than into bondage.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Glade Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Glade Knight	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8
Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5

TROOP TYPE: Cavalry.

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery, Fast Cavalry, Forest Strider.

GLADE RIDER KINDREDS

Kindreds of Sehenlu

Also known as Kindred of Equos (in the south-west), Horse-Masters, Saddle-Born, and the Ridderkin. A noble that rides an Elven Steed will often be from a Kindred of Sehenlu, or was once a part of one of those Kindreds.

The name Sehenlu has evolved from the Elven rootword Senlui, meaning swiftness, and accuracy.

ETERNAL GUARD

Through the long winter months, the forest of Athel Loren is at its lowest ebb, made dormant and vulnerable through the cycle of the seasons. The Treemen slumber and even the normally lithe Dryads are sluggish and slow. During this time, guardianship of the most sacred of places falls to the Eternal Guard, sons and daughters of the noble houses of Athel Loren. Eternal Guards fight with stout thrusting spears shaped from the tall straight staves of the ash tree, which are strong enough to unhorse a Bretonnian knight at full gallop!

The Eternal Guards are chosen from among the tallest and sturdiest among them and entrusted with the task of guarding the kindred's sacred glades. Only skill on the field of battle can earn an honoured place within the ranks of the Eternal Guard, for their duty is a difficult and dangerous one. Should the forest be assailed in the frozen months they can depend upon little or no aid from Athel Loren itself, and will be called upon to hold fast against whatever threat comes to challenge them. Bravest of all are those who guard the Oak of Ages in the heart of the forest. Sometimes, in the bitterest of weather when the Shadow Fey stir from the Wildwood to claim the Oak of Ages for their own, the threat comes from within and not from without. Regardless of whether the foe be faerie spirit, marauding Beastman or Questing Knight, the Eternal Guard stand firm before it.



Each guardian is a formidable foe in his or her own right, trained to a pinnacle of skill that other races cannot easily match. When assembled in numbers, they form a deadly and steadfast phalanx, their spear-staves thrusting and cutting with a graceful yet disciplined efficiency. The Eternal Guard themselves refer to such a formation as a 'fortress of boughs'. They face the enemy with feet planted firmly upon their chosen ground, shields braced against the enemies' attacks, and the fine of spears rippling as the leaf-shaped blades dart forward to kill.

Though their chief duties are tied to the winter months, the Eternal Guard are called upon to serve all year round, whether as the watchmen and arbiters of the Elven halls, or as bodyguards for the greatest of Elf nobles. Indeed, it is all but unknown for one of the great lords and ladies of Athel Loren to travel anywhere without an escort of some hundreds of Eternal Guard, and this number can rise steeply if battle is expected at the end of the journey.

The Eternal Guard hold duty to their lord high above the threat of personal danger, and fight without thought to their own safety whilst their lord or lady has need of service. Thus have they often fought on, long into the night, steadfastly defending their charge from a terrible fate, even though their allies have cast aside their arms and fled or he dead upon the field. Eternal Guard are pledged to stand beside their lord, even should the spectre of death come to claim them. Come one foe or one thousand, it matters not, the Eternal Guard does not surrender.

It is this undying loyalty that has preserved Athel Loren from civil war on more than one occasion, as it is custom for feuds between nobles to be settled through trial by combat between representatives of each other's Eternal Guard. Combatants are chosen by the drawing of lots, making it in a lord's best interest that all Eternal Guard under his command be trained to as high a standard as possible. To be nominated to fight such a duel is the greatest honour an Eternal Guard can know as, win or lose, they know that their deeds in the arena of blades will save the lives of thousands.

ETERNAL KINDREDS *Kindreds of Selathoi*

As the Eternal Guard, the Kindreds of Selathoi form an undying and unyielding defence of all the sacred places of Athel Loren during the winter months. Members of the Eternal Kindreds tend to have learnt their trade in a Warrior Kindred and have proved time and again that their skills and courage are worthy.

The name Selathoi has evolved from the Elven root-word Sarathai, meaning unyielding defiance.



Many Eternal Guard kindreds decorate their shields with depictions of the sacred Oak of Ages, which is where the spirit of the forest dwells. Others choose various signs and symbols such as the Eyes of Isha and the sacred spirals, seen as the markings on the wings of Ariel in her Sylph aspect. Another potent symbol depicts the antlers of Kurnous of the wild hunt. Other favoured motifs are the watchful eyes of the owl, a leaf rune of the sacred tree of the glade in which the kindred dwells and the various triple and double spirals representing the sacred dances of the equinox.

Pennants, which serve the kindreds as standards, depict similar motifs to the shields. Sometimes Spellsingers will divine arrangements of signs which endow the standard with magical properties. Certain symbols can attract magical energy from the forest. There are legends of wounded Elven warriors being wrapped in a standard after a battle and making a miraculous recovery!

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Eternal Guard	5	5	4	3	3	1	5	1	9
Eternal Warden	5	5	4	3	3	1	5	2	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: **Elven Grace, Forest Strider, Stubborn.**

Saearath: *Different Eternal Guard kindreds employ different armament – some rely on Saearath (spear-staves) using the whirling blades to fend off enemy blows, others prefer more traditional spears and shields.*

A Saearath can either be used as a normal spear or a spear-stave. A spear-stave follows the normal rules for spears, but Requires Two Hands and adds +1 Attack. You may choose which fighting style you want to use at the start of each round of close combat.



WILDWOOD RANGERS

Athel Loren is not a safe place, even for the Elves. Even now, thousands of years on from the first great council, there are those forest spirits who resent the Elves' presence, and visit upon them whatever cruelties are in their power. Banished to the sinister south-eastern corner of Athel Loren, known as the Wildwood, these dark spirits rail against the waystone fence that confines them, and dream darkly of revenge on those who have occupied their home.

The task of guarding the border between this shadowy prison and the rest of Athel Loren falls to the Wildwood Rangers. Theirs is an existence thoroughly at odds with the gaiety and splendour known by other Wood Elves, for just as the creatures of the Wildwood do not rest, nor can those who have sworn to keep them trammelled. The waystone fence is ever under attack, and it suffers disruption more often than any care to contemplate. Any breach, however small, brings with it the risk of carnage as the dark spirits slip loose from their bonds and wreak all manner of havoc in the forest beyond. The Rangers converge on such breaches within moments of their formation, holding back the tide of dark spirits long enough for Spellweavers to make the waystone barriers whole once again. Thus must the Rangers be ever vigilant, so that their kinsfolk need not live in fear.

Few take up the Ranger's glaive without having suffered tragedy at the hands of the Wildwood's denizens. Most have lost a loved one to a changeling; others have experienced first-hand the destruction caused by the rampage of an insane Treeman. A few, a very few, are purposefully recruited by other Rangers. There is honour in such an invitation, but pride is tempered by foreknowledge of the sacrifices that will be required. Once the Ranger's path has been trodden, it is not easily set aside.

Rangers do not triumph through physical prowess alone, but through a steadiness of will that other Elves find intimidating. Many of the Wildwood's spirits are horrifying beyond measure, able to drive reason from an unsteered soul with but a glance. Others cloak themselves in glamour and appear in comely and seductive forms no less dangerous. For a Ranger to survive, he must therefore harden his soul to all emotion. Not all are successful. Each year, some are lost to terror-born madness, or have their hearts ensnared by some siren of the Wildwood. Of the two fates, the former is by far preferable. Terror can be overcome in time, and a fractured mind repaired; but there can be no escape for those seduced beyond the waystone fence, just a life of stupefied servitude and false bliss that ends only in a death too long delayed.

Though not answerable to any of Athel Loren's lords or ladies, bands of Rangers will sometimes join a campaigning army. Here, a resolve hardened against the denizens of the Wildwood finds bloody employment against monsters possessed of vast and terrifying power. Always, the Rangers meet such foes with stoicism, hacking apart Minotaur and Dragon, Vampire and Daemon with a calmness and discipline that few Elves, though they be valorous souls by nature, can hope to match. Wildwood Rangers do not join such battles

"I hunted the interloper with the practiced gift of my people. His folly was borne in every hurried fumble, every snapped twig. I was the breath of the forest, the rustle of leaves. I was justice."

- Charoi Everwatcher, Chief Wildwood Ranger

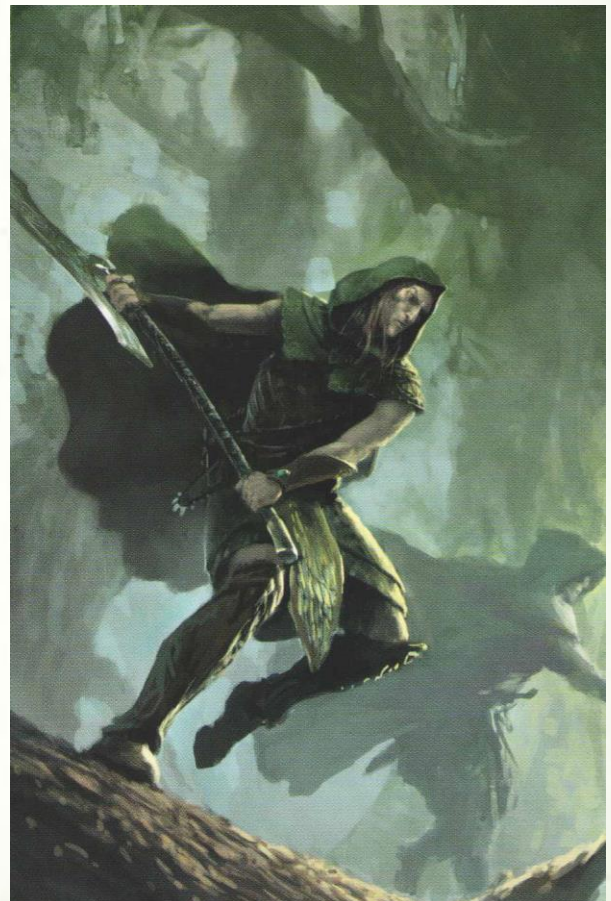
out of a desire for glory, or even to show common cause with their kin; they are driven by a far deeper purpose. Many dark spirits are shapeshifters or changelings. Most such creatures are driven by simple instinct and use their gifts only to imitate those they have murdered. A few, however, have the wit to inveigle themselves into the ruling classes of Athel Loren's enemies, or to seek anonymity in the sprawling ranks of a marauding army. It is such creatures that the Rangers of the Wildwood seek when they march to war, though they seldom tell even the army's commander of their true goal. To destroy such a prey, they will battle for many years and across untold leagues, lay waste to cities and slaughter thousands of beings whose only crime was to be deceived. Only when the changeling has been cornered and killed, its body reduced to lifeless ash, do the Rangers return to Athel Loren and recommence their silent vigil.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Wildwood Ranger	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	9
Wildwood Warden	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Forest Strider, Immunity (Psychology).

Guardians of the Wildwood: If a model with this special rule is in base contact with at least one enemy model with either the Fear or Terror special rule, it gains +1 Attack.



WARDANCERS

The shrine glades of Athel Loren are where the Wood Elves perform their arcane rituals. The heritage of the Wood Elves is recorded as much in ritual dances as in Elven runes or epic sagas. Every kindred has a band of ritual dancers who perform in the shrine glades, enacting the tales of Wood Elf lore and invoking the gods Kurnous and Isha. As well as ritual dances, there are deadly war dances that can be used in battle. The dancers who perform these dances also fight in battle as Wardancers. They are a select caste, including both male and female Elves, ordained at birth and raised to the spectacular skills that are famed and feared throughout the world.

Wardancers roam across the length and breadth of Athel Loren in tightly knit troupes, treading paths and secret ways that few others know of or dare use. They are welcomed to Elven halls and treated with the utmost respect, yet also with more than a little fear and wariness. Other Wood Elves regard the Wardancers as wild and unpredictable, and not without cause, for they are the servants and worshippers of the Elven trickster god, Loec, a deity whose conventions are a mystery to those not already committed to his path. Sometimes known as Feastmasters for their role in great festivals, the servants of Loec lead the Elves in music and rejoicing, and perform the intricate dance rituals that re-enact the history of Athel Loren, a form of storytelling just as important to the Wood Elves as the more conventional methods of song-smithing and writing.

A troupe of Wardancers, handpicked by Orion and Ariel themselves, have the sacred task of guarding the Oak of Ages. They must guard the oak through the deep midwinter while the King and Queen in the Wood lie entombed within, awaiting rebirth in the spring. At the Spring Equinox it is the Wardancers who perform the strange and ancient ritual dances that arouse the immortal Orion and Ariel from their winter slumber.

Wardancers are exceptionally agile and swift, even for a race whose grace and speed is legendary. The frantic dances of the Elves are physically demanding beyond Human endurance, often lasting for many days and nights. To a Wardancer even other Elves appear to be moving painfully slowly, for every move made by one of the kin of Loec flows into the next, and thence the

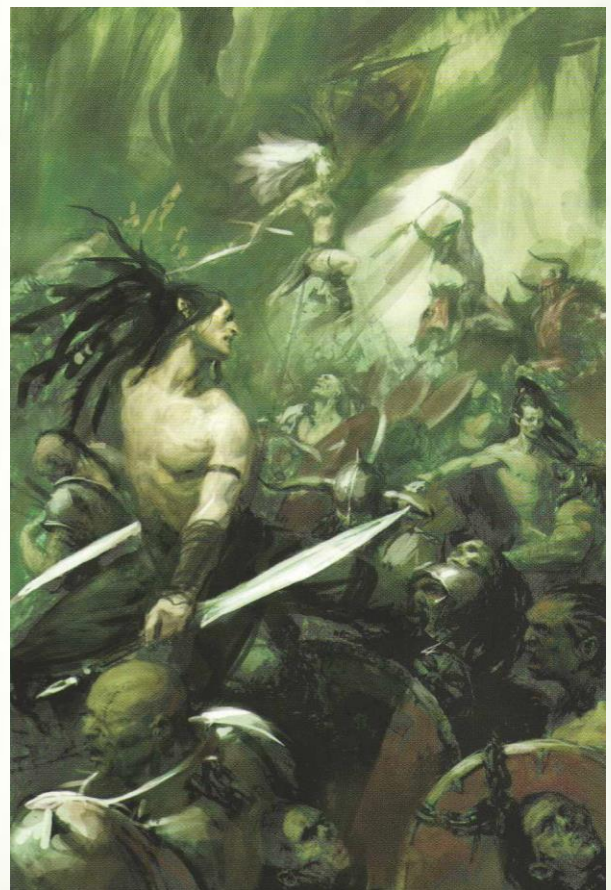
next one after that without conscious thought or guidance.

Forgoing armour, the Wardancers decorate themselves for the ritual dances that they perform and do the same to go into battle, when the body painting and hairstyles become even more savage and ferocious to scare the enemy. Spiral patterns with swirling designs in natural plant dyes are daubed all over the body which may be whitened with lime or chalk to make the patterns show up better. These are not just to overawe the foe but also ward off hostile magic. Spirals and magical designs such as the sacred Eyes of Isha are especially favoured and potent as magical protection. The designs are painted with dye made from berries and forest plants and shades of blue are the most often used.

The Wardancers' long hair can be made to stand up in a crest or spikes using lime or tree resins, and is often dyed in outlandish colours. Wardancers takes on the roles of mythical figures and ferocious warriors, their form of movement and even their fighting style paying homage to the one who inspires their dance. The designs include ritual symbols such as the Spiral of Life, Horns of Kurnous and Eyes of Isha, and many others. The wild whoops and blood-curdling shrieks of the Wardancers, not to mention the weird piping of any musicians that may accompany them, just add to their terrifying appearance.

*"Agile as a Wildcat.
Deadly as a Serpent.
Strong as a Bear.
Graceful as an Eagle.
Fear o' foe!
For the Wardancers are upon you!"*

- Battle hymn of the Wardancers





Wardancers are sublime warriors, made even more formidable through their war dances, the favoured rituals of the trickster god. For these, the favoured rituals of the Trickster God, no rhythm is called for these dances, nor are instructions issued. Instead, each dancer instinctively settles upon the correct pattern to strengthen and complement the dance of the rest of the troupe, an effect that creates a web of movement as graceful and beautiful as it is deadly. Each dance functions not only as a different discipline of battle, but also as an affirmation of faith and a re-enactment of a past victory. In this way, the Wardancers celebrate their great triumphs of the past, even as they carve the shape of a new one upon the bones of their enemies.

In battle, Wardancers are deadly warriors, leaping over the enemy and twisting mid-air to strike them from behind, darting out of the way of blows and able even to dodge incoming arrows. Each Wardancer leaps and pirouettes through the enemy ranks to music only she hears, gracefully evading her opponent's clumsy blows and ending his life with an impossibly swift to strike of her own. Such is their sublime skill and grace that they dance rings around their enemies, darting in to strike fatal blows and pirouetting elegantly out of harm's way before a foe can react. To many they seem like forest demons, intangible and unassailable beings who cannot be thwarted or denied whether by steel, stone or strength of will.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Wardancer	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	2	8
Bladesinger	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Forest Strider, Immunity (Psychology), Skirmishers.

Talismanic Tattoos: *Wardancers are adorned with all manner of tattoos and warpaint that grant them the blessing of their gods.*

Models with this special rule has Magic Resistance (1) and a Ward save (6+).

Shadow Dances of Loec: At the start of each round of close combat in which they are fighting, models with this special rule choose one of the following dances, the effect of which lasts until the end of that turn or until a new dance is chosen. This is done before Impact Hits are resolved. All dancers in the same unit must choose the same dance. Dancers cannot choose the same dance in two consecutive rounds of combat.

- **Whirling Death:** *Each strike of a Wardancer's blade is made with uncanny precision, capable of severing a head or piercing a heart with one deceptively elegant stroke.*

While performing this dance, the model gains the Armour Piercing (1) and Killing Blow special rules.

- **Storm of Blades:** *The Wardancers rain blow after blow upon their opponent, moving with such speed that the eye cannot follow each distinct cut and thrust.*

While performing this dance, the model gains +1 Attack.

- **The Shadows Coil:** *With agile grace the Wardancers evade the clumsy attacks of their enemies, becoming almost impossible to strike.*

While performing this dance, all close combat attacks against the model suffer -1 To Hit.

- **Woven Mist:** *The sinuous movements of this dance distract and confuse the enemy, allowing the Wardancers to strike before their foe can react.*

When performing this dance, the model gains the Always Strikes First special rule.

SHADOWDANCERS

Shadowdancers are the closest thing that the Trickster God has to a priesthood, and they are both respected and feared as a result. They, and only they, know all the paths through Athel Loren – indeed, it is said that they tread the paths of the Dreaming Wood as surely as they do the mortal world. In battle, Shadowdancers are even more dazzlingly swift than other Wardancers. At other times they are less flamboyant, preferring to confound others with deceptions of the mind rather than swiftness of body. Indeed, many Shadowdancers create illusions, which they inevitably use to further distract their foes or mete out a much-needed dose of humility to Elves or spirits that have forgotten their station.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Shadowdancer	5	8	6	4	3	2	8	4	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

MAGIC: A Shadowdancer who is a Wizard uses spells from the Lore of Shadow.

SPECIAL RULES: Blessings of the Ancients, Elven Grace, Forest Strider, Immunity (Psychology), Shadow Dances of Loec, Talismanic Tattoos.

WARDANCER KINDREDS *Kindreds of Caidath*

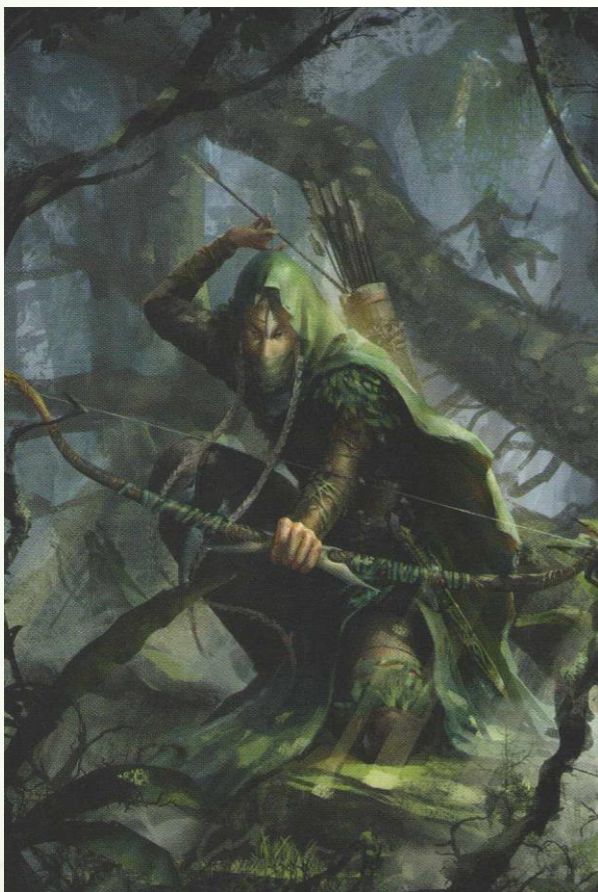
Sometimes those of the Wardancer Kindreds are known as the Shadow Dancers of Loec, Feast Masters, Bladesingers and Deathdancers. They are a cult Kindred dedicated to the Elven trickster god Loec, the god of laughter, dance and music.

The name Caidath has evolved from the Elven root-word Cadaith. This Greater Word carries the following meanings: grace, power, music of the stars.

WAYWATCHERS

Guardians of the paths leading into Athel Loren, the Waywatchers are silent and deadly sentinels. They are masters of concealment, and have trained themselves so that they can lie unnoticed and unmoving for days on end before springing into action to slay a startled and unfortunate prey. Most commonly the way of the watcher is the natural progression for those who have trained as scouts, though more rarely unblooded youths feel the call of the forest coursing through their blood. Over time, an Elf may find that he is more comfortable in the forest's embrace than in the presence of his kin. He will drift further from the halls, spending more and more time in the forest, honing skills of stealth and marksmanship. Many never return from this journey, for there are corners of Athel Loren that are dangerous even to the Elves, yet those who survive are skilled beyond compare and hardened by their experiences.

Waywatchers operate in small bands so that they can hide more easily among the woods. They may even hide in the trees, living for long periods on wicker platforms woven among the branches. From up here they can observe everyone and everything which enters the forest. If the Waywatchers spy enemies they sound the alarm or despatch a fast runner through the forest to alert the kindreds and inform the King and Queen in the Wood. Meanwhile the Waywatchers will prepare concealed traps to delay and deter the invaders while the rest of the Wood Elf army gathers for battle.



Taciturn and solitary individuals, Waywatchers can let years pass between visits to Wood Elf halls, for they are perfectly at ease within their forest homeland. Waywatchers survive by their wits and cunning in the wilds, gathering and hunting what they need and honouring the ancient spirit of Athel Loren through their day-to-day actions. On the rare occasion that a Waywatcher returns to the halls, they stand apart from all others, even family, for in their own distinct way they are closer to the forest than other Elves. No two Waywatchers behave in the same way, for each is taught by their experiences and trials rather than any formal system of training.



Long years of practice with their chosen weapon has left each Waywatcher capable of a tremendous rate of fire, able to loose an unerring stream of black-shafted arrows one after another, seemingly without pause and without loss of accuracy. As well as this, they can place a single shot precisely in the weak point of a foe's armour. Few who have not seen the skill of the silent watchers believe the truth in these tales, and few who do see it survive to speak of it. Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that any who enter Athel Loren run the risk of being slain without warning by the Waywatchers, cut down by unseen archers or falling prey to their cunningly constructed traps.

When the call to battle comes, the Waywatchers band together into small groups. Their uncanny skills naturally lend themselves to the arts of disruption and surprise, appearing silently next to a vulnerable enemy and vanishing as quickly as they came before his body hits the ground.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Waywatcher	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8
Waywatcher Sentinel	5	4	6	3	3	1	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery, Elven Grace, Forest Strider, Scouts, Skirmishers.

WAYWATCHER KINDREDS

Kindreds of Nymraif

Sometimes those of this Kindred are known as Wood Hunters, Pathwatchers, Shadow Striders and Mist Walkers.

The name Nymraif has evolved from the Elven root-word Minaith, meaning skill in arms, spirituality, or the lost way.

Lethal Shot: Models with this special rule have Killing Blow with missile attacks from their bows.

Forest Stalker: *Waywatchers are masters of camouflage. They wear carefully woven raiments of green or brown which are made from leaves sewn together or which incorporate foliage. They paint their bodies with green paint and entwine foliage into their hair to help them vanish into the background. These ploys make them almost impossible to spot and able to sneak up extremely close to their foes.*

While inside a wood, models with this special rule are at an additional -1 to be Hit with missile attacks. In addition, they may deploy within 12" of an enemy unit if they do so within a wood.

UPGRADE:

Traps: *Waywatchers are masters of woodcraft and ambush. They are especially adept at setting woodland traps for unwary invaders.*

A Waywatcher unit which is within a forest is automatically assumed to set traps around its positions. Any enemy charging the unit through the forest will activate the traps as soon as the enemy unit touches the forest. If the chargers are already inside the forest when the charge is declared the traps are activated as soon as the charge is declared. Roll a dice to determine the type and effect of the trap.

WAYWATCHER TRAPS

- D6 Result:**
- 1-2 Spikes:** *The Waywatchers have scattered pieces of long thorn on the forest floor, and have half buried short spikes in the ground around their position.*
The enemy unit suffers D6 Strength 3 hits.
- 3 Snares:** *The attackers are caught by snares as they charge, preventing them reaching their target.*
The enemy unit deducts D3" from the charge distance.
- 4 Nets:** *As the enemy charges nets fall on top of them from the trees above.*
All enemy models in base contact with the Waywatchers must pass a Strength test or be unable to attack in the ensuing close combat.
- 5 Camouflaged Pit:** *As the enemy advances they find themselves falling into concealed pits lined with sharp stakes.*
The enemy unit counts as moving through Dangerous Terrain. If the unit would already treat the forest as Dangerous Terrain, they instead fail the test on a 1-2.
- 6 Impaler:** *A huge concealed spike suddenly springs out and impales anyone in its way.*
Treat the unit as being hit by a bolt thrower in the front rank. The file it hits is determined by the Wood Elf player.

"I did not see – none of us saw. The arrows flew as from the very trees themselves. My men, they fell, and my legs allowed me to escape. Or did they? Their unfailing accuracy leaves only the conclusion they let me escape, so that I would know..."
- Henri Corbeau, Bretonnian Soldier

WAYSTALKERS

Waystalkers' personalities have become entirely submerged by their obsession with stalking prey. They are taciturn and solitary individuals, and they may let years pass between visits to Wood Elf halls. Waystalkers are perfectly at ease within their forest homeland and effortlessly survive by their wits and cunning in the wilds. On the rare occasions when a Waystalker returns to the halls, he stands apart from all others, for he is closer to the forest than to other Elves.

A Waystalker's marksmanship shames even that of other Waywatchers. He can pick out a single enemy from a seething mass of troops and place the one perfect shot that brings the target, lifeless, to the ground. Yet the Waystalker finds no reason to exult in the application of his skills – after all, what prey could hope to escape one who has dedicated his entire life to the hunter's art?

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Waystalker	5	6	7	4	3	2	7	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: **Asrai Archery, Elven Grace, Forest Stalker, Forest Strider, Lethal Shot, Scouts, Sniper.**

CELANOOTH THE BLADE
Celanooth the Blade is perhaps the most infamous Waystalker to inhabit the Forest of Loren. Originally apprenticed to a wizard, his renowned skill with the bow first became evident when he and his master were ambushed by a group of Orc brigands. Celanooth's arrows quickly felled all their foes. Some say that Celanooth still indeed possesses a talent for magic... it just manifests in his bow.

Celanooth shuns most inhabited places, preferring the solitude of the woods. However, the elven warrior almost always has company. Wherever the Waystalker goes, a small cadre of foxes is certain to follow, and even wolves are known to occasionally join his company.

Celanooth is well-known for his ruby-tipped arrows. Early in his career, the Waystalker shattered a ruby amulet worn by a Chaos wizard. He took the shards of the ruby and placed them in the tips of his finest arrows, which he saves for foes he deems worthy of honour.



WILD RIDERS

The Wild Riders of Kurnous are Orion's personal guard, each as aggressive and impulsive as he. They are fey and dangerous creatures who are no longer truly the Elves they once were. Now and forever they are a part of the Wild Hunt's eternal glory.

In appearance, Wild Riders are throwbacks to the ancient days of the Elves. Their weapons are things of crude iron, or even flint; their ceremonial robes and armour seldom more than the pelts of animals slain during their sacred hunts. Yet there is an otherworldliness and nobility about the Wild Riders that cannot easily be denied; the power of Kurnous flows through them as surely as it does through Orion.

Throughout the winter months, while Orion's spirit is dormant, the Wild Riders watch over the King's Glade with eyes aglow with faerie fire, unspeaking save to challenge those who have intruded upon the most sacred of groves. Their authority is absolute, for in accepting the honour of becoming a Wild Rider, they have become severed from Wood Elf society in all ways except that of service to their king. Though they are revered and honoured, most Elves avoid dealings with the kin of Kurnous where possible, intimidated by the aura of power and otherworldly presence of the tall warriors who are now as much forest spirit as they are Elf. Indeed, so alien are the Wild Riders to other Elves



that few of their former kinsmen even dare speak with them, let alone challenge their deeds. Once a warrior's foot is set upon the path of the Wild Rider there can be no return, yet none refuse its call for it is the highest honour that can be bestowed.

When winter rolls into spring and the ritual of Orion's rebirth begins, his Wild Riders lead the ceremony, binding themselves anew to the ever king with each stage in the ritual. In a night of magic and terror when ghostly shapes and eerie cries haunt the glades, the lord of Athel Loren is roused once again from his death sleep. The clarion cry of Orion's horn rings out across the moors and heath surrounding the forest and the Wild Hunt begins anew. All of Athel Loren trembles as Orion's footsteps thunder through the forest, gathering speed and followers with every stride. In his wake come the Wild Riders, made stronger and more ferocious by the awakening of their lord and mounted upon the swiftest of steeds. Some ride not on mortal mounts, but Steeds of Kurnous – manifest aspects of the hunt that are as tireless and determined as the Elves who they bear into battle.

Only the bravest or most foolhardy individuals remain abroad when the horns of the Wild Riders are heard upon the breeze, for their otherworldly tones invoke the fear of the prey in all who hear them. Such an instinct is well-founded, for there is no mercy to be had from the Wild Riders once the hunt has begun, who are as driven and deadly as their lord. In combat, the spirit of Kurnous imbues the Wild Riders with deadly vigour. Those unlucky enough to be espied by them and caught in their path are ridden down without mercy, their deaths a sacrifice to the purity of the hunt and timeless splendour of the King in the Woods.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Wild Rider	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	9
Wild Hunter	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	9
Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5
Steed of Kurnous	9	3	0	4	3	1	4	1	5

TROOP TYPE: Cavalry.

SPECIAL RULES: Devastating Charge, Fast Cavalry, Forest Spirit, Frenzy.

WILD RIDER KINDREDS

Kindreds of Auryaur

Sometimes those of this Kindred are known as the Spears of Kurnous, the Brethren of Orion and Pyrewardens.

The name Auryaur has evolved from the Elven root word Oriour, meaning blood and birth.

SISTERS OF THE THORN

The Sisters of the Thorn are Ariel's handmaidens. In many ways, they are equal and opposite to the Wild Riders of Kurnous, a sisterhood pledged to sorcery and subtlety where Orion's equerries know loyalty only to the glory of the hunt. Where the Wild Riders are borne into battle on steeds as reckless as they, the Sisters ride upon Steeds of Isha – mounts whose viciousness lies hidden beneath a graceful aspect.

Sisters' nature and origins are shrouded in mystery. This has not prevented Wood Elf skalds from recounting stories that tell of such things. It is, after all, in the nature of bards to weave tales to fill the voids left by absent truth. If they are to be believed, the Sisters of the Thorn could be anything from Elf-maids possessed by Dryads, splinters of Ariel's soul given life by Dark Magic's influence, an exiled cabal of Naggarothi sorceresses, or one of a hundred even more outlandish theories. The Sisters have heard all these stories – little that occurs in Athel Loren escapes their notice, and their tendrils of influence reach into almost every hall – yet they do not care. The bards, by spreading these tales, have done more to obscure the truth than the Sisters ever could.

Though Orion's Wild Riders are respected, but not especially well-liked, the Sisters of the Thorn are both loved and feared by almost all Wood Elves. Loved, because they respond readily to requests for aid; feared, because the price they exact for assistance is often more than the supplicant is willing to pay. They may imbue young warriors with peerless battle skill, but in exchange steal all kindness from their soul.



They might answer the pleas of an Elf-maid forlorn in love, then years later steal away her first-born child. It is even within the Sisters' power to stave off death's hand, but they will only do so if a life is offered in exchange, and the petitioner is seldom permitted to choose the victim. In other lands, the Sisters of the Thorn would be driven into the darkness or burnt at the stake, but in Athel Loren, they understand that there must be a balance for everything, and that those who deal willingly with the Sisters must be prepared for the consequences.

Just like their mistress, the Sisters of the Thorn are eternal; they seem never to age and succumb to injury only briefly. Should one be slain, her siblings place her body upon a bier of root and ivy, and bear it away to the hallowed halls beneath the Oak of Ages. There she slumbers away the weeks and months until the arrival of a new spring, where the riot of magic and life-energy restores her to vibrant existence. Only if her body is irretrievable or mutilated beyond all recognition does the fallen Sister's spirit flee the mortal world, leaving her bereaved siblings to exact vengeance on her slayer.

And the Sisters of the Thorn can bring death in so many ways. They know all the poisons of branch and briar – not just those that cause a man's bones to snap with his own desperate convulsions, but also the venoms that turn the blood to fire, bring intoxicating madness or cause the body to rot from within. Crafted from the boughs of bitter and malevolent trees, their javelins are lethal to all blooded life.

They are also versed in ancient curses, of words that can sap strength or cause their victim to fly into a rage so consuming that he slaughters his own kin without compunction. But such methods, though effective, are impersonal and provide little sport. The Sisters far prefer to kill with javelin or knife where they can, that they might see the fear fade from their victim's dying eyes.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Sister of the Thorn	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8
Handmaiden	5	4	6	3	3	1	5	1	8
Steed of Isha	9	3	0	4	3	1	4	1	5

TROOP TYPE: Cavalry.

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery, Blessings of the Ancients, Fast Cavalry, Forest Strider, Poisoned Attacks, Ward save (4+).

Deepwood Coven: A unit of Sisters of the Thorn is considered to be a Level 2 Wizard that knows the spells *Shield of Thorns* (Lore of Life) and *The Curse of Anraheir* (Lore of Beasts). This doesn't prevent other friendly Wizards from knowing the same spells. The unit receives an additional +1 to cast for each rank of 5 or more models it has, after the first, to a maximum of +3. Each time the unit casts a spell (or is targeted by a special rule that affects a Wizard), you must nominate one Sister or Handmaiden of the Thorn as the caster (or target) for the purposes of line of sight, range, etc. In the event of a Sisters of the Thorn unit rolling a miscast, do not roll on the Miscast table. Instead, the unit suffers D3 Wounds with no saves of any kind allowed.

WARHAWK RIDERS

Many large birds of prey live in Athel Loren, especially where it covers the foothills, ravines and crags of the Grey Mountains, making their eyries high amongst the towering pinnacles of rock. These hawks and shrikes commonly grow to far grander proportions than similar species found elsewhere in the Old World, though why this should be remains a mystery. Some scholars speculate that such birds were once a common sight across many lands but have long since been hunted into extinction in the more accessible places, whilst others claim they have been changed by magic. Wherever the truth lies, the hawks of the Grey Mountains commonly grow to such a vast size, boasting wingspans that can average fifteen to twenty feet. Each of their talons is as long as a dagger, making them dangerous adversaries in their own right.

Warhawks are not an ancient race like the Great Eagles, though they are a particularly intelligent one and far more clever than any 'normal' bird. They originated in the forest of Athel Loren, where the greater bulk of them still reside, though some tales hold that a few of them have travelled farther afield to seek eyries elsewhere and a few of them have been spotted in the World's Edge Mountains. Their long association with the Wood Elves is well known outside of Athel Loren, though few guess at the nature of the relationship.

Though most Elves live beneath the protective shade of Athel Loren, there are those who crave the more sparsely forested uplands of the Grey Mountains, and so a strange kinship has developed between the two races. One way they do this is by rescuing hatchlings or even hatching them from abandoned

eggs found in nests among the pinnacles or in the highest branches of pine trees. Upon the middle slopes of the mountains, Elven halls are fashioned close about the great rocky spires upon which the hawks make their nests, eyries adorned with the sun-bleached bones of those who have dared intrude upon their territory.

Warhawks carry Wood Elf riders into battle, a purpose they were not bred for, but one they adapted themselves to. A fledging chick raised by an Elf develops a powerful, nigh-unbreakable, connection with its bond master. Should it be required, a hawk raised in such a manner will carry its rider into battle without question, swooping upon the foe and rending with its cruel beak and swift talons. This bond ties both parties together, for the Elves who choose to become Warhawk Riders are bound over to the needs and care of their mount just as the hawk is to the Elf. As time passes, the lives and essences of both rider and hawk become more and more entwined, so that they almost become one creature, existing for the call of the hunt and the thrill of the chase alone. In this way, an intruder who strays into the pine-strewn crags faces not only the fury of the hawks, but also that of the Elves – as several Dwarf expeditions have found to their cost. Flying high above the treetops of Athel Loren, the Warhawk Riders scout the area for approaching enemies, and are skilful enough to guide their Warhawks down through the trees to strike at intruders should occasion demand it. Those who ride the Warhawks display phenomenal agility and balance, able to launch volleys of arrows while the mount flies at full speed through the forest.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Warhawk Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Wind Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8
Warhawk	1	4	0	4	3	2	5	2	5

TROOP TYPE: Cavalry.

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery, Fast Cavalry, Fly (10).



"When first we strolled amidst ash and elm, they were already here, watching us with their sharp gazes. For a long time there was strife between our two kindreds and our children could not walk abroad in the day without fear of being swooped down upon quicker than even an Elven arrow can fly. To our lasting shame, we scaled their great trees, smashed their eggs, and killed their chicks. So it was until the coming of Kirada the Beast Caller. She it was who first made peace with the Shy-gwythiar, the Keen Ones, the Wind Riders. Those who had the guiltiest in destroying their young offered themselves up, but the Shy-gwythiar knew that vengeance was useless, instead saying that they would raise our children as their own. These were the first of the Warhawk 'riders' a clumsy Human term that doesn't begin to properly describe the bonds between Wind Rider and Elf. They are not just loyal mounts; they are brothers and sisters."

- Elthias, Waywatcher



ALTERS

The strangest of all the Wood Elves are the Alters. They are much more isolationist than any other of the Kindreds, and though they see themselves as a Kindred, they live alone and generally do not mix any more with their own than any other Kindreds. These are Elves with magical powers, who are able to talk to animals and even change into their shape. Powerful magic is required for them to make a change that lasts, but it is easy for them to shift shape for a few moments. They are able to communicate with all kinds of creatures, but usually choose a single creature which they adopt as their second skin or totemic beast. Because the Alters live in the forests, the animals they adopt are those familiar to them, such as bears, boars, wolves, as well as hawks, eagles and other forest birds.

Alters live alongside their adopted creatures for periods of time, growing more and more like them as they do so. If they live long enough among the beasts their usual form changes to that of a beast and they are only able to change to Elf form for brief moments. Most Alters remain Elves and only change their form for a few moments, becoming beasts for just a short period of time before reverting to their true form. When they fight they are continually changing shape, so that their bodies are only recognisable as either one thing or the other for the briefest moment. The metamorphosis of Elf to savage beast is quite unnerving for the enemy, as fur sprouts from their bodies and teeth laden muzzles extend from their faces. They are confronted by a monstrous vision of twisting flesh and cracking bones, of claws that sprout from hand, slash, and are gone leaving gaping wounds and gushing blood.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Alter	8	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	8
Wild Kin	8	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Fear, Forest Strider, Skirmishers, Swiftstride.

THE ALTER KINDREDS

Kindreds of Laith-Koum

Known often as Alters, Shifters or Wild kin, these Elves can adopt aspects of the creatures who dwell within Athel Loren.

The name Laith-Koum has evolved from a combination of the Elven root word Lathain, meaning storm, wrath, and gently falling rain that brings eternal sleep, and the name of the Elven god Kurnous.

Animal Form: At the start of each round of close combat in which they are fighting, models with this special rule choose one of the following Animal Forms, the effect of which lasts until the end of that turn or until a new form is chosen. This is done before Impact Hits are resolved. All Alters in the same unit must choose the same form. Alters cannot choose the same Animal Forms in two consecutive rounds of combat.

- **Bear:** *The Alters grow thick muscles, allowing them to strike harder against the foe.*

While in this form, the model gains +1 Strength.

- **Boar:** *The hide of the Alters thicken, making them able to withstand stronger blows.*

While in this form, the model gains +1 Toughness.

- **Wolf:** *The Alters grow long fangs and claws that cuts deep, making them more savage in combat.*

While in this form, the model gains +1 Attack and the Armour Piercing (1) special rule.

- **Stag:** *The Alters sprout long horns from their heads, which they use to pierce the flesh of their foe on the charge.*

While in this form, the model gains the Impact Hits (1) special rule with Strength Bonus (1).



MEADOW CHARIOTS

Few would relate chariots with the folk of Loren, for the forest is dense and twisting, making the passage of such war machines impossible in normal circumstances. The wood elves, however, have adapted so perfectly to their abode that they can pilot the small chariots their kind use with such dexterity that even the forests of Athel Loren are no obstacle to their passing. Wood elf constructs are often sung from living wood, and indeed the structure of the chariots they ride is very much alive, infused with the life-essence of the mother tree, the spites that nest in the knots and hollows of the chariots flanks and even the briars and thorn vines that grow parasitically from the verdant frame. While there are many places in the forest that even these chariots cannot go, there are ample paths and forest glades for charioteers to pass over.

This all said, chariots are rare in the host of the Asrai. They are reserved for message-runners and lower nobles when the blaring horns of the wild hunt are sounded. Chariots are sometimes ridden by Wood Elf Highborn and used in battle by the Kindreds of the Meadow Glades and the Kindreds

living in the edges of the Forest of Loren. These warriors gallop across the open heaths surrounding the forest, chasing and riding down any foes who transgress the borders of Athel Loren before they even enter the forest itself.

As the host of Loren sweeps from the forest in the springtide, chariots are uprooted from their winter resting places and the fey elves that ride them gird their horses for war. In battle, these warriors are the very hounds of Kurnous themselves, harrying the foe over miles upon miles and reaping their numbers with spear, sword and the wicked thorns that trail and float in the wake of the chariot like falling leaves.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Meadow Chariot	8	-	-	5	4	4	-	-	-
Charioteer	-	5	4	3	-	-	5	1	9
Elven Steed	-	3	0	3	-	-	4	1	-

TROOP TYPE: Chariot (Armour save 5+).

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery.

Prince Iolair Gilandiril drove through the forest on a crisp winter's morning. The frost glistened jewel-like on the branches and on the leaves of the evergreens, and the pale sun filtered through the morning mist to wash the scene with delicate pastel shades.

This beauty was not lost on the Prince, but he did not pause to spend a couple of hours considering it as he might have done on other mornings.

He watched the play of muscles create rippling patterns of surpassing beauty on the flanks of his four horses as Eponandilas the charioteer guided them between the trunks of the great trees, and heard as only an Elf can hear the complex cross-rhythms their hooves made with their panting breath and the sound of the wind in his hair. He looked up as he heard the distant beating of wings among the other sounds of the forest, and his eyes followed the tawny shape of a great hawk, circling above the trees.

"What news?" he said to Aesilanan, who stood on his right.

"The ford beyond this next hill," replied the wizard. His eyes were distant, not seeing his surroundings as he saw through the bird's eyes. "Two hands, perhaps three." To the Prince's left, Fildigar the archer spanned and strung his great bow, and loosened his arrows in their quiver.

The chariot halted at the crest of the hill. At the ford below, a dozen ugly, green skinned figures were preparing to eat. They stood in a loose circle, and in the middle was a young deer, with a wicked barbed spear jutting from its flank, plunged this way and that, but each time its escape was blocked by a shouting, grinning Orc. They jeered and capered in horrible glee as one of their number gave the spear a sickening twist in the bleeding wound. The Prince's eyes grew hard.

"Enough of this," he said softly. "Let us give them their surprise." The others chuckled in grim appreciation of the irony in his words – he had used the Elven phrase which refers to a surprise gift or party. Eponandilas raised one hand. The charioteer was

born with the gift of horse-friendship, and the chariot's lornalim yokepole creaked softly as the team – born at a single foaling – moved forward in response to his unspoken command. He had no need of reins.

Aesilanan's hawk was now on his wrist, and his other hand spat fire as the great chariot thundered down towards the ford. Barely slower than the fire were the arrows which flew, seemingly of their own accord, from Fildrigar's bow. Three Orcs were down before the chariot was upon them, and Iolair reached down to pull the spear from the deer's flank as it plunged past them into the forest. He drew and hurled it in a single motion, and a fourth Orc fell twitching as the weapon sank shaft-deep into its throat.

Two more fell beneath the scything wheelblades as the chariot passed, but one showing more presence of mind than its fellows had grasped the chariot's yoke, and held on with one sinewy arm as the jagged and filthy sword in the other lashed at the horses' hamstrings. Eponandilas was there in an instant, running along the yoke-pole like a cat. His knife flashed once, and the Orc seemed to hang in the air for an instant, howling at the bloody stump of its wrist before it vanished from sight beneath the thrashing hooves. The charioteer swung himself onto the back of the lead horse - Silverleaf, the oldest by an hour - as an Orc was carried backwards off its feet by the Prince's levelled fighting-spear.

The remaining Orcs had turned to flight, but two more fell to Fildrigar's arrows as the chariot spashed through the ford after them, and a third lost its footing and was trampled into the stream-bed. The Prince motioned Eponandilas to halt as the chariot overtook the last of the Orcs, and leaped over the rail with his great fighting-spear in both hands, felling the Orc with a mighty butt-stroke. It looked up from the cold, hard ground to find the four Elves surrounding it - The Prince with his great spear, the archer with his bow on his back and his short sword drawn, the charioteer with his small but deadly-swift knife, and the wizard with his hawk on his wrist and the other hand raised.

"Now," spat Iolair, in the harsh and unlovely Orcish tongue. "Let us try this game a different way..."

DRYADS

Dryads are tree spirits – magical beings who dwell in trees and are capable of assuming the aspects of a particular tree or even shape-shifting into the form of a tree at will. They are only found deep in the forests of the Old World, far from the cities and towns of humans. The Forest of Loren is one of the last refuges of these strange beings. Dryads do have a solid form, with flesh like the pliable, green sapwood of a young tree. Their hair is like the foliage of a tree or may resemble moss and lichen. Dryads are not small creatures, they tend to be up to about twice the height of an Elf. Dryads speak with strange, eerie sonorous voices able to charm or scare the unwary. Their long fingers are usually also dangerous weapons sprouting thorns or whip-like twigs. They are extremely spiteful and vengeful creatures if offended or if the trees they inhabit are threatened or harmed, and their hearts are akin to shards of ice. If a Dryad's tree is destroyed, the Dryad will lose its spirit until it withers away and dies.

In the soul of a Dryad, there is neither room nor regard for compassion or mercy, merely an uncompromising dedication to Athel Loren that makes even the most heartfelt vows of Elf or Man seem trivial by comparison. To harm the forest is to incur the wrath of the Dryads and invoke a deadly and unyielding vengeance that will follow the transgressor until his body has been ruined and broken at their hands. Only a fool deliberately offers insult to a Dryad, but alas, these spirit-maids are so utterly different to mortal creatures that offence is often taken whether it was intended or

not. Few mortals make such a mistake twice, and then only if the individual in question is either very lucky or very swift. Wood Elves are careful to placate these spirits and often ask them for help. Dryads trust and favour Wood Elves and will help them in many ways, even by assuming awesome and savage aspects to fight alongside the Elves in battle.

When Dryads appear to Elves or Men in a friendly or alluring aspect, they often mimic the appearance of Elves. On such occasions, they appear as unearthly, lithe and beautiful maidens – albeit with a greenish, brown or even silvery white hue to their skin and twigs in their long, cascading hair. However, in place of hair, a cascade of green or autumn-coloured leafy foliage flows from their head. It is in this form that the Dryads walk the bounds of Athel Loren. They are not choosy in their victims, preying on tree-killers, invaders and lost innocents with equal malice. The only sensible course of action when approached by such a creature is to flee as far and as fast as possible, but most potential victims find themselves enraptured by the Dryad's comely form or beguiled by the haunting melodies of her otherworldly song. Before long, the victim is sufficiently addled that he will do anything that the spirit desires, and so is swiftly enticed into the shadowy depths of the forest.

Only when the hapless prey is completely under her spell, his mind lost in a cloud of desire and promise, does the Dryad strike. Sloughing off her beauteous form she transforms into a war aspect, the hatred and spite within her soul remaking her outer appearance into a thing of horror. Her hair becomes a twisted mass of thorns, briars and twigs, her face distorts into a terrifying and savage visage, her limbs turn long and wood-like, and her fingers become vicious talons capable of rending and impaling her prey. Before the victim has even registered his predicament, his blood is spilt upon the hungry ground of the forest and his body ripped limb from limb with implacable savagery.



"They are fluid as a stream and just as ever changing. No one shape can contain their essence for long, so they shift from one form to another, dancing even while they are standing still. They are the pulse of the forest, wild and fierce by turns, followed by pensive calm. One moment they are as hard as an Ash, shrugging off blows that could fell an Ogre, the next they are as supple as a reed, bending around their opponent's weapons as they giggle or mock his discomfort. My fellows and I have often talked about why they never hold to one form for long. The general consensus is that they easily grow bored."

- Mylaburr, Deepwood Scout

"The four legs have their teeth, their claws or their speed to protect them. The Shining Ones have their bows and blades. What do the trees have? They have us and the Forest Lords."

- Whishira, Dryad

The Dryads of Athel Loren frequently accompany the Wood Elves when they march to war, though they always act on their own dictates, largely ignoring any but the most vague of orders. They often accompany the great Treemen into battle, acting as a sort of honour guard. The connections between the two, other than that they both seem to be types of nature spirits, is unknown. When Athel Loren takes the field of battle, the Dryads assume their war aspect and hunt upon the flanks of the army. Their lithe and swift nature allows them to cover great distance at speed, falling with ease upon a foe who, until moments before, thought themselves entirely safe from harm. Indeed, a surprise attack by hissing and darting Dryads is oftentimes the first tangible warning an enemy army has that Athel Loren marches against it. That, or their general disappearing from camp in the still watches of the night, only to be found shredded and lifeless in a nearby glade at dawn the next day. Dryads are not known for their mercy.

Dryads are disturbing opponents for their generally beautiful features flow and twist into hideous shapes as they charge into battle. Their skin continually shifts into different forms reminiscent of the various trees of Athel Loren and their fighting style alters to



accompany it. When fighting, they turn into terrible snarling beings seemingly made of wood. They are elusive opponents, mercurial in their actions and difficult to read. Dryads have been known to sincerely compliment a foe on a particularly telling blow, only to take his head off moments later.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Dryad	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8
Branch Nymph	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Flammable, Forest Spirit, Hatred, Natural Armour (6+).

Tree Aspects: Dryads are able to dwell inside trees or assume the form of trees by magical shape-shifting.

At the start of each round of close combat in which they are fighting, models with this special rule choose one of the following Tree Aspects, the effect of which lasts until the end of that turn or until a new Tree Aspect is chosen. This is done before Impact Hits are resolved. All Dryads in the same unit must choose the same Tree Aspect. Dryads cannot choose the same Tree Aspects in two consecutive rounds of combat.

- **Birch Aspect:** Dryads which shift shape into their Birch aspect take on a silvery-white appearance like birch trees, with a mass of delicate yellow green or tawny yellow foliage for hair. They are extremely vicious and spiteful and lash the foe with their long fingers which cut into the flesh.

While in this Aspect, the Dryads gain +1 Attack.

- **Oak Aspect:** When Dryads shift shape into their Oak aspect, they become more robust and resilient to wounds. They assume a green or brown skin and their limbs thicken. Their hair becomes a mass of oak leaves and acorns.

While in this Aspect, the Dryads gain +1 Toughness.

- **Willow Aspect:** In their Willow aspect, Dryads change into creatures with green skin and extremely long yellowish green hair which hangs down around them like the leaves of the weeping willow tree. Their fingers extend in incredibly long, whip-like willow twigs. In close combat they entwine their fingers around the foe and grip his weapon making it difficult for him to wield it at all.

While in this Aspect, enemy models in base contact suffer -1 To Hit.

"Your sap flows pure and strong through your limbs. I would feel its warmth upon me. Share just a little of it with me, won't you?"

- Kayanora, Dryad



BRANCHWRAITHS

Branchwraiths are the oldest of the Dryads. They have ever served as the handmaidens to the Ancients of Athel Loren, and attend to the Treemen with a dedication bordering upon the fanatical. And before the coming of the Elves, the Branchwraiths were so much more. In those days, it was they who ruled the forest and they who tamed the Winds of Magic to bring sustenance to bough and branch. Thus do few Branchwraiths think kindly of the Elves, and many hate them – it matters not that Durthu brought the Elves into the forest precisely because he knew that the Branchwraiths’ cruel nature would lead Athel Loren to great evil. Now the Branchwraiths watch and wait for the seasons to shift once again. One day soon, they believe, the usurpers will be cast down from their lofty perches and the natural order restored.

Branchwraiths lead all but the most wayward or unfortunate enclaves of forest spirits. They are matriarchal authority figures and spiritual warrior chieftains who curb the wild instincts of the more fey and whimsical of their followers, striving constantly to ensure the survival and well-being of their Dryad kin. Branchwraiths are powerful forest spirits, and many are gnarled by centuries of warfare and unflinching

pragmatism. The Branchwraiths carry within their heartwood an echo of the noble spirits’ greatness and still comprehend the importance of their place to their people. It is the Branchwraiths who most clearly hear and project the spirit-song amongst the forest spirits, and they who ensure that, when the song of war is sung once more, their Dryad bands join the muster.



*"Bold Brandyn met with a lady fair,
As graceful as light, and as free as the dawn.
He strayed with her into the wilding wood,
And nobody saw him no more.
Yes, nobody saw him no more."*

- Excerpt from 'Four Foolish Knights' a popular Bretonnian drinking song

Natural currents of life magic suffuse the Branchwraiths. They channel this surging energy into coiling blasts of thorned destruction to tear apart their enemies, or as a harmonic resonance to coordinate, protect and summon forth their Dryad followers. Their lithe limbs singing with the power of Ghyran, the Branchwraiths are the priestesses and the leaders of the Forest Folk. At their behest, the Wildwoods stir to life, and slumbering Dryads emerge from the shadows to answer the Branchwraiths’ call to war.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Branchwraith	5	6	6	4	4	2	7	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

MAGIC: A Branchwraith who is a Wizard uses spells from the Lore of Life or Athel Loren.

SPECIAL RULES: Blessings of the Ancients, Flammable, Forest Spirit, Hatred, Natural Armour (6+), Tree Aspects.

*"Die thee, plaguespawn! Rotfinger! Viletouch!
Squirm thy last! The forest spirits kindled
beauty in these lands you have befouled, and
by my claws, so we shall again."*

- Branchwraith Astylia

TREE REVENANTS

At the heart of every Tree Revenant resides the soul of a dead Elf, though this is not the fate of all. Only the strongest and most driven souls retain enough individuality to become such a creature. Most, eager to renounce the identity and struggles that shaped their mortal lives, pass into the Weave of the forest. Though their families and friends might occasionally fancy that they can hear their loved one's voice upon the wind, it is but an echo of a life long abandoned. However, those souls that become Tree Revenants are unable to completely abandon their grip on their former lives, and they forge themselves a new body out of dead timber so that they might continue to defend in death that which they loved in life.

Tree-Revenants seldom recognise those they knew in their former lives. So much of memory is based in their physical senses, and thus lost alongside the physical form. As a result, those few flashes and fragments that remain to a Tree Kin are more confusing than informative. Of course, to all things there is an exception, and amongst the Tree-Revenant, that exception is Amadri Ironbark. Once the renowned Elf lord Amadri Dawnspear, he was tortured to death by vile Daemonettes. So eager were they to ensure that Amadri experienced the full measure of their tortures, the Daemons placed a curse on him so that no detail of it would ever escape his senses. They soon came to regret this when Amadri's mortal form perished, for their enchantment bound also the Tree Revenant he became in the hour of his death. Fully aware of his fate and of his tormentors, Amadri soon took cruel

vengeance of his own. Now and forever haunted by a pain he no longer truly feels, the reborn Amadri Ironbark rules Arranoc still.

For most Tree Revenants, however, the world is a strange place, hidden beneath a shroud of forgotten memory. Though the creatures might be drawn to guard particular glades or safeguard certain Elves, they are seldom aware of the importance that those places and people held to the mortal being they once were. In point of fact, one such creature stood sentinel over its family halls for a thousand years, never once aware that the same catastrophe that had slain its mortal form had killed every member of its blood-kin also.

The Tree Revenants affect a sombre aspect. Their appearance is that of part Elf, part tree, but fully forest spirit; their features flowing and strangely delicate, their smooth-barked limbs ending in hands that wield elegant, enchanted blades. Everything the Tree-Revenants do, from their selfless defence of the Athel Loren to the strokes and swirls of their eerie fighting style, is intended to uphold and strengthen the memory of those beings. They even bear worm-silk banners into battle, rallying around these woodland icons like their ancestors of old are said to have done.

Though they fight in a regimented fashion, this does not mean that bands of Tree Revenants simply advance stolidly into the teeth of an enemy army. Wherever possible, Tree Revenants prefer to use the spirit paths to arrive in battle, coursing along the worldroots from one wood to the next. Such tactics not only allow the Tree Revenants to outflank or evade their enemies at the speed of thought, they are also extremely disconcerting for their foes. Few sights are as frightening as these fey spirits flickering through the trees with murder in their eyes.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Tree Revenant	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8
Scion	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (6+).

Martial Memories: *Tree Revenants are suffused with the echoes of their predecessors' lives, and can draw on centuries of experience when they go to war.*

Models with this special rule may re-roll 1's when rolling To Hit and To Wound in close combat.

Spirit-walk: Instead of moving normally, the unit can walk the spirit paths during the Remaining Moves sub-phase. Remove it from play, and set it up so that the centre of the unit is within any wood on the table.

GOSSAMID ARCHERS

Amongst the Tree Revenants, there are those that have formed a symbiotic relationship with the Zephyrspites of Athel Loren, giving them the gift of flight. They are known amongst the Wood Elves as Gossamids, and have swiftly become famous for two things above all else – the punishing accuracy of their archery, and the hideous fate of those struck by their shafts. To be hit by a Gossamid's arrow is to literally be eaten alive from the inside out.

The Gossamids that flit at the fore of the Wood Elves' advance are far more than highly mobile skirmishers. They are given the power of flight by the zephyrspites that clasp their torsos, magical creatures with buzzing double wings that allow their allies to take to the skies. At a fierce shout from the unit's leader, these winged beasts will detach and fly straight at the enemy, the buzzing insectile things confounding the attacks of the foe for a short time as their masters sprint off to find safety anew.

The winged spite is not the only symbiote that these archers employ. Though their bows are

supple and strong, it is their quivers that hold the secret to their lethality. The quiverbug that they keep at their hip extrudes a special type of larval pod, its stalk straight and true, and its overall shape much like that of an arrow. When fired as a projectile into the flesh of an enemy, the ravenous grubs couched within the arrowhead hatch, eat and grow to maturity in a matter of seconds, usually resulting in a shocking explosion of gore. The effect does not end there; once their gestation is complete, a buzzing whirlwind of new quiverbugs will fly off from the corpse left behind, their intent to seek out more Gossamids willing to begin the cycle of life-through-death all over again.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Gossamid Archer	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8
Flitwing Scion	5	5	5	4	3	1	5	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Fly (10), Forest Spirit, Martial Memories, Natural Armour (6+).

Larval Shafts: If a model with this special rule rolls a natural 6 To Hit with their bows, that Attack automatically Wounds with the Multiple Wounds (D3) special rule.

Zephyrspites: *These buzzing insectile symbiotes can be released to confound the attacks of the foe for a short time as their masters sprint off to find safety anew.*

After a unit where the majority of the models with this special rule has resolved all their missile attacks and is within 6" of an enemy unit; they may move directly backwards D6", keeping the same unit facing.

SPITERIDER REVENANTS

Spiterider Revenants are unions of tree-spirit and insectoid predator. With astounding agility, they whirl above the battlefield before diving into a sudden, devastating charge. Should the buzzing chorus of the Spiterider Seekers be heard, it is already too late to evade them.

Dragonspites are diminutive natives within the bark of the Oak of Ages which inundates it with pulsing egg-clusters. When Treelsinging is performed, the Dragonspites awaken, swollen through the magics they absorb from the Oak of Ages. Dragonspites possess a deep connection to the energies of life, and are almost impossible to slay. Only a mighty blow can hope to overcome their regenerative capabilities – otherwise they will heal and endure, as endless as the seasons.



To tame a skittish Dragonspite, a Tree Revenant must call upon the deepest notes of the spirit-song, soothing the creatures through the emotion of their chorus. Should the Dragonspite echo the song in its hissing voice – and not lash out with claws and mandibles to tear the supplicant apart – the Tree Revenant will be permitted to clamber atop their new steed.

These Forest Spirits are critical enough to the glades' existence and future prosperity that Orion has dispatched them across the realms to become permanent warriors, integrated into the standing army of each realm. Armed with sickles or spears redolent in magic and bearing shields imbued with the power of Athel Loren, Spiterider Revenants view their duty with great solemnity. They are far less prone to joviality and flights of whimsy than their kin, and while few Forest Spirits would be so crass as to joke at the Seekers' expense, the dirge-like, mourning refrains that they contribute to the spirit-song are prized only in those glades of the grimmest disposition.

On the battlefield, however, the Spiterider Revenants' moribund demeanour is replaced by a fierce determination fuelled by a desire to protect their people, and they will fly into the very jaws of death to this end. Other Forest Spirits are inspired by the courage of the Spiterider Revenants in the face of adversity, and know well the importance of their task.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Spiterider Seeker	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8
Spiterider Scion	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	3	8
Dragonspite	3	3	0	4	4	2	4	2	5

TROOP TYPE: Cavalry.

SPECIAL RULES: Devastating Charge, Fast Cavalry, Fly (9), Forest Spirit, Martial Memories, Natural Armour (5+), Regeneration (5+).



SPITE REVENANTS

Where other Forest Spirits are graceful beings at one with nature and suffused with life magic, the creatures known as Spite-Revenants are terrors from the depths of a nightmare. They do not move with the grace of the Tree-Revenants, but rather in fitful flickering bursts, like a nightmare vision that at one moment is impossibly fast and at the next is painfully slow. They are surrounded by an aura that instils spite in living things around them, and plants that possess wicked thorns or bear poisonous fruit tend to proliferate where they lurk.

The Wood Elves have long speculated about the origins of the Spite Revenants. They are of the forest spirits yet not, a dark reflection of Isha's otherwise vibrant children. Perhaps they were spites who tried to become Wood Elves and became something monstrous instead? Maybe they are the product of pods growing in tainted soil? Many believe that the Spite-Revenants are Wood Elves who gave in to despair or broke an oath to their lord. All agree that the first of the Spite Revenants appeared in the wake of the Forgotten Season, that sinister time of forgetting into which even the eldest Wood Elves cannot cast their minds. What can have occurred, they wonder, that was so awful it compelled Isha to shield her children behind a veil of forgetfulness, and to bear the burden of memory alone? None can say, but all Wood Elves are filled with disquiet when they think upon such things. Most frightening of all is that, even now, none know where new Spite Revenants come from.

The Spite Revenants inhabit wild places soured by bitterness and malice. These twisted spirits are quite mad, for they are cut off from all but the darkest harmonies of the spirit-song. Their minds exist in a terrible void, though whether this is a symptom of their condition or its cause is unclear. The Spite Revenants perceive only the song of war, and thus interact with their uncorrupted kin only when the Wood Elves muster for battle. Even then, the Spite Revenants stand apart from the rest, a situation that Isha's untainted children strive to maintain. After all, no one is really sure whether the Spite-Revenants' madness is contagious...

When war calls the Wood Elves, the Spite-Revenants also answer, creeping forth from the deepest shadows of the forests. These terrible creatures hurl themselves into battle, dancing wildly through the enemy ranks with talons slashing and fangs bared. The fires of madness burn brightly in their eyes, and the darkness seems to cling to them, so that they flitter weirdly away from the light, appearing like sporadic patches of gloom on a sunlight-dappled forest floor.

Where Dryads sing a war dirge in battle, Spite Revenants scream a sawing, nerve-shredding cacophony of horror and hate fit to drive mortal minds beyond the brink of sanity. Darkness twines around these terrible creatures, and many enemies flee screaming rather than battle such nightmares. Hissing and shrieking, the Spite Revenants surge from the shadows of Athel Loren and fall upon their victims with malicious savagery. Light and shadow flicker weirdly around these ghastly creatures as they tear and

bite at their victims, rending to bloody tatters any who do not simply fling down their weapons and flee. They drench themselves in the blood of the foe, perpetrating acts of murderous butchery that shock even the stalwart of their fellow Forest Spirits. They are known to take trophies and to string the remains of the slain in gruesome fashion amongst the branches. Even the fiercest of foes dread fighting against or even near Spite-Revenants. Their extreme violence is unnerving enough, but it is the palpable waves of spiritual dissonance which radiate from them that truly unsettle their prey, and many foes have simply fled in terror when affected by this disturbing phenomenon.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Spite Revenant	5	4	4	4	3	1	5	2	8
Shadestalker	5	4	4	4	3	1	5	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Ambushers, Forest Spirit, Hatred, Natural Armour (6+), Skirmishers.

Unbridled Malice: *Spite-Revenants fight with a vengeful fury, filling the air with blood-chilling curses in unknowable tongues.*

Spite Revenants' Hatred special rule applies in all rounds of close combat, not just the first. In addition, enemy units in base contact with them must re-roll successful Leadership tests. This has no effect on units that have Immunity (Psychology).



SYLVAN HUNTERS

Hulking warriors nearly twice the size of a Dryad, the Sylvan Hunters are the spearhead of Athel Loren's forest spirits. They have emerged from the groves only since the Season of Redemption and Ariel's return, and thus the hunters are a relatively recent addition to the Wood Elves ranks. Masters of sword, bow and scythe, they are strong enough to tear a man in two and tough enough to shrug off arrows with ease. The Sylvan Hunters are agile and skilful fighters with a grace that seems almost supernatural in beings so large and powerful, quietly moving into position with less noise than the gentlest of breezes rustling through a forest's eaves.

Travelling in small bands, the Sylvan Hunters typically range ahead of the warwealds. Some sorcery of the Ancients lends speed and subtlety to their movements, allowing them to pass undetected through all but the most heavily guarded terrain. Then, they watch the enemy's movements with infinite patience before choosing the perfect moment to strike. They are especially adept at communicating via the worldroots, allowing the Hunters to heed their leader's commands or to report what they see across distances and obstacles that would block the efforts of other races.

When they fight, the Sylvan Hunters show none of the capricious whimsy of some of their kin. Calm as an ancient oak, certain as the seasons turn, the Sylvan Hunters lure their victims into traps and strike swiftly from ambushes. After standing perfectly still, the Hunters will suddenly strike, moving and killing with a graceful precision. Each fluid movement has a considered purpose, and not a single motion or weapon swing is wasted. Effortlessly they feint, parry and

strike with massive blades and scythes that would take three lesser warriors simply to move, while their powerful hind claws sink into the earth to hold them firm before an enemy charge, or rise up in order to crush and trample.

Some Kurnoth Hunters wield elegantly curved bows that stand twice as tall as a man. Deceptively nimble for their great size, the gnarled hands of these archers move with blurring speed as they notch, draw, aim and loose their arrows, accurately hitting targets at incredible distances. However, at need, those same hands can easily rend flesh and crush bone. During such times, the Hunters do not fight with animal rage but with an air of calm – a quiet and deadly storm in the midst of a tumultuous melee, or confrontation with the most rabid and bloodthirsty of foes.

The Sylvan Hunters are not only exceptional scouts, but also serve as the forest's executioners. Should an enemy war leader be deemed too dangerous to live, or some perpetrator of great misery against Athel Loren be found, the Sylvan Hunters have dispensation to hunt them down. At such times, all forest spirits are compelled to lend their strength to the Hunters' quest and will not rest until their prey has been cornered and slain.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Sylvan Hunter	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	3	8
Huntmaster	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	8

TROOP TYPE: Monstrous Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Flammable, Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (5+).

Great Bow: Longbow. A Great Bow has a range of 36" and Strength 5. Any shots made with it have the Magical Attacks special rule.

Tanglethorn Thicket: At the start of either player's Movement phase, Sylvan Hunters can sprout a thick weave of thorned branches. Until the end of the turn, they cannot voluntarily move, but counts as being in Hard Cover.



*"Be sure, my son, when you swing your axe,
That the bough you strike is dead
For though winter is come, and the wind doth blow
Though the air is bluer and the fire is low
You may find that the bough swings back,
To crush your skull and break your back.
So you pay heed to what I've said.
And be sure the bough is dead."*

- From a Bretonnian peasant's working song



TREE KIN

Athel Loren is inhabited by many strange and powerful beings, many of whom are as ancient as the forest itself. They watch over those that enter their realm with distrust and suspicion. In spirit form, these creatures are insubstantial and may appear as little more than glowing spheres of light, though they can take physical form at will, and change their shape at a whim. In times of conflict these spirits can bind themselves to the husks of dead trees and fallen branches, making the silent form uproot itself and meld into a powerful shell with which they can oppose interlopers. Once the threat has passed or the battle is over, the spirits will leave the tree once more, a dark and silent shadow, bereft of life.

In motion, these animated hulks of deadwood appears as a twisted and horrifying parody of a man, though one that stands well over eight feet tall on its gnarled and twisted legs. Lacking any of the outward signs of true life, these beings are completely motionless at rest, indistinguishable from the lifeless hulks from which they were formed with nothing to betray the essence that lurks within. Nonetheless, they remain fully aware and ready to strike with lethal ferocity should an enemy stray too close, waiting with unceasing patience for weeks upon end should it be required, and more than one careless trespasser has had his life cut short in such a fashion. It does not fight with finesse, but with gnarled fists that batter armour apart and pummel flesh to bloody ruin. The Tree Kin is implacable, fearing neither pain nor death, for its body no longer has the ability to feel sensation and the spirit that drives it is already long dead.

Yet if a Tree Kin's garbled memory causes the creature sadness, it never speaks of it. Indeed, it is rare to hear one speak at all. When roused to communicate, the creatures do so in slow, hollow tones, as if the thought driving the words comes from somewhere far distant. However, they understand instructions well enough and are even willing to abandon their self-imposed vigil when asked, should their strength be needed elsewhere. At no time is this more clearly seen than when the summer comes and the Wild Hunt begins and hundreds of Tree Kin emerge from

the deepwoods to answer its call. Buried deep though it is, the Tree Kin's soul resonates to the strident tones of Orion's horn and stirs eagerly to meet the challenge, their arched and gnarled forms following in Orion's wake. Thus can the Wild Hunt often seem to be nothing less than a forest come to life, seething with rage and determined to reclaim the lands stolen from it in centuries past. There are few sights more glorious, or more terrifying.

In Bretonnia alone there are a score of folk tales that tell of trees driven by a terrible hunger, and variants of these tales are recounted as far away as Kislev. There is no doubt that such a sight speaks to the deepest primal fears of mortal creatures (particularly those who gather firewood from living trees), for it is as if the forest itself has come alive to reclaim the land that has been stolen from it in centuries past. When autumn comes and the Hunt subsides once more, the spirits abandon their adopted forms and return to Athel Loren, leaving a ghostly forest of dead trees in their wake into which only the very boldest venture.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Tree Kin	5	4	4	4	5	3	3	3	8
Tree Kin Elder	5	4	4	4	5	3	3	4	8

TROOP TYPE: Monstrous Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Flammable, Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (4+), Stubborn.

"Maynard was a woodcutter foolish enough to cut the live wood on the edges of Loren Forest. One day, as he struck at such a tree, another tree swung its branch at him. Maynard ducked and struck back, hacking with his axe again and again till the tree moved no more. Maynard came back to the village and thought no more of it. That night, the forest came to us on gnarled and twisted legs. The trees gathered in the village square outside Maynard's house, and we knew what had to be done. We gave him to the trees and they dragged him into the centre of their group, away from our eyes. But we heard him scream. When his screams stopped the trees were still. They have not moved since. And that is why, in the middle of our village square, there is a thicket of trees no woodcutter will touch."

- Gervase, Bretonnian Rapsallion



TREEMEN

The Forest of Loren is inhabited by many strange and ancient creatures, some as old as the forest itself. Some of the more powerful and ancient of Athel Loren's spirits are able to entwine their essence with that of a living tree, moulding it to their will. It is not a decision taken lightly for, when a spirit forms a bond with a living tree, they become irrevocably merged and cannot choose to leave – only death can sever the connection. From that moment on, the will of the spirit shapes and drives the tree, using knotted bark and gnarled branches to serve where an insubstantial spirit form cannot. Thus is a Treeman born.

Treemen are massive humanoid creatures that resemble upright walking trees. They are considered a legend by most Old Worlders and the few that believe in their existence think them long dead. They are not gone, but those that remain dwell exclusively within the forest of Athel Loren. Indeed, there are those who believe the Treemen are Athel Loren. They seldom venture beyond the forest for any but the direst reasons, and Dryads frequently accompany them when they do so. The Treemen are wise and will not engage in battles they cannot win unless they have no other choice. All the creatures of Athel Loren obey them without question, which grants them a great many beast allies, to say nothing of the Wood Elves. To stand against the wrath of a Treeman is to face the fury of nature unleashed. Survivors often dread going into the woods for years afterward, many of them becoming city dwellers permanently.



When the High Elves raised their glittering towers deep in the heart of the forests they soon noticed that they were not alone in the woodlands. As intelligent and inquisitive as the Elves were, they never came face to face with the gigantic shadowy creatures they saw at the edges of the woods. It was only many centuries later, after the High Elves departed for Ulthuan that the Treemen of Loren forest befriended the Wood Elves.

The Treemen had been watching and studying the Elves for hundreds of years, deciding whether they were good creatures or ill, and whether they intended to harm their forest homes. It was as well for the Wood Elves that the Treemen eventually decided in their favour, as Treemen are powerful enemies, and completely intolerant of creatures who threaten their beloved forests.

These mighty Treemen are revered by Elf and forest-creature alike, and are often infested with lesser spirits living amongst their branches, roots and hollows. For their part, the Treemen cherish all lesser creatures – they have a warmth of character wholly at odds with that of the Dryads. These incredibly ancient beings have seen entire races rise and fall like the ascent and descent of the sun, and understand the passing of rime in a completely different way to mortal creatures. Even the long lived Elves seem to pass into dust at an alarming rate to these Treemen, the oldest of whom can remember times before the footsteps of the Elves left a mark upon the world and can expect to remain when the Elves walk no more.

The Treemen of Athel Loren seem concerned only for the affairs of their wood and little else. They have only left the safety of the forest less than a hand's count of times in the last few millennia. When they have done so, they have inevitably been marching alongside a Wood Elf host. The Treemen's relationship to the Wood Elves and their mystical rulers, Orion and Ariel, is a mystery known to none save those involved. Some speculate that Orion is in fact an Elf-Treeman hybrid, perhaps a living symbol of the "truce" between Athel Loren and the Wood Elves. Whatever the nature of the arrangement, it is closely guarded secret and only those who are directly involved know the truth of the matter. Inquiring too deeply into such affairs is to court death, not only because of the insular and often times paranoid nature of the Wood Elves, but also because there are legitimate reasons to believe that their enemies, including the forces of Chaos, may try to disrupt the bond that they have with the Treemen. The Wood Elves, for their part, are deeply respectful of the Treemen and cautious in their dealings with them.

"Do not lightly rouse the Forest Lords, for they are slow to anger, but when they finally decide to unleash their wrath, all the wood rages with them. The warhawks grow restive as the shadows stretch longer. Creatures who were once prey turn on their predators and we have to guard against the fiercer beasts who suddenly become bold enough to attack our villages. Woe then to any that creeps uninvited under the grand canopy of the Dark Green for never shall they emerge again."

- Elthias, Glade Guard

"How could you ever understand us? You are not of the forest; you do not follow the Green Way. Yours is the scurrying of badgers, the flight of the starlings, but without meaning. You are never still, never at peace. Always taking without thought, never giving back. You anger me sorely. I wish your kind would find your proper place in the world, then all would be better."

- Mossback, Treeman

Treemen are extremely large, at least two or three times the height of an Elf, with massive trunk-like legs and thick branching arms. When they stand still they can easily be mistaken for old gnarled trees with their clawed feet spreading into the ground like roots. Their flesh is tough and woody and their thick gnarled hide has the texture of dry cracked bark. Instead of blood they have sap and foliage or moss instead of hair. Their mouths, nostrils and eyes appear as deep cracks and knots in the bark-like exterior. Their branch-like arms end in horny talons resembling sharpened twigs. The Wood Elves believe that Treemen can communicate with trees, picking up messages through the whispering of the leaves or even the eerie creaking of branches. The Elves also call Treemen Guardians of the Forest and take great care not to harm the old trees to which the Treemen seem particularly attached.

Treemen have a great antipathy of fire because of the damage it can do to themselves and to trees – Treemen's skin is very dry and burns easily. Treemen have a particular hatred of Orcs and Goblins, not just because they are evil creatures but because they chop down the biggest and oldest trees to make their war machines.

A Treeman can be counted amongst the mightiest of Athel Loren's denizens. Terrifying to behold, these behemoths smash apart all who stand against them. His gnarled form is almost impervious to harm, and his strength a near match for the Dragons of the deep glades. Treemen do not fight with grace or finesse, but with huge sweeping blows that strike home with enough force to shatter stone. They can stomp their knurled feet into the ground, knocking foes to the ground, or even send writhing roots to drag foes deep underground where the tendrils can feast upon flesh and bone. Foes are swallowed whole by gaping mouths that open in the trunks of these mighty beings, the corpses providing the host tree with nourishment for many years.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Treeman	5	6	6	5	6	5	2	5	9

TROOP TYPE: Monster.

SPECIAL RULES: Flammable, Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (3+), Stubborn.

Tree Whack: *The Treeman can use his immense bulk and robust limbs to smash things that would resist any other weapons. It is said that Treemen can even shatter stone.*

A model with this special rule can choose to make a single Tree Whack in place of making his normal close combat attacks. If a model is making a Tree Whack, it must be declared before rolling To Hit.

To resolve a Tree Whack, nominate an enemy model in base contact. That model must pass an Initiative test or suffer D6 Wounds with no armour saves allowed. A character with this special rule may make a Tree Whack in a challenge.

UPGRADES:

Strangleroots: *Treemen can plunge their roots into the ground, only to have them erupt elsewhere, clutching and tearing at the foe.*

A model with this upgrade can make the following shooting attack:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
12"	5	Multiple Shots (D6+1), Quick to Fire

TREEMAN ANCIENT

Of all the Treemen of Athel Loren there are those, old beyond mortal reckoning, whose names are revered above all others; these are the Treeman Ancients. When first the pact between forest and Elf was formed, it was they who spoke on behalf of the forest, yet they were ancient even then. Treeman Ancients seldom rouse themselves to war; they find the colours of the waking world less vibrant as they get older and so steadily retreat into the dreaming lands of sleep where their magics nurture and shape the forest's growth. Like their younger brothers, these ancient ones can pass through the centuries in dormancy, tended by small groups of Dryads. Only when dire times befall are they awoken from slumber, for only with their leadership can Athel Loren be roused to its full fury.

Of them, Adanhu, eldest of all Treemen, is considered most wise; his experience keenly sought after by the Elves. Durthu, scarred many centuries ago by Dwarfs (who were either incredibly foolhardy or brave) is a creature driven to the brink of madness by his hate of all who would harm the forest and even the Elves are wary when in his presence. Another ancient, Rhydysann, is a mystery to the Elves and rarely seen, for since the days of the pact he has walked alone, unswayed by petition or plea. He sees to the needs of the forest in his own way, and refuses to be distracted from his purpose. Perhaps he has come to regret the alliance between Athel Loren and the Asrai, though why this should be remains known only to him. Though one of the three is always awake to watch over the forest, the others will occasionally rouse in response to a great peril overtaking the forest. More commonly, Treesingers will supplicate themselves before these slumbering forest lords, entreating them to rise to the defence of Athel Loren.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Treeman Ancient	5	4	4	5	6	6	2	3	10

TROOP TYPE: Monster (Character).

MAGIC: A Treeman Ancient is Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Life or Athel Loren.

SPECIAL RULES: Blessings of the Ancients, Flammable, Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (3+), Stubborn, Tree Whack.

GREAT EAGLES

The ancient and proud race of Great Eagles has lived among the peaks of the World's Edge Mountains since the dawn of time. They also live in the Grey Mountains on the edges of the Forest of Loren, where the gnarled pines mingle with the crags and pinnacles of rock. These wise creatures live for many centuries. From the vantage point of their high eyries, the eagles watch the movements of ground dwelling creatures. They particularly revile evil creatures like Goblins who seek out their nests and plunder the eggs.

Great Eagles are the largest birds of prey in the Old World, with a wingspan that measures over thirty feet and having razor-sharp talons. They have long black claws and ferocious beaks which they use to tear their enemies apart. Their feathers are golden yellow and glisten in the sun, while their underside, tail and the tips of their wing feathers are white like clouds. Some eagles have black edges to their tail and wing feathers. This is a sign of great maturity and power, and only the mightiest Wind Lords are marked in this way.

They are exceedingly intelligent and a few of their eldest are even rumoured to be capable of speaking in the tongues of other races, though they seem to prefer most often to deal with Elves. The vision of Great Eagles is so sharp that they can clearly watch the movements of ground animals from miles away. Correspondingly, they are capable of executing devastating ambushes wherein they attack an opponent from such a great height that their target isn't aware of his danger till their claws sink into his flesh. Great Eagles are large and intimidating creatures and it does not pay to be caught in the open by them. When a Great Eagle swoops down upon prey, its vast wing span blots out the sun and all the victim can see is the oncoming razor-sharp beak and powerful rending talons. The plummeting dive of but a single such bird is indeed a formidable sight, but it pales in comparison to the dreadful yet elegant vision of an entire war-flock plunging out of the skies towards a foe. In perfect unison, each of the mighty raptors peals out of flight and streaks downward, striking their foes like thunderbolts.

"They don't feel fear as we do, or if so, they hide it well. I saw one take on a Griffon without hesitation when it came too close to his eyrie, and I've heard tell that the mothers will even assault a Dragon if their chicks are threatened! They can be as fierce as a northern storm and just as swift if they've a mind to. When they dive, if you blink, you'll lose sight of them."

*- Lorenz, a mountaineer,
discussing the Great Eagles*

It takes considerable centuries to earn the trust of these noble creatures, and thus far, only the Elves have done so – the Eagles view other races with either mild distrust or outright loathing. Although Great Eagles are the rarest and most intelligent of the giant birds of prey to be found around the Forest of Loren, they are sometimes befriended by the most adventurous and exceptional Wood Elves.

There has always been a great bond of kinship between the Elves and the Great Eagles, stretching back to the birth of the Elven race. Of old their greatest friends amongst the races of the Old World were the High Elves, and in former times the Wind Lords of the Eagles would fly to the towers of the Elves to talk of movements amongst the Orc tribes and the progress of Chaos. Nowadays the High Elf towers are ruined and abandoned, but the Wind Lords still fly to the forests of Loren to commune with the Wood Elves. That bond remains strong between the Wood Elves and the noble avians, and many families of eagles chose to make their homes in the heights of the Grey Mountains, close by the borders of Athel Loren. The Eagles are also friends of the Dwarfs, as both races have little liking for Goblins and the Dwarfs are always grateful for words of their enemy's activities.





Nobler of aspect than the smaller Warhawks that live on the lower mountain slopes, the eagles are creatures of unceasing vigilance, possessed of an abiding loathing for creatures of evil heart. Ever alert to the events occurring in the lands beneath them, the Great Eagles unceasingly carry news to the Elven nobles that dwell far below, giving them a welcome, and often crucial, advance warning of invasion or strife.

On rare or desperate occasions, a Great Eagle may offer itself as a mount to a particularly trusted Glade Lord. If an Elf can succeed in winning the trust of a Great Eagle he has gained a truly awesome beast to ride into battle. The races of Elves and Eagles are very close, and the Elven Lords sometimes ride to battle upon the broad backs of their mighty allies. This is a great honour in the eyes of the Wood Elves, for it is a true partnership of equals. Such a union invariably forms the start of a great and enduring friendship that continues to bind both parties, even after death.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Great Eagle	2	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Monstrous Beast.

SPECIAL RULES: Fly (9).

UPGRADES:

Swiftsense: The model gains +1 Initiative.

Shredding Talons: The model gains the Armour Piercing (1) special rule.

"Stay in da mob, lads. If you cut an' run dem big birds'll swoop down an' carry you off like a scared rabbit. Den we'll never see you again!"

- Goblin wisdom



ELVEN STEEDS

The horses of the Elves are renowned for their beauty and speed. The Elf colonists brought Elf steeds to the Old World, and when the Elves abandoned their colonies, some Elf steeds were left behind and mingled with the rough wild horses leading to the breeds of horses now ridden by men. The last pure herd of Elven steeds in the Old World are to be found in the Forest of Loren. One of the kindreds who refused to return to Ulthuan were horse breeders who took their herds into the forest rather than abandon them. All the Elven steeds ridden by the Wood Elves are descended from this herd, the purest of all equine bloodlines.

The steeds of the Wood Elves are swift and graceful, with an agility that cannot be matched by the lesser breeds employed in other kingdoms. Where the Bretonnian warhorse and the stallions of the Imperial stables are bred for strength, endurance and dog-like loyalty, the horses of Athel Loren are trained from birth to be swift, agile and cunning, to work in partnership with their riders, and not merely to be broken to their will. The steeds reared in this way form a lasting bond with their rider, resulting in a darting and dangerous grace few other cavalrymen can match. In times between war, the horses are pastured in hidden glades until their rider summons them once more. Those rare outsiders who catch a glimpse of such a beast at play upon the heath often refuse to believe that these horses are truly mortal, assuming instead that



some strange fey creature has crossed their path. In truth, there is little more magical about the steeds of Athel Loren than any other inhabitant of the wood, merely the boundless joy of a creature born into freedom and not into bondage.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5

TROOP TYPE: War Beast.

SPECIAL RULES: Forest Strider.

Tafellu stood motionless on the hill, his hands resting lightly on the top of the stone. His eyes were half closed, and he was breathing slowly and deeply, yet he was fully alert. On such a morning as this, with the land swathed in mist, and the ground hard with hoar frost, his keen ears and sense of smell were more use than his sight.

Down the slope he could hear his horse cropping the frozen grass tips, and smell the warmth of its breath. On the other side of the hill, where the heath joined the edge of the forest, he could detect the characteristic rustle of wood quail hunting for seeds in the frozen bracken.

To the north, the ground rose slightly and ended at the base of a long, low cliff, while to the south and the west it levelled out into undulating plains dotted with the occasional clump of birch trees.

Despite the freezing air, Tafellu was not cold. The hill where he stood watch marked a sacred place, a confluence of two lines of power, and the faint tingle of magical energy that thrummed through the stone kept him warm.

A sudden flick of static energy made Tafellu jerk his hands away from the stone; at the same time a flock of birds flew up from the cliff top. An animal might have frightened the birds, but the reaction of the stone could only mean that something evil had entered the forest. The screeching cry of a hawk cut through the cold winter air; it was Glouwyn, calling a warning message from his lookout post in the pine trees at the top of the cliff. A large band of Ores had crossed the border and were heading east, towards the forest itself. Pass the warning and summon the kindred!

A string of lookouts guarded the borders of Athel Loren, all close enough to each other so the Glade Riders could relay messages up and down the line. Tafellu turned to the south and passed the message on – his calling sign was the cry of a rook – then vaulted lightly onto his steed and rode off at a gallop towards the forest. He leant low over his horse's neck, urging it on as it bounded sure-footed over the frozen ground to meet with the other Glade Riders and join them in the defence of their forest home.

GREAT STAGS

Great Stags are magical beasts that are closely connected to the most ancient of forests. No beast in all of Athel Loren is treasured more than the Great Stag, a creature that the Wood Elves revere as representing the true soul of the forest. Wherever the truth of their nature lies, the Great Stags are unquestionably magical creatures, though they are undoubtedly of a nobler cast than Unicorns. It is said that when a Great Stag emerges from its dark arboreal shelter, great deeds are at hand. Such a beast only ever seems to appear in portentous times, commonly when great danger threatens the forest – though one is occasionally in evidence at times of great celebration and is interpreted as a sure sign of the forest’s blessing when it does appear.



Once or twice in a generation, a Great Stag may seek out a particularly noble or courageous Wood Elf and consent to be their steed in a battle to come. Such a thing is seen as a boon beyond all others, for not only is the Stag a formidable opponent in battle, its very presence can inspire those about it to greater heights of bravery. Infrequently encountered as the Great Stags are, to see the White Hart of Athel Loren, a mighty stag of unsurpassed nobility and grace, is rarer still. Only one of these noble animals is ever sighted at one time, and it is a common belief amongst the Asrai that there has only ever been one – that it is an immortal facet of the forest than neither grows old nor dies.

Amongst a lower class of Bretonnians, there are many ribald tales of carousing. As one famous story goes, an entire village turned out for a feast for the wine god, but alas their merriment was ruined by a stampede of sylvan knights, each mounted atop a Great Stag. Everything was smashed and the whole party was beset with a magical sleep until the next day, when they awoke sore of head and befuddled. Since then, all have come to fear the coming of the Stag Knights.

There is no chance of mistaking a Great Stag for any of the lesser herd beasts that roam the forests of the world. It is a powerfully built animal, whose every snorting breath releases plumes of steam. The antlers of the Great Stag are both impressive and formidable, about whose iron-hard points dances a ghostly nimbus of magic. However, what is most remarkable about a Great Stag is its noble presence; the creature moves with an unsurpassed grace, for it is a king amongst beasts and the natural spirit of the world, made manifest. Such a creature can be tamed for brief periods, perhaps, but never truly mastered.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Great Stag	9	5	0	5	4	3	4	2	7

TROOP TYPE: Monstrous Beast.

SPECIAL RULES: Forest Strider, Impact Hits (D3).

"To witness a Great Stag is not to see a mere beast, but instead to glimpse the very heart of a forest given form and come alive before your eyes."

- Bonnaudo, famed Bretonnian explorer



UNICORNS

Unicorns resemble large and powerful horses, though the structure of their heads is reminiscent of a goat's. A single spiralling horn crowns their foreheads, rising up from between their eyes, and they are quite skilled at using it as a weapon. The Unicorn is a powerful creature with heavy hooves as hard as iron and snorting breath like plumes of steam. They are clever creatures thought to be capable of sensing both purity and wickedness in those around them. They are invariably wild beasts, for no one has ever tamed a Unicorn. Unicorns are shy beasts that generally wish only to be left alone.

Unicorns are proud and mystical creatures that dwell in or near forests, particularly those that are rich with arcane energies, such as Athel Loren, one of the few places where they still can be found. Unicorns themselves shimmer with magical power, a gleaming aura that also bears an enfolding glamour that bewitches and beguiles any who come near. Scant wonder it is then that the Unicorn has gained a reputation as a noble beast, though in truth it is quite temperamental and stubborn, both selfish and vain.

Like all the magical creatures of Athel Loren, they form part of the web of consciousness that weaves the forest together and are something quite fundamentally different to that which they appear. It is a rare beast and difficult to master because it is more intelligent than other monsters. Unicorns have an aversion to evil creatures and will not allow themselves to be tamed or ridden by them.

Unicorn ivory is a much sought after prize in certain corners of Bretonnian society, and many a gallant knight has met his end pursuing a Unicorn deep into Athel Loren. The knights invariably follow the Unicorns for many miles, the beast staying just slightly out of reach the entire time. Just as the brave warrior thinks he has cornered his prize, the creature disappears without warning, coincidentally within feet of a swarm of vengeful Spites or coldly vigilant Waywatchers.



Being magical creatures themselves, the very presence of Unicorn is harmful to other creatures summoned or created through sorcerous means. The selfish nature of the Unicorn means that it tends to feel no kinship with such creatures, despite their common origins. If anything, Unicorns pity all other beasts for their misfortune at being something far less glorious than themselves!

Curiously, Unicorns tend to have an underlying affinity to those that possess knowledge of the arcane arts. They are drawn to female mages as moths to a flame, as the taste of true magic is somewhat intoxicating to them. This curious weakness ensures that the youngest and most foolish Unicorns are especially susceptible to spells of summoning and binding when a storm of magic rages. Through normally reclusive creatures, Unicorns will willingly leave the shelter of the enchanted glades, hoping to bask in the wondrous aura of those most potent of magics. Most Elven mages find this an acceptable situation as a tame, or at least willing, Unicorn is an excellent and durable steed, though it would be wrong to assume that the beast is broken to the will of the rider – they simply both tread the same path for a while. Regardless, even amidst the Wood Elves there are only one or two maids in a generation that can claim to have ridden a Unicorn, and they do so without bit, bridle or saddle.

Unicorns move with a graceful ease that hints at their true speed and quickness. In battle, a Unicorn can rear up, delivering blows with its hardened hooves, but the steed is most dangerous when it gets a chance to charge with its horn lowered. The radiant glow of the Unicorn offers some protection as well, shielding the majestic beast somewhat from both physical blows as well as from hostile magics. The Unicorns' resistance to magic is exceptional, so much so that even master mages have trouble affecting them with all but the most powerful of enchantments. They even convey their resistance to the rare few that they allow to ride them. Scholars generally believe that the source of this powerful ability is their single horn. The unusual nature of the Unicorn provides the mage with a measure of protection against hostile magics, with a devastating spell often resulting in little more than a slightly inebriated and emboldened steed.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Unicorn	10	5	0	4	4	2	5	2	8

TROOP TYPE: War Beast.

SPECIAL RULES: Forest Strider, Magical Attacks, Magic Resistance (2).

Impale: *When a Unicorn charges it uses its horn like a lance to pierce the enemy.*

Unicorns gain +1 Strength to their Impact Hits.

"They are one of the most beautiful themes in the song of the world and sacred in Loec's eyes. They are a reflection of all that is good. As they fare, so do we all. If the day should come that our people falter and the last Unicorn falls, then Chaos will sweep over all lands and madness shall rule this world until its end. It is no accident that their purity can hold evil enchantments at bay, nor chance alone that leads some of our most honoured maidens to ride them into battle."

- Litharin, Wardancer



FOREST DRAGONS

Although the Forest of Loren is free from many of the hideous, savage and terrible creatures which roam at large throughout the forests of the Old World, there are still hidden places where such awesome beasts lurk. At first thought, it seems incredible that a creature as vast as a Dragon could make its home in the dense forests of Athel Loren. Yet, in the deepest recesses of the Chasm Glades, there lurks a distinct race of great sky wyrms who long ago adapted to life within the greenwood. This remote region is almost inaccessible even to the Deepwood Scouts. It lies in the east of the realm where the forest creeps into the crags and pinnacles of the Grey Mountains.

The best way into the Chasm Glades, should you be reckless enough to go there, is to fly in upon the back of a great bird of prey. No doubt the first dragons to make their nests here also fly in from above. These dragons have been dwelling here since the dawn of time. They have now become a distinct and exceptionally rare race of dragons known as Forest dragons. Long ago they lost the battle for supremacy of the peaks to the savage and more agile dragons of the bare mountains.

Instead the Forest dragons adapted to a life among the trees in the densely forested Chasm Glades. With sheer rock face on all sides, the dragons' nests were safe and secure from any predatory dragons flying above or any



other creatures or dragon hunters. No questing knights or Elf hunters could find them, nor could Dwarf Dragonslayers find a way into the chasm. Protected by the forest canopy and shielded from the attentions of young heroes seeking to make names for themselves by the sheer rock faces of the chasms, these Forest Dragons thrived and multiplied. Such providence has proven itself a stark contrast to other places in the Old World, where Dragons and their kin have long since been either slain or driven into the mountains.

Nothing dwells in Athel Loren without being changed, and the Forest Dragons are no exception. Like certain groups of Wood Elves, the dragons have slowly been made over into an aspect of the forest, and can almost no longer be considered beings in their own right, but an extension of the forest's will to survive and prosper, coloured in various shades of mottled green. Forest Dragons and torpid and somnolent creatures given to slumbering under forest canopies, wound about the gnarled boughs of mighty trees.

Though still voracious predators, the dragons hunt only when the forest has need of them, resting in a state of hibernation the remainder of the time. Should a foe too mighty for Athel Loren's Tree Spirits intrude upon the sanctity of the wood, the forest will occasionally awaken one, or sometimes several, of these great beasts to wakefulness and serve as a steed for a worthy Highborn in order to counter the threat. More often, the Elves will themselves petition the aid of a Dragon to serve as a steed for a Glade Lord – a request to which the beast cedes with reasonable grace, provided it wasn't disturbed from a particularly fascinating dream. Over time, a Glade Lord might form a strong bond with a particular Forest Dragon, the two becoming friends, more than mere allies at need.

THE REBEL PRINCE

There once was an Elven King whose only son fled Ulthuan after his mother was put to death for witchcraft. The prince found haven within Athel Loren, where he became famous for his many heroic deeds. The King was determined to bring his only heir back to his court, and set out for Athel Loren at the head of his personal warhost. At first he was met with stony silence, and then, as he commanded his men to cut down the forest, by an army of wrathful Wood Elves led by the rebel prince himself. In a climactic battle father and son duelled for a full hour before dying impaled on each other's blades. Such is the price of meddling with the affairs of Athel Loren.



Regardless of the reason for its waking, a Forest Dragon is a ferocious foe and one not easily matched. Few can stand firm against its wrath unless they can master the primal fear its countenance provokes. This fear only grows when the beast descends, arrows and bullets scattering off its scaly hide, to eviscerate and devour all who oppose it. Even those enemies fortunate enough to find themselves beyond the crippling sweep of the Forest Dragon's talons inevitably succumb to its soporific breath. They are incredibly poisonous, and even the merest wisp of their clammy breath can kill. Those who breathe this cloying emerald vapour collapse into a stupefied daze, their will to fight or flee utterly spent. This induces a raging fever in all who breathe it, sapping their will and driving them into a coma from which there is no awakening. Their duty done, and their appetites satisfied by the flesh of the foe, the dragons then return once more to their silent slumbers until called upon once again.

Despite their monstrous appearance, Forest Dragons are actually highly intelligent, and maintain a keen interest in events that occur far beyond the boundaries of Athel Loren. They are particularly voracious for tidings that relate to their long months of slumber. In part, this hunger is fed by the Elves who petition them for aid, but the Dragons do not necessarily consider the Elves to be wholly unbiased observers and often seek out others to provide counterpoint.

Indeed, it is not unknown for a Dragon to spare a suitably intriguing opponent, providing that it has the potential to expand the Dragon's knowledge. If the captive's news is sufficiently valuable or intriguing, the Dragon feels dutybound to spare his life in exchange

for the information; if not, the captive is invariably devoured on the spot for unknowingly having squandered the Dragon's precious time.

A few Wood Elves, especially mages, have been able to find and communicate with these dragons. They have discovered that far from being a menace to the Elven folk, the dragons are themselves protectors of the forest on which they depend and therefore natural allies of the Wood Elves. Occasionally a mage will succeed in tempting a Forest dragon to leave the chasm and join with the Wood Elf army to fight off invaders of the forest, or find a thousand year old egg will be found and warmed up until it hatches. The hatchling will be nurtured for centuries until it has grown into a worthy mount reserved only for the greatest of Glade Lords.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Forest Dragon	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8

TROOP TYPE: Monster.

SPECIAL RULES: Fly (7), Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (3+).

Soporific Breath: *Forest Dragons belch corrosive green fumes. Armour is of little use against the soporific fumes exhaled by the Dragons of Athel Loren.*

A Forest Dragon has a Strength 2 Breath Weapon. Armour saves taken against Wounds caused by Soporific Breath suffer a -3 penalty. All models in a unit that suffers one or more hits from Soporific Breath gain the Stupidity special rule for the remainder of the game.





ORION

The King in the Woods

Orion is the consort-king of Athel Loren and presides over the realm together with Ariel, his queen. Through the strange magic of the Oak of Ages Orion acquired the aspects of Kurnous, the old Elven god of nature, the wild hunter of the forests who embodies the untamed savagery of the primeval Elven spirit!

He is immortal, but his existence is irrevocably tied to the seasons. Thus does he pass willingly into his own funeral pyre each midwinter, only to be reborn into thunderous life on the first day of spring. This is the way of all things and is merely a continuation of the never-ending process of death and rebirth. Orion's power runs rampant each midsummer, yet each midwinter he voluntarily offers himself up as sacrifice to the cycle of existence.

Each year, on the eve of the vernal equinox, the Wild Riders select a young prince who will bear the mantle of Orion for the coming year. This chosen one is led to the Oak of Ages and given over to Ariel's keeping. There, she works the miracle of rebirth, sculpting her lost husband anew from the chosen one's flesh and Kurnous' spirit. On the following morning, the chosen one emerges from the Oak's embrace, a mortal Elf no longer, but reborn as Orion, god-king of Athel Loren.

At the height of his power in midsummer, Orion is a terrifying being of majesty and power. He stands over ten feet tall, and his lithe, green tinged body ripples with barely contained anger. As the moons align overhead on midsummer's eve, a beautiful cloak crafted by his Queen is draped over his shoulders and the great horn of the Wild Hunt is placed reverently before him. As the time of the conjunction draws near, he takes up his weapons from their shrine within the Oak of Ages. At midnight Athel Loren goes utterly silent, not a creature stirring, for all know that the ride of the Wild Hunt has come.

The spirit of Kurnous flares brightly within Orion at this time, stirring the hearts and souls of the Wood Elves. Savage excitement and restless vigour spreads like wildfire through the forest as the blaring of his hunting horn resounds through all of Athel Loren, and the earth thunders with the pounding of his cloven hooves. Every Elf and forest spirit feels the pull off his savagery and many are overcome by the primal urge to join his wild ride, and commit acts of untold savagery and vengeance on their foes. To stand in the path of Orion is to stand before the fury of the storm, and few can resist his awesome power.

When his realm is threatened, Orion is the first to fight in its defence. Assuming the awesome aspect of Kurnous he takes up his mighty weapons of war and winds his great horn to call Athel Loren to the Wild

Hunt, before he goes forth to hunt the foe. All Athel Loren trembles as the Hunt stampedes through the forest and races across the moors. Every Elf feels the lure of their king's wild summons, and many are overcome by this most primal of urges. Drawn to their king's side, they gladly abandon their civilised concerns for the thrill of the hunt and the heady tang of blood upon the wind. The dogs of war crawl from their hiding places and gallop at Orion's heels, howling with savage anticipation. Spears of lightning crack down from the sky, and thunder rolls across the treetops. The sound of Orion's mighty bellowing echoes through the woods, causing saplings to topple and stones to crack open. The ravens and crows fly up from their roosts on the Tree of Woe to glut themselves on the bodies of the enemy.

Though Orion's nature is always infused by Kurnous' joy of the hunt, his temperament can differ greatly from one year to the next. Whilst Ariel and Isha have long been one and the same, their desires merged into a single whole, Orion's personality is a melding not only of Kurnous and the chosen one, but of every Elf who has borne the mantle of kingship since the very beginning. These older minds are faint, and seldom influence Orion's actions directly, but still their voices whisper through his thoughts. At times, they offer





advice, at others they admonish and berate. Kurnous is the strongest voice of all, and the only one that can actively supplant the chosen one's wishes. Though the Hunter God's personality has been eroded through the continual cycle of death and rebirth, his legacy of primal power and divine wisdom is still great beyond mortal reckoning. Such is the reason that the chosen one must be strong of will, for he must strive with the spirit of Kurnous and dominate the other spirits in his soul if he is not to be driven mad. It is a heavy burden, and one that grows greater with each passing year, for every cycle of rebirth adds a new voice to the choir. On occasion, a chosen one will falter in his purpose, and in those years Orion's boundless power is held by a splintered and fractious mind.

The rituals of the chosen one's selection are kept carefully hidden, for there are always those who wish to subvert the process for their own reasons. At various times, both the Elves of Ulthuan and Naggaroth have sought to interfere in Orion's rebirth, each party hoping to steer the Wood Elves in a direction to their liking. Nor, alas, are the folk of Athel Loren themselves entirely immune to the lure of interference. Despite the sacrifice that the act of Orion's rebirth calls for, many a noble family would be only too glad to see a member of their kin elevated to the position of Ariel's consort,



though it be only for a year. In fact, some of the more ambitious lords see the time of the choosing as having the potential for a double victory, that of basking in the reflected glory of a relative's selection, and of no longer having to compete with that relative for further honours. Few Elves would admit to such a sentiment out loud, of course, because Athel Loren society considers itself to aspire to better than such intrigues, but the truth of the matter lies plain behind many eyes, if one knows only how to look for it.



It is not just mortal intrigue that must be guarded against, for there are many gods who would delight to meddle in the act of Orion's rebirth. Chief amongst these is Anath Raema, the Savage Huntress. She long ago coveted Kurnous' affections, and has ever since made no distinction between the godly being for whom she once lusted, and the form he now assumes when striding the mortal world. On many occasions, Anath Raema has sought to force the selection of a prince more attuned to her charms than Ariel's. Most of the time, her efforts meet with failure, but not always. The Wood Elves speak seldom of those seasons when Orion's heart is divided; they simply refer to them as the 'dark years' and pledge anew never to let such times occur again.

On those occasions when Orion is reborn with a shadowed soul, there is only one consolation, just as there is one final unavoidable woe in those years when he emerges from the Oak of Ages as a paragon of Elvenkind. Wise or mad, noble or haunted, each incarnation of Orion must end the same way; in the flames of the midwinter pyre.

The spirit of Kurnous infuses Orion. He has no understanding of fear, pain merely feeds his anger and he will not stop until his enemies are dead beneath his hooves. As Kurnous, Orion leads his army through the forest like an enraged spirit of the wood, felling foes with his magic spear as he chases them headlong through the trees. Orion is no longer a mortal Elf, being part of Athel Loren itself, and part deity. He grows to twice his normal size and sprouts great antlers like a mighty stag. His hair is a mass of entangled ivy and his flesh becomes green. If their king is slain in battle, the Elves will bear him away from the battlefield and seal him within the Oak of Ages to be reborn again in the spring.

"...And Orion is consumed by flame, only to be born anew; a cycle of regeneration without end. As he emerges once again, he bears the memories of those who have come before; branded by the flame."

- Treiya Silverwing, Spellsinger



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Orion	9	8	8	5	5	5	9	5	10
Hound of Orion	9	4	0	4	4	1	4	1	6

TROOP TYPE: Monstrous Infantry (Special Character). Orion may be accompanied into battle by two Hounds of Orion (War Beast).

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery, Elven Grace, Forest Spirit, Frenzy, Terror, Unbreakable.

Orion's Equerries: *When Orion takes to the battlefield as the wild hunter of the forest he is accompanied by a pack of savage baying hounds. The sound of Orion's horn and the smell of the prey summons huge wild dogs from their earthen lairs beneath the gnarled roots of trees to join in the Wild Hunt.*

If Orion is accompanied by Hounds of Orion, they must be deployed as a unit. Orion cannot leave this unit, and cannot join other units.

The Wild Hunt: In an army led by Orion, Wild Riders counts as Core Units. An army led by Orion must include at least one unit of Wild Riders.

SPECIAL RULES (Hound of Orion): Forest Spirit, Frenzy, Unbreakable.



MAGIC ITEMS:

Spear of Kurnous (Magic Weapon)

This spear is a living weapon. It was crafted long ago from the bole of the glorious birch tree that grew in Isha's heavenly garden, and bound with enchantments to nurture and renew its flesh. The Spear of Kurnous is irrevocably bound to its master, and always returns to Orion's hand should he cast it at a foe, which he does often. The King in the Woods holds that a true hunter can bring down any prey with a spear as easily as a bow, and ever seeks to prove the merit of his words. When Orion takes on the aspect of Kurnous and goes forth to battle, he takes up the Spear of Kurnous from its secret shrine within the Oak of Ages. It is a powerful weapon of immense proportions. This spear is so huge that no ordinary Elf could wield it. Only Orion with the strength and stature of Kurnous can use it. Of course, the Spear of Kurnous' colossal size gives him a substantial advantage over other preyseekers – when driven by his peerless might, it can disembowel a deepwood auroch as easily as it can a man.

Spear. The Spear of Kurnous gives Orion +1 Strength, as well as the Armour Piercing (1) and Multiple Wounds (D3) special rules. In addition, it can be used to make shooting attacks using the same rules as a bolt thrower with the profile below. This attack can be made if Orion moves (but not if he marches).

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
18"	+1	Armour Piercing (1), Multiple Wounds (D3)

Hawk's Talon (Magic Weapon)

This is an immense and powerful longbow that Orion uses to slaughter any foe that flees before his wrath. Crafted from a single smooth span of rare wythelwood, Hawk's Talon is the pinnacle of the huntsman's craft. Of all the Elves, only Orion possesses the incredible strength to draw this weapon. This is as it should be, for as the forest's foremost hunter only he has the skill to wield Hawk's Talon to its fullest effect.

Longbow. All shots with this weapon are resolved at Strength 5 and have the Multiple Shots (6) special rule. Hawk's Talon may fire Multiple Shots even when moving.

Cloak of Isha (Talisman)

This sacred garment wards off evil magics and is woven anew from the leaves of the sacred rowan trees of the Grove of Isha each spring by the Mage Queen Ariel herself. It is the only protection Orion wears in battle, and the only one that he needs. It is through the Cloak of Isha that Ariel grants her beloved a portion of her own strength, ensuring that the wounds he suffers are fleeting.

The Cloak of Isha grants Orion the Ward Save (6+) and Magic Resistance (2) special rules. At the start of each of your turns, roll a D6. On a score of 6, Orion regains a Wound lost earlier in the battle.

Horn of the Wild Hunt (Enchanted Item)

Orion carries an enormous hunting horn, crafted from the horn of a mighty aurochs, the gigantic wild ox of the forest. This horn is one of the oldest artefacts in all of Athel Loren. Legend tells it was a gift from Kurnous to his mortal children at the dawn of creation, a token of his favour that placed them above the myriad brutish beasts of the world. Now the Horn of the Wild Hunt has returned to its rightful master. In Orion's hands it is more than merely a symbol of a god's favour; it is the vessel of the Hunter God's savagery and determination, and imbues a portion of Kurnous' wildness in all who hear its blare. All foes who hear the blaring horn of Orion are filled with fear.

One use only. At the start of any turn, the Horn of the Wild Hunt may be sounded. Once it has, Orion and all friendly units within 18" gain the Devastating Charge and Fear special rules for the remainder of the turn.



ARIEL

Mage Queen of Loren

Ariel is the queen of Athel Loren and presides over the realm together with Orion. Ariel acquired the aspects of Isha, the ancient Elven goddess of nature, through the strange magic of the Oak of Ages at the same time as Orion gained the aspects of Kurnous. Thus the magical force of nature flows through Ariel as if she were Isha herself.

Ariel wields immense natural forces and weaves them according to her will, commanding the trees of the forest to grow and vegetation to spring forth from the ground. It is Ariel who weaves enchantments around Athel Loren to delay and mislead intruders, or lure them onwards to their doom! Like Orion, Ariel's immortality is linked to the seasons and though she dies each midwinter, she is reborn the following year. If Ariel perishes in battle, the Elves will carry her away and seal her within the Oak of Ages to be reborn again in the spring.

When enemies enter the Forest of Loren, Ariel shifts shape into her sylphlike war aspect. She grows almost twice the height of an ordinary Elf and unfolds huge wings like those of a gigantic moth, covered in tiny scales of shimmering iridescent colours. Upon her wings strange markings known as the Eyes of Isha and the Spirals of Isha can be seen in the patterns of her wings. Sometimes Ariel's wings display the markings



of the death's-head moth indicating that she is enraged and in a vengeful mood. Moth-like antenna emerge from Ariel's head, but her face remains that of a beautiful she-Elf with piercing eyes. The upper part of her body is clad in shimmering scales of incandescent green, while the lower part trails away into infinity – like an ethereal or elemental being. She appears to glow with an inner light like the moon and trails raw magic in a shower of glittering stardust. In this form, Ariel can fly around the battlefield wielding her magic. The wafting of her huge wings over the heads of the enemy fills them with both dread and awe.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Ariel	5	5	5	4	4	5	7	0	10

TROOP TYPE: Monstrous Infantry (Special Character).

MAGIC: Ariel is a level 4 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Athel Loren.

SPECIAL RULES: **Blessings of the Ancients, Fly (9), Forest Spirit, Loremaster (Lore of Athel Loren).**

Aura of the Fey Queen: *Ariel is one of the truly legendary individuals in the Warhammer world. When Ariel assumes her Sylph shape, she becomes a magical being like the goddess Isha herself and gains a divine aura of protection against hostile magic.*

Ariel has Magic Resistance (3). In addition, all friendly units within 6" of Ariel have Immunity (Panic).

Screech: *Ariel in her Sylph form does not use a weapon but attacks with her voice! In close combat she utters a shrill piercing screech in the face of the foe which can wound, stun or even kill.*

Ariel may use Screech when it would normally be her time to attack in close combat. This is a special attack that automatically Hits all enemy models in base contact at Strength 4 with the Ignores Armour special rule.

Earthbind: *If Ariel is endangered, the land itself will rise to protect her by entangling those who would threaten her.*

Any units declaring a charge on Ariel count as moving through Dangerous Terrain for the duration of the turn. In addition, if Ariel flees from combat, any enemies attempting to pursue her roll an extra D6 when determining their pursuit distance and discard the highest result.

MAGIC ITEMS:

The Dart of Doom (Magic Weapon)

This dart was carved from a twig broken from the Tree of Woe. The tip of the dart is a thorn and the shaft is engraved with magical spiral designs.

One use only. The Dart of Doom has a range of 12". If the dart hits a model it causes 1 automatic Wound which Ignores Armour saves. If the wound is not saved the dart sucks energy out of the victim, draining their Strength characteristic by D3 to a minimum of 1.



The Heartstone of Athel Loren (Talisman)

A physical representation of the many ties that bind Ariel to the forest of Athel Loren, this gemstone protects her from the effects of hostile magics.

If Ariel successfully dispels a spell targeted at her, the casting Wizard must immediately take a Leadership test. If he fails, he immediately loses a Wizard level and may not cast that spell for the remainder of the game.

The Wand of Wych Elm (Arcane Item)

This is a long twisted and gnarled staff cut from the rare and magical Wych Elm tree. This tree draws magical power out of the ground as it grows and stores it in its wood. Any wand cut from such a tree may have centuries of stored magical power locked within it. The only way to tap the power locked in the wood is to cut a wand from the tree and inscribe a spell on it. Only a demi-god or wizard of exceptional skill can unlock and use such power. When Ariel takes on the divine aspect of the goddess Isha she gains the ability to use the power stored in the Wych Elm. With it, she can bend the winds of magic more freely to her will.

This staff allows any failed Dispel attempt to be re-rolled.

The Berry Wine (Enchanted Item)

This is a magical and intoxicating brew made from the berries of magical trees, it is so potent that more than enough can be held in an acorn cup.

One use only. The wine can be drunk at the start of any phase. Ariel will immediately regain up to D3 Wounds previously lost during the battle.

The Acorn of Ages (Enchanted Item)

The Oak of Ages grows acorns all year round, but sheds them only when Ghyran, the Wind of Life, reaches its height. These magical seeds are diligently gathered by Ariel's handmaidens, and planted in those regions of the forest that have been ravaged by war or wildfire. Such is the bountiful magic in these acorns that they can grow from seed to sapling, to towering oak in a matter of seconds. This magic too is the reason that the seeds must be gathered swiftly upon their fall. The last squirrel that consumed an acorn from the Oak of Ages stomped much of King's Glade flat, and was brought down only by the combined armies of three high realms.

One use only. At the start of the game, after the battlefield has been set up, but before deployment begins, place a forest, no more than 12" in diameter, on the battlefield. This forest can be placed anywhere at least 1" away from another terrain feature and the edge of the battle field. Once the forest have been placed, it scatters 2D6". If this scatter causes a forest to end up within 1" (or on top of) other terrain, or within 1" of the battle field edge, reduce or increase the scatter by the smallest amount necessary to avoid the obstruction. When this has been done, declare which type of forest you want it to be – choose from the types on the Mysterious Forest table.



ARALOTH

Lord of Talsyn

Araloth was not always a hero. In his youth, he was a craven lordling who had not the mettle to hunt any prey that could hunt him in return. Whilst others went to battle in his stead, Araloth caroused and hunted in the company of worthless friends, and tried to forget his shame.

It was upon one such hunt that Araloth was thrown from his horse, and separated from all companions save for Skaryn, his trusted hawk. After wandering lost for many hours, Araloth came to a strange glade. Though dawn had broken scant hours before, the lordling now beheld a crescent moon hanging low in a darkened sky. It was a scene to stir the heart, yet Araloth scarcely saw it. He had eyes only for the Elf maiden who stood alone at the glade's heart, and the monstrous four-armed Daemon that menaced her.

There, at last, Araloth found his courage, for even his craven heart could not abandon the maid to the Daemon's cruel pleasures. Before he realised it, Araloth was running to her aid, and his hunting spear soon gouged the Daemon's flank. The beast was swift, and Araloth would have perished from its counterblow, had Skaryn not descended from the skies to tear out the Daemon's eyes. Blinded, the beast flailed madly, but Araloth ducked easily under its claws and thrust his spear deep into its black heart. As the Daemon fell dead, Araloth closed his

eyes, amazed both at his victory and at the courage with which he had won it. When he opened them once more, the Daemon's body had vanished. Looking upon the maiden once more, Araloth saw at last beyond her mortal guise, and knew that he was in the presence of a goddess.

Long they walked under the stars, the goddess and the lordling. They spoke of many things, and she revealed to him many wonders. The goddess told of how she had watched and counselled the Elves since the dawning of the world, speaking plainly when the Creator allowed it, and through dreams when he would not. But even the power of the gods must fade, she said sadly. Hers was nearly spent, but she still had three great gifts to bestow. Araloth, freed now of his fears, was the first of these; a hero to defend the Elves in the coming dark. The second would be Araloth's first-born daughter, a saviour to bring hope when it was needed most. Of the third gift, however, the goddess would not speak, for there were some secrets even she could not share. Soon after, Araloth fell into a deep sleep. When he awoke, he did so in his hall, with friends at his bedside. He had been thrown from his horse, they said, his senses scattered by the fall. When Araloth told them of his tale, his companions laughed, thinking that he had dreamt it all. Not wishing to be thought mad, Araloth laughed also, but his heart knew the truth.

In the years after, Araloth became the fearless hero that the goddess had foretold, his triumphs the inspiration for many a song. Following the Battle of Arden, in which Araloth slew Morghur the Corruptor, the Mage Queen decreed that he would thereafter be her royal champion, an honour not bestowed in living memory, let despite the renown and the accolades, Araloth has never forgotten she who made him thus. So it is that on those nights when the crescent moon shines down upon Athel Loren, Araloth the Bold embarks upon the hunt with Skaryn as his only companion, hoping to meet with his beloved goddess once more.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Araloth	5	8	7	4	3	3	8	5	10

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Forest Strider, Ward save (4+).

Boldest of the Bold: Whilst Araloth is a lone character, he has the Unbreakable special rule.

Skaryn the Eye Thief: At the start of each of your turns, nominate a single enemy model within 18" of Araloth. That model takes a Strength 4 hit. If the Wound is unsaved, and the To Wound roll was a 6, the model suffers a -5 penalty to Weapon Skill, Ballistics Skill, and Initiative (to a minimum of 1) for the rest of the game. A model can only suffer this penalty once.

THALANDOR DOOMSTAR

Lord of Argwylon

Thalandor is known as the "Doom Star" because he will swoop over the dark forest by night hunting for Goblins trying to creep into Athel Loren under cover of darkness. If he spies any from on high, he will swoop down between the pines and attack without mercy, riding upon the back of Gwandor, his faithful Great Eagle.

Gwandor the Black is perhaps the most famous of the Great Eagles. This mighty Wind Lord has plumage of the deepest black that shone like polished jet. Gwandor carried Thalandor into ill-fated battle against the undead hordes of Manfred Von Carstein, the Vampire Count of Sylvania, and it was the bravery and power of Gwandor that saved Thalandor's life on that grim day.

A Wood Elf contingent which had marched to help the Empire by scouring the grim pine forests of Sylvania for signs of the Count's army, was overwhelmed by tides of Skeleton warriors and foul Zombies. The location of the enemy was revealed, but almost at the cost of the entire Elf contingent. With their general slain, the Elves fought a rearguard action and many escaped. Thalandor heroically held back the hordes with his magic until he was beset by Fell Bats and badly wounded. The Elves escaped, thinking Thalandor had fallen. Meanwhile, Gwandor fought ferociously to rescue his master and carried the badly wounded Thalandor speedily back to the safety of Loren where he was healed by the magic of Ariel.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Thalandor	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10
Gwandor	2	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Monstrous Cavalry (Special Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Fly (9).

MAGIC ITEMS:

Spear of Daith (Magic Weapon)

This spear was made by Daith, legendary master craftsman of Loren. He carved upon its shaft mystical spirals which give the weapon a will of its own. Upon the hardened copper spearhead are engraved eyes that allow the spear to see the blows of the enemy and intercept them with its unbreakable hardwood shaft.

Spear. The Spear of Daith gives Thalandor a Parry save (4+), even while mounted.

Talisman of Qwarr (Talisman)

Qwarr was the mightiest of all the Great Eagles who ever lived and an ancestor of Gwandor himself. It was Qwarr who slew the ravenous dragon Grathgol when he came to steal eggs from his eyrie. Although the dragon plummeted to his doom, torn by Qwarr's talons, Qwarr himself also perished in the fight. Elves saw this terrible conflict in the air and preserved the mighty talons and beak of Qwarr as a powerful talisman. If the talisman is hung around the neck of a Great Eagle he is protected by the spirit of Qwarr, magically deflecting enemy blows.

Models targeting against Thalandor and Gwandor with missile attacks suffer -1 To Hit.

WIND RIDER KINDREDS

Kindreds of Sethayla

Sometimes known as Brethren of Seth or Dawn-Riders, the Wind Rider kindreds hail mostly from the Pine Crag where their mounts live unrestrained by the dense forest canopy of the lower reaches of Athel Loren. Members of Wind Rider kindreds are often reckless, secure in the knowledge that the swiftness of their mount can carry them unharmed through great danger.

The name Sethayla has evolved from the Elven rootword Sethai, meaning flight, wind, and cry in the far mountains.

DURTHU OAKHEART

Eldest of Ancients

Durthu is an Elder of Athel Loren, a Treeman so ancient that even Ariel's millennia-long existence pales in comparison. Durthu resembles a wizened and gnarled old oak tree, and his bark skin is very dense, even by the standards of Treemen. He is immensely old and has endured in the depths of the forest for untold ages. It was he who first forged a union between Elves and forest, and he also who argued with his fellow Elders that the binding be made permanent. Amongst the eldest of all the Ancients of Athel Loren, Durthu can remember a time when the Elves dared not walk within the forest.

Like others of his kin, he once longed for a time when the groves of Athel Loren did not suffer the presence of any outsiders. Over time, however, what was once a burning hatred has faded to the merest ghost of irritation – proof positive that even the oldest and most stubborn creatures can change if the span of time is sufficient. In truth, the Dwarfs must bear some responsibility for the softening of Durthu's attitudes towards the Elves. Shortly after the Elves began to live in Athel Loren, a band of Dwarfish explorers blundered into Durthu's groves, felling many trees and even taking an axe to the ancient himself, thinking him to be no more than a particularly large and flammable looking variety of oak.



The scars that Durthu took that day have never healed, though it is certain that he had the better of the encounter as not one of the luckless Dwarfs survived to tell the tale. It is certainly possible that Durthu began to feel more kindly towards the Elves from that day forth. This may have been because he realised that they were respectful of the forest (for mortals). More likely, it was the way that many of them came to spectate whilst the furious Treeman repaid the indignity of his situation upon the Dwarfs, interfering only to herd the frantic interlopers towards Durthu, letting out the occasional cheer when a Dwarf met a particularly entertaining death. In those days, he was ever a friend to the children of Isha, always willing to help them broaden their understanding of the forest and of the Weave.

Alas, those days are long gone. Centuries of destruction and carnage have taken their toll on Durthu's valiant spirit. He has borne witness to the rapacity of blooded fife, and of the wanton destruction it has heaped upon his homeland. He has seen untold acres of trees felled for kindling or from simple spite. He has watched, time and again, as the Elves have invited calamity on the forest through an inability to sever their connection to the outside world. Worst of all, he has seen his fellow Elders fall, one by one; some slain by their own foes but most destroyed by the enemies of the Elves.

Now Durthu's benevolence is gone, replaced by an abiding madness. No longer is he a healer and teacher; he has taken up a sword, forged specially for him by Daith, and become solely a destroyer. Whilst the other Ancients tend to sleep through the years, he stays awake and alert, just waiting for a foe to show itself. He makes no distinction between the lost, the innocent and the wicked – all who tread Durthu's beloved glades without leave are doomed if the Elder happens upon them. Only the Elves are spared Durthu's wrath, for he does not blame them for what has come to pass, only himself. Yet nor does he any longer consider the children of Isha to be his friends, and now shuns their company as determinedly as he once embraced it. Allies they might be, through the common cause of survival, but that is all.

"There was once a place beneath Durthu's ancient husk where wisdom and compassion once flourished, and all were better for it. But that is gone now, purged by centuries of malice and war. What remains of Durthu's heart now beats only to avenge."

- Lady Menlui of the Witherhold



For their part, the Elves mourn for Durthu. As long-lived creatures themselves, they know well the cruelty of the world, but can only imagine the sorrows an eternity of destruction has inflicted on a creature older than their entire race. Alas, it is beyond the power of the Elves to heal Durthu's weary heart; but it is not, perhaps, beyond his own. When an Elder of the Forest is slain, his essence is absorbed by his peers. As one of only two survivors, Durthu now commands fully half the combined might of every Elder that ever existed – more than enough to heal his ravaged soul, and to achieve many miraculous things besides.

Sadly, so clouded by rage and loss has his mind become, that he is unaware of the power at his command. What little Durthu employs, he does so only on an instinctive level to augment his already formidable strength or loose swarms of ethereal spite-creatures against his enemies. Manifestations of Durthu's inner sorrow, these wraithlike apparitions chill the soul and spirit of any whom they assail. On those rare occasions on which Durthu slumbers, they sing maliciously through his dreams, ceaselessly reminding the Elder of all the ways in which he has failed his beloved forest. Yet still the potential remains for this being, once the noblest of his kind, to bring a new age of splendour to Athel Loren, if only he can abandon his hatred.

On rare occasions he is glimpsed among the shadowy glades or even found by wandering mages. If the Forest of Loren is invaded, Durthu will become disturbed by the shouts and wanton destruction of the invaders. Enraged, he will lurch through the forest seeking out the intruders and attack them with a savage fury that defies description. His eagerness to exact revenge upon particularly vile forest-despoilers often leads Durthu to fixate upon one particular enemy who he judges to be the one most responsible.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Durthu	5	6	6	6	6	6	2	5	10

TROOP TYPE: Monster (Special Character).

MAGIC: Durthu is a Level 1 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Beasts.

SPECIAL RULES: **Blessings of the Ancients, Flammable, Forest Spirit, Frenzy, Hatred, Natural Armour (3+), Strangleroots, Stubborn, Tree Whack.**

Unburden of Thieflings: *Durthu is infested with spites possessed not only of seemingly inexhaustible malicious energy but also a kleptomaniac streak a league or so wide. When these spites swarm over the target they use their razor sharp claws to filch anything that takes their fancy (peculiarly, this tends to be all manner of clasps, buckles and pins, although it has been known for several to work together in acquiring a particularly shiny helmet).*

An Unburden of Thieflings is a close combat attack that can be used in addition to Durthu's other attacks. It has the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
Combat	2	Magical Attacks, Poisoned Attacks, Random Attacks (D6)

Any enemy units that suffer Wounds from any of these attacks suffer -1 To Hit and To Wound as well as -1 to their armour saves until the start of your next turn.

MAGIC ITEMS:

Sword of Daith (Magic Weapon)

This blade, like Durthu himself, is steeped in millennia of bitterness and rage waiting to be unleashed.

This sword allows Durthu to re-roll failed To Hit rolls every turn, not just the first. In addition, he can never lose his Frenzy special rule.

VENGEANCE KINDREDS

Kindreds of Talu

A very small kindred devoted to revenge for acts of particular harm (either to Athel Loren or personally). This is an unusual kindred in that those who join it only do so for the fulfilment of a particular vendetta, and they then return to their former Kindred. To stay too long within the kindred of Talu is particularly dangerous (one cannot leave the kindred without fulfilling the reason he or she entered it), and Elves will only become one of this kindred very rarely. Those belonging to this kin are known by names such as Riftblades and Mournsingers.

The name Talu has evolved from the Elven root-word Thalui, meaning hatred or vengeance.

DRYCHA

Briarmaven of Woe

Long ago, Drycha held court amongst the roots of Addaivoch, the once-glorious creature known in recent times as the Tree of Woe. Most believe that Drycha lost her mind when Morghur's death soured the ground of the Glade of Woe, the area of Athel Loren to which she was bound, though in truth the Branchwraith was capricious and hostile for many years before that tragedy. As with many of Loren's spirits, Drycha is incredibly old, and is said to remember the days before the coming of the Elves, and has ever rued the folly that shackled the forest to mortal whim and fate. She recalls these times with anger and sadness, for she believes that the alliance between Athel Loren and the Asrai has brought little but destruction to the forest even though the intervention of the Elves almost certainly saved Athel Loren from the axes of the Dwarfs. Indeed, she rarely converses with others, even the Dryads who serve her as handmaidens, but instead chants, mantra-like, the names of all those fellow spirits whom she believes have been failed by the Elves. As old as she is, and with a memory still possessed of crystal clarity, it is doubtful that she will ever reach the end of her tally, for new names are added with every battle between Athel Loren and the outside world.

In the early years of the alliance between the Elves and forest, Drycha was ever in evidence about the glades and groves, watching the Elves and examining their every action for any sign of betrayal. She has been seen little in the years since Morghur's blood was spilt upon her glade, though she is known to commune with Coeddil, a Treeman of great age and power, and serves as his herald while the great being lies shackled in the depths of the Wildwood. Such a thing cannot help but provoke unease, for Coeddil's distrustful attitude of the Wood Elves is legend. He is so incredibly ancient that

"First they attack us; severs and burns to build their halls and fuel their fires. Then they cages us; enfences us with great stones. Now they lives amongst and within, and they be thinking that their transgressions be paid no mind. Elvenfools believe that the forest is their home for now and for all times that lies ahead, but we are older than them. We will be here long after their bones are broken and their flesh is wormfoods.

So lets them keeps their lordling of ashes and their faerie queen. Lets them be holding their councils of light and gabbling courts of power. I knows the darkling places of the forest. I walks the silent ways that trammels and delivers, breaks spirit and twistses time upon itself. I knows where the eldest ones slumber, them that have never awoken to find the Elvenfools underfoot. When they rises and sees, hears and tastes, their fury be roused and dreadful. Things be very different thereafter."

- Attributed to Drycha

it is difficult to ascertain his motivation, for Coeddil has forgotten more than many younger beings – the Elves included – will ever know. If these two embittered spirits have found common cause, as it appears, it can only be a matter of time before the balance of Loren forest is thrown into disarray.

In recent years, strange tales have begun to reach Athel Loren; worrying rumours of Drycha's activities, causing great concern amongst the councils of the Wood Elves. On the fringe of the great Drakwald Forest in the Empire, the peasants tell stories of the trees that come alive hungry for blood. On the edge of the Forest of Arden in Bretonnia, some villagers gather only deadwood for their purposes, citing tales of other villages found ruined and torn, the inhabitants left as scraps of tattered meat by the vengeance of the trees. Though some of these events bear the hallmarks of attacks made by the Asrai, they were not instigated by Ariel's court. To many they seem as senseless as they are apparently random, yet if these attacks are indeed the work of Drycha and her handmaidens, there must surely be a greater goal behind them than mere slaughter – though what that goal is remains to be seen. Even Naieth the Prophetes cannot see the destination to which Drycha strives, for it is drenched in blood and horror.





	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Drycha	5	7	6	4	4	2	7	4	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

MAGIC: Drycha is a Level 2 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Life or Athel Loren.

SPECIAL RULES: Blessings of the Ancients, Flammable, Forest Spirit, , Natural Armour (6+), Spirit-walk, Tree Aspects.

Eternal Rage: Drycha is filled with deep and abiding loathing of all non-forest spirits.

Drycha has the Hatred special rule which applies in every round of close combat, not just the first.

Fanatical Resolve: Like many driven individuals, Drycha dreads being slain with her work unfinished and will fight all the harder if death seeks to claim her.

If Drycha is reduced to 1 Wound, she gains the Frenzy special rule. She automatically loses Frenzy if she is healed back to her starting number of Wounds.

Roused to Wrath: This rule cannot be used if there are no forests on the battlefield when it is time to deploy your army. When you deploy, you may choose D3 units wholly composed of models with the Forest Spirit special rule – these are not deployed at the start of the game, but are ‘slumbering’ somewhere on the battlefield.

At the start of the Remaining Moves sub-phase of your first turn, roll a D6 for each slumbering unit. On a roll of 1-2, nothing happens – roll again next turn. On a roll of 3-6, the unit awakens. Place it on the battlefield so that all models in the unit are wholly within a forest, and at least 1" away from other units and impassable terrain. Treat units that cannot be placed as having rolled a 1-2. Any units that have not yet awoken by the time the game ends award victory points as if they had been destroyed.

Elvandriel stood in the glade, her arms outstretched, her voice rising and falling in the alien syllables of the language of the Dryads. Her throat ached with the effort of producing the strange clicks and rasps that were needed, her mind reeled with the effort of memory. Her companions waited on the edge of the glade, half fascinated, half appalled at the act of summoning. Finally, with a last shrill wail, the song was over. The Mage leaned on her staff panting, trying to gain the strength of mind to speak to the Dryad when it arrived.

There! She could bear it now – a slight noise, like the wind in the leaves – but travelling in the opposite direction to the breeze. She doubted that her human and Dwarf companion would notice it. Then she saw the movement, and the Dryad came striding through the dappled leaf shadows. It was twice her height, presently in Willow aspect, smooth green skin and long yellowish hair banging down its hack. It stood towering over her its long, whip-like fingers moving constantly, like twigs in the breeze.

"I hhhheard you... ssssing the... ssssong of... ssssumrnoning." Its voice was low and sonorous, though its grasp of Elthdrin was slow and halting. "I ccccome in resssponse... to the ancient... paccct. Whhbhat do you... whhhish of me?"

Elvandriel bowed low, trying to remember the correct forms of address. "Greetings, O spirit of the forest, I come in search of aid, for myself and for the trees I hold in trust for my people. There is a group of Orcs passing through the woods to the north of here, I and my companions would have you by our side in combat, to rid the forest of these foul creatures."

"Sssoo Orcccs? Tbossse tame killers? I would hhhhelp you, but my sstrength is low. Whhhat would you give me in return?"

Elvandriel was flustered by the request. "Surely, ridding the forest of Orcs is reward in itself?"

She immediately knew she'd said the wrong thing. The Dryad's skin turned silver-white, its hair became more busby, its fingers grew sharp as it changed into its birch aspect. A menacing hiss escaped between its wooden fangs.

The Wood Elf Mage bowed again. "My apologies, o great spirit of the trees. I spoke in haste. What reward would you wish?"

The Dryad looked around the glade, its fingers moving, searching. Finally, its eyes settled on a certain spot where there was a glimpse of movement behind a tree-trunk. "I would hhhhave... the lifeblood of the burrowing longbeard... to nourish my roots..."

NAESTRA & ARAHAN

Sisters of Twilight

High in the alpine slopes of the Pine Crag, the Eyrie of Twilight dominates the skyline. Herein lie the elegant halls of Naestra and Arahan, the Sisters of Twilight. The twins are as different as night from day, not just in appearance, but in personality. Naestra's spirit is as pure as starlight; Arahan's as wild as an unbridled flame. While Naestra seeks battle only in pursuit of preventing greater harms, Arahan welcomes it with a wanton joy. If truth be told, Naestra always seems reproving of her sister's deeds, though this only ever increases Arahan's delight. Despite their differences, the twins are inseparable – never has one been sighted without the other in all the time they have dwelt in Athel Loren.

The Sisters of Twilight first appeared during the long years of Ariel's self-imposed exile from the mortal realm, acting as her representatives upon the great council. None save for the Mage Queen know the sisters' true origins, though there are many rumours that purport to fill this gulf. Some say that they are the splintered halves of a young Elf-maid who became lost in the Wildwoods long ago, and was remade so that she might better serve the Weave. Wardancer kindreds throughout Athel Loren dance the tale of the mysterious Elves, telling the story of a young Elf child named Naestrahan that wandered deep into the depths



of the wild woods. Alone, this young girl stumbled through the dense undergrowth, led by glowing faerie lights and darting spites. Deep into the darkness she was led, into a place that even the Waywatchers feared to go.

The family of the girlchild were distraught, but accepted that she had been claimed by Athel Loren. Many years passed before a battle was fought at the feet of the Grey Mountains. Foul Beastmen had lit great pyres, and the trees of Athel Loren cried out silently in pain as they were torn from the earth and heaved onto the blaze. Drawn by the ripples of pain dim spread through the forest, the Wood Elves assailed the despoilers the next morn, but they were too few in number so prevail. Hundreds were slain by Elven arrows, and Wychwethyl the Wild led his Wardancers in acrobatic dance that slew countless more, but it was not enough to halt the creatures. Brutal Gors fought their way through the hail of bowfire, and began hacking apart the Elven archers, spilling much precious blood. Amidst the carnage a pair of Elven maidens appeared, descending into the clearing crouched upon the back of an ancient dragon of the deep forests.



The warrior maidens were identical in all ways but one – where one had hair as dark as night, the other had hair of purest white. The ancient dragon tore through the Beastmen scattering those that it did not rip limb from limb. The warrior maidens fired their bows, as entangling briars sprung up to halt those who sought to flee and great magical fires consuming those who fought on. The dark-haired Elf-maiden leapt gracefully to the ground to tend the wounded, while the pale haired twin, still upon the back of the great dragon, launched into the air in pursuit of the fleeing beasts, intent on slaying every last one.

It slowly became apparent that in the depths of the magical dark woods the girl child Naestrahan had become something altogether different and strange, and that these two war maidens were linked somehow to her. Some speculated that one was the real girl while the other was a merely a powerful changeling, yet the wisest Spellweavers said that it was as though the one child had been split into two separate beings.

Each sister represented the divided, yet balanced, nature of the Wood Elves themselves. Where one sister is light, one is dark. Where one is filled with anger and lethal destructiveness, the other is calm and serene. They reflect opposing, yet harmonious aspects of Athel Loren itself.



Others recount that the twins are the darkest and lightest aspects of Ariel's spirit made manifest, her passion and mercy split apart from her soul so that they can no longer dominate her being as they have in the past. A few stories even claim that the sisters are as divine as Ariel and Orion, but most commonplace by far are the songs and tales that claim the twins are simply Ariel's daughters, and thus princesses of Athel Loren by right of blood and lineage. Ultimately, however, the Wood Elves debate and retell these possibilities solely out of their love of story-craft. They know that Naestra and Arahan speak with the authority of their beloved Mage Queen; no secret of the past will ever change that.

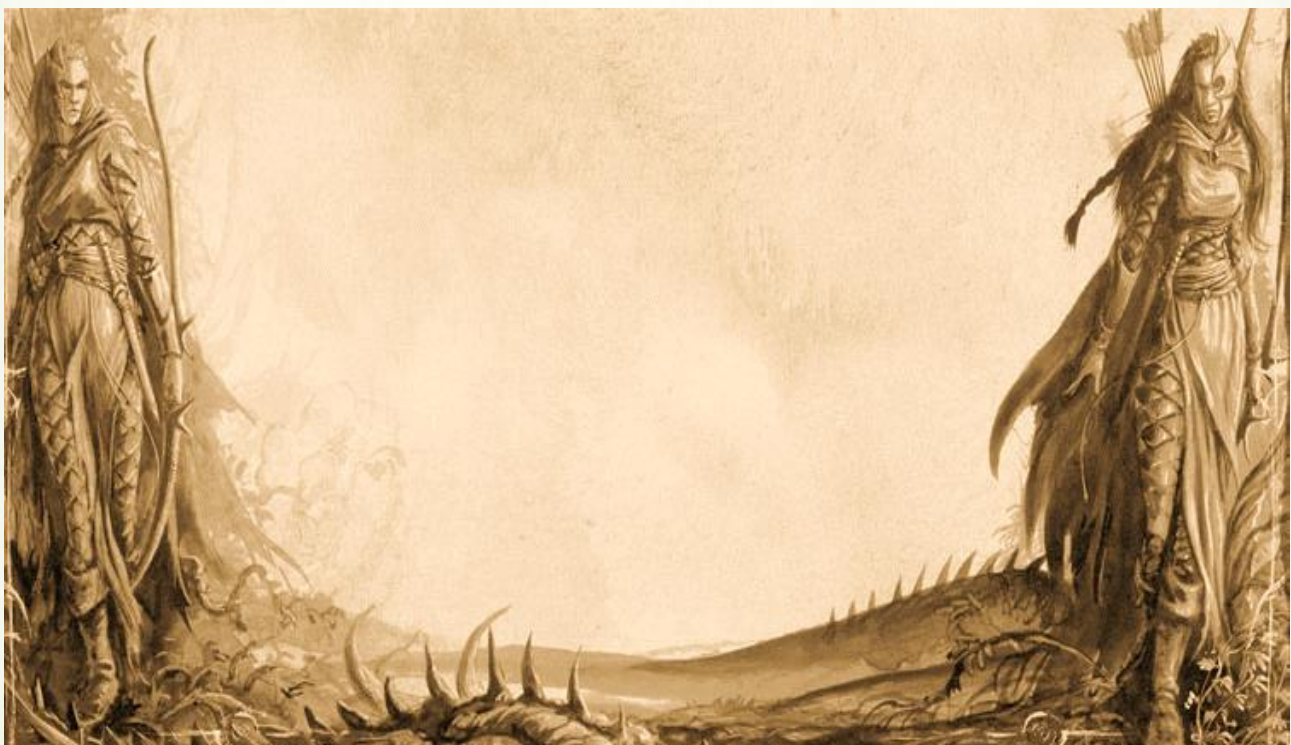
Even amongst the fey folk of Athel Loren the Sisters of Twilight are notable for an otherworldliness of spirit and manner. Any weapons the sisters touch become infused with a portion of their nature. Those wielded by Naestra become anathema to creatures of anarchy and discord, whilst Arahan's tools of battle inflict great harm on beings with noble souls. Armed thusly, the sisters walk paths that even Waywatchers dread, and are said to tread the glades of the Dreaming Wood with as little concern as they do the eternally sunlit groves of Arranoc.

Though inclined to seek battle from afar, Naestra and Arahan do not shirk the bitter press of melee should the situation require. All of their armaments, be they arrows or blades, are crafted upon Vaul's Anvil by no lesser hands than those of Daith. The master smith dotes upon the pair in the manner of a proud uncle, and indulges Naestra's obsession with the perfect honing of her time-worn blade as uncomplainingly as he does Arahan's ardent insistence at carrying a freshly-fashioned spear into each battle. No other, not even Daith's fellow lords and ladies of the great council, can

command his time as completely as the Sisters of Twilight. Yet each time the twins present the smith with a new challenge, he simply gives a small smile and returns to the fires of the forge.

A foe would be well-advised to avoid confronting the Sisters of Twilight unless he possesses absolute certainty that he can fell them both in quick succession. The harms inflicted upon one twin are inconsequential so long as the other yet draws breath; the ancient magics of the forest see the fallen sister restored within moments of the supposedly fatal event. This protection extends equally to both Naestra and Arahan, but it is inevitably the latter who gains most frequent benefit from it, and then invariably in the most spectacular of fashions. To recount but a few such occasions, Arahan has hacked her way out of the belly of a Ghorgon after being swallowed whole, emerged unscathed from a razor-sharp cloud of Dark Magic to slay its caster, and eviscerated a Vampire a heartbeat after her own decapitation.

The fleeting moments of Arahan's 'deaths' are about the only times when Naestra casts aside her calm demeanour, and becomes as furious a fighter as her twin. It is impossible to say whether this is because Arahan's wild spirit flows into her sister for those brief moments that her own body lies slain, or is simply a sibling's natural wrath at the seeming slaughter of her kin. Whatever the cause, the consequences for the foe are inevitably bloody. Naestra's bladework may not be as exuberant as Arahan's, but what it lacks in brashness, it more than compensates for with lethality of precision. Indeed, the slaughter Naestra wreaks when enraged is matched in scale only by the withering disapproval with which Naestra beholds her reckless sister once the moment has passed; a disapproval that Arahan disregards as cheerfully as she does all others.





The Sisters of Twilight seldom fight from the centre of the battle line but are instead carried through the war-torn skies by one of their loyal steeds. Swift-winged Gwindalor is a wise and even-tempered ally, as would be expected of a beast whose lineage springs directly from Talyn, King of Eagles. Moreover, he has an uncanny ability to bring the twins to a position where their arrows can inflict the most harm. Ceithin-Har, by contrast, is as hot-blooded a creature as can be found in dragonkind. He thinks nothing of hurling both himself and the Sisters of Twilight into the thick of the fray where arrows can be fired at point-blank range, and blades too can do their wicked work.

Though it is sad to say, these two creatures know little fondness for each other. Gwindalor considers the dragon to be reckless and venturesome, whilst Ceithin-Har berates the eagle for his aloofness and constant caution. Different in temperament though they might be, Gwindalor and Ceithin-Har are nonetheless united by their bonds of friendship with Naestra and Arahan. Though it is doubtful that either would put himself in harm's way for the other, both would gladly die a hundred times over in defence of their mistresses.

The sister-twins are masters of the wild beasts that dwell within Athel Loren. These creatures adore Naestra and will do as she wishes out of love, while they fear Arahan and so do as she wills out of respect. In times of strife and need, the sisters ride forth from their mountain eyrie borne upon the back of one of these faithful beasts. Arahan takes savage pleasure in cutting down her foes, while Naestra does so with tears in her eyes.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Naestra	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9
Arahan	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9
Ceithin-Har	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8
Gwindalor	2	5	0	4	4	4	4	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).
Naestra and Arahan must be carried into battle by either their Forest Dragon Ceithin-Har (Monster) or their Great Eagle Gwindalor (Monstrous Beast).

SPECIAL RULES: Asrai Archery.

Conjoined Destiny: *The sisters are bound by ancient magics, as old and unknowable as the forest itself. While one still draws breath, both endure – no matter the harm inflicted upon them.*

If Naestra and Arahan have been reduced to less than 4 Wounds at the end any turn, they will be restored to 4 Wounds.

Sisters of Twilight: Naestra's close combat attacks receive a +1 bonus To Wound against models from the Forces of Destruction. Arahan's close combat attacks receive a +1 bonus To Wound against models from the Forces of Order.

SPECIAL RULES (Ceithin-Har): Fly (7), Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (3+), Soporific Breath.

Impetuous: If Ceithin-Har can declare a Charge during the Charge sub-phase, he must do so unless he passes a Leadership test.

SPECIAL RULES (Gwindalor): Fly (9).

Hunter's Mount: When mounted on Gwindalor, Naestra and Arahan re-roll all failed To Hit rolls when making shooting attacks.



MAGIC ITEMS:

Talon of Dawn (Magic Weapon)

Naestra's bow fires no mortal shot, but bolts of blessed light that melt through armour to sear the flesh beneath. It is said that the souls reaped by this weapon yield their energies to undo the harms they have wrought against the wielder's allies.

The Talon of Dawn is a missile weapon with the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
30"	5	Armour Piercing (1), Flaming Attacks, Multiple Wounds (D6)

If an attack from the Talon of Dawn causes one or more unsaved Wounds, they regain a single Wound lost earlier in the battle.

Talon of Dusk (Magic Weapon)

The arrows of Arahan's bow are crafted from the spirit husks of the Wildwood's bitterest Dryads. Once loosed, they splinter into scores of poisonous thorns that seek the flesh of Athel Loren's enemies.

The Talon of Dusk is a missile weapon with the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
30"	2	Armour Piercing (1), Multiple Shots (2D6), Poisoned Attacks

NAIETH THE PROPHETESS

High Seer of Athel Loren

Naieth the Prophetess is skilled in the arcane art of divination. Only a select band of mages knows this secret lore. By means of divining rods cut from magical trees they are able to 'feel' the flow of magic deep within the ground. When they find a point at which the magic rises towards the surface they instruct their kindred to set a great stone in that place, carved with arcane spirals to direct the flow of magic.

In this way the Wood Elf mages have created a web of magical protection around the Forest of Loren. Changes in the flow of magic can be detected using the divining rods and used to predict impending danger or the presence of intruders in the forest. Naieth has become so adept at interpreting these signs that she is known throughout Loren as The Prophetess.

Whereas other mages study the ways of the elements, trees and beasts, Naieth has devoted herself to the arts of divination. Although there are mightier mages with greater power upon the battlefield, Naieth will sometimes accompany the Wood Elf host to battle to use her unique and subtle skills to help her kindred.

During the Season of Doom she received a vision of the fall of Athel Loren. Since then she has been instrumental in galvanising the Wood Elves to fight for the future of their land, and has marched to war beside Araloth of Talsyn many times to thwart the machinations of the Children of Chaos, most specifically the mutating power of Morghur, Master of Skulls.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Naieth	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

MAGIC: Naieth is a level 2 Wizard. She may use spells from the Lore of Beasts, Life, Light, Heavens, Shadow or Athel Loren.

SPECIAL RULES: Blessings of the Ancients, Elven Grace, Forest Strider.

Othu the Owl: *Naieth is always accompanied by her faithful companion Othu the Owl. When not flying around the battlefield Othu rests on Naieth's wrist. Naieth is able to understand the owl's twitterings and knows how to interpret his strange wisdom. It is said that many of her inspired prophecies indeed come from the owl, for Othu is all-seeing and all-wise. In battle Naieth sends Othu to swoop low over the battlefield where he will see where the fighting is fiercest and the danger is greatest.*

Sometimes Othu will perch upon the standard of a regiment or the shoulder of its leader. This is seen as an omen of good luck by the Wood Elves. A unit of Wood Elves favoured by the owl seems to gain from the bird's uncanny sureness of sight and are more likely to shoot straight!

Othu may settle on any unit of Wood Elves with a Standard Bearer at the start of the shooting phase. This unit may then re-roll To Hit rolls of 1 with missile attacks this turn. The owl never settles on the same unit twice in succession. Othu is not vulnerable to weapons, missiles or magic, but if Naieth is removed from play Othu flies away.

MAGIC ITEMS:

The Rod of Divination (Arcane Items)

Naieth carries a long rod which is made of the willow twigs of many magical trees woven and entwined tightly together. Wherever this rod is thrust into the ground it has the power to tap the flow of magic and draw it to the surface.

The Rod of Divination gives Naieth an extra Power dice at the start of each Magic phase.

*"The kinbands must march to war.
Blood must be spilt."*

- Naieth the Prophetess

LOTHLANN THE BRAVE

Battle Standard Bearer of Athel Loren

Lothlann earned his nickname 'the Brave' at the Battle of the Creaking Yew. Here he took up the battle banner from the hand of the slain Athryn the Strong when the Elves were in desperate battle against the Skaven. When the Elves saw the banner rise again with Lothlann bravely galloping among the foe hewing to left and right, they surged forward like an irresistible tide. Thus they utterly defeated the ratmen, scattering them in headlong rout through the forest to become the prey of wild beasts during the hungry winter of that year. Since then Lothlann has had the honour of bearing the sacred battle banner of Athel Loren.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Lothlann	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Forest Strider.

MAGIC ITEMS:

The Battle Standard of Athel Loren (Magic Standard)

The Battle Standard of Athel Loren is woven from the hair of countless Elven maidens who sacrifice some of their golden, silver or russet tresses as strands to be woven into the banner. With each generation more strands are woven into the banner making it more magnificent and more enchanted than before. This battle standard was the one used at the Battle of Creaking Yew. It was borne by Athryn the Strong who was on foot when he was surrounded and cut down by Skaven. Lothlann the Brave rode headlong into the foe and snatched the standard. Seeing the standard rise again the Wood Elves renewed the attack and won the day. The standard depicts the sacred Oak of Ages, the most ancient tree in Loren, the very heart of the forest. It is the custom for Elf maidens, sorrowing for fallen warriors, to sacrifice their tresses to be woven into the standard.

This is the army's Battle Standard. Any enemy spell cast at a friendly unit within 12" of the standard is automatically dispelled on the roll of a 5+.

The five soldiers pulled their sweating horses to a halt on the crest of the hill. Below, the land fell away into a bowlshaped valley. The sides of the valley were lightly wooded with dumps of larch and young oak trees, and the valley bottom was hidden by tall, dark pines.

"The duke wants the hooded man dead. If we don't bring back his body, there'll be trouble." The accent of the sergeant marked him out as a Bretonnian. He was a tall, thin man, his gaunt face twisted by an ugly scar that ran from his left eye down to his chin. "Those who hunt King Louis' deer pay the price for their thievery... There he is!"

Standing up in his stirrups, he pointed into the valley. A slender figure, dressed in a short, brown cloak was running down a narrow sandy path that headed straight into the trees. "Merde! The cowardly cur runs like a deer. Catch him, before he reaches the trees!"

The soldiers spurred their horses down the slope at breakneck speed, skidding on the loose surface of the path. The horses were galloping, but still their prey gained ground, running swiftly and surely over the stony ground.

One of the horses slipped and fell, snapping its foreleg with a crack. Horse and rider tumbled down the side of the valley and disappeared into the bushes with a crashing of branches. The other soldiers started to pull back and go after their comrade but the sergeant shouted at them to keep going.

When the hooded man reached the treeline he paused, turned briefly to face his pursuers and made a strange gesture before vanishing into the bushes. Seconds later, the Bretonnians stewed to a stop at the edge of the woods. It was impossible for them to go any further. What had looked like ordinary light woodland from a distance was now an impenetrable jungle. The path disappeared under a dense thicket of black thorns which defied all attempts to cut through it. The trunks of the trees were so massive, and so close growing that the horses could not fit between them. When the soldiers dismounted and tried to force their way through the wood on foot they were beaten back by waving branches, whipping twigs and stinging nettles.

Infuriated, the sergeant shouted terrible curses at the trees. He was answered by a flock of arrows. All three of his men fell to the ground dead, the green shafts of Wood Elf arrows sticking from their chests and necks. Unable to retaliate, or enter the wood, the sergeant had no option but to ride back to face the wrath of his master, the Duke Lazard.

SCARLOC

The Hooded One, Mistwalker of Athel Loren

Skarloc, "the Hooded One" is probably one of the most renowned Wood Elf to walk the Old World in current times. Skarloc and his companions, the wardancer Glam and the apprentice mage Kaia Stormwitch, were adventures for a short time and travelled over the Vaults into the Border Princes.

While staying in the fortress of the Border Prince Cline, they discovered the prince had an ancient Wood Elf artefact in his collection in his throne room. The artefact is the heart shaped casket containing the ashes of the Wood Elf hero, Kern. The artefact has been lost to the Wood Elves for over 100 years. During a meeting with the Border Prince, Skarloc and Kaia attempted to peacefully acquire the artefact, but Cline refused just give the artefact over them without an artefact to replace it. This was unacceptable to Skarloc, and decided that they would return that evening for the artefact.

Soon after nightfall, the trio quickly gained access to the halls of the fortress by making short work of the guards and taking the key to the front door. With Wood Elf stealth, Skarloc, Kaia, and Glam moved swiftly to the throne room. What they found there was shocking, to say the least. Cline was in his throne room with a few Skaven. The Border Prince was haggling with the lead Skaven about selling all of the people under his rule to the Skaven for a few small artifacts. This sickened Skarloc, and the Elves charged in. After a

short battle, the Skaven were dead and Glam had the corrupt prince pinned against the wall. Cline offered to give the artefact to them if they would spare his life – Skarloc agreed. After Kaia retrieved the artefact the Elves turned to leave, but Cline drew a pistol from his boot and cocked the trigger back. The click that the pistol made when the trigger was cocked flung Glam into action. Moving as fast as the wind, Glam cleaved the prince's hand clean off with one sword and delivered the killing blow with the other.



When Skarloc and his companions returned to the Loren Forest, they presented the artefact to the Forest King. He was taken by the bravery and initiative that Skarloc has shown by returning the Casket of Kern to his people. The Forest King had announced that Skarloc would be the defender of the casket, and he would be put in command of band of scouts defending the outskirts of the Loren Forest. The casket was fashioned into a banner, and he and his companions left to meet the scouts.

The Wood Elf scouts that would become known as Skarloc's Scouts of gained a name for themselves when defending the southern Loren forest from the Orcs of the Broken Skull tribe. Skarloc and his scouts were the only regiment in the area at the time the Broken Skulls attacked. The story says that Skarloc and his scouts, prepared to meet the charge of the 200 plus Broken Skull Orcs. The regimental musician sounded his brass horn. The sound of the horn terrified the Orcs so much so that they stopped in their tracks and looked to see if a large monster was going to attack them. Then Glam leapt himself on to a stump and charged, signalling the scouts to release a sheet of arrows cutting down a countless amount of greenskins. The Orcs were confused and panicking, Skarloc drew his rune sword and ordered the musician to sound the charge.



"Athel Loren shall not suffer the presence of Men, nor Orcs, nor Dwarfs, nor Beastmen. If a foe takes a single step upon such sacred soil, they shall not take another."

- Skarloc, Mistwalker of Athel Loren



Once news of the Broken Skull's attack made it to the Forest King, a wing of War Hawk Riders was dispatched to assist Skarloc. When the War hawks arrived, they discovered that Skarloc and the rest of the regiment weren't only alive, but they had totally wiped out the attacking Broken Skull Orcs. The wardancer Glam was crouched on top of mountain of Greenskin bodies totally painted in the greenskin's blood.

The Duke of Parravon, Gancreb, made a request to the Forest King for assistance in his war against the Lichemaster, Heinrich Kemmler. The Forest King sent Skarloc's Scouts to Parravon, since Skarloc has some prior experience working with the filthy humans. When the Lichemaster attacked a village outside Parravon, the Duke's army met the undead threat at full force. Skarloc and his scouts got around the Lichemaster's lines and showered the walking dead with arrows. This did not go over well with the Lichemaster, so he sent Krell to do away with these troublesome elves. Glam and Skarloc charged Krell. They have matched blow with blow, with neither side getting the upper hand.



The battle ended when a Questing Knight put a lance in to Krell's back pinning the Wight to the ground. The Lichemaster's army was crumbling Kemmler used his powers to remove his remaining forces and Krell from the field. The Wood Elf scouts were credited for the victory. Skarloc's fame quickly spread across the Old World, and his band of scouts became in demand. Skarloc decided that working with different general, in different lands would give him insight on the working of the enemies of Loren thus allowing his scouts better defend their homeland. From that day forward, Skarloc's Scouts have worked for different Counts of the Empire, Merchant Princes of Tilea, and other Dukes of Bretonnia. They always send whatever they do not need to the Forest King; to whom they are viciously loyal.

Skarloc is known both within and beyond the Forest of Loren. Leading a band of Deepwood Scouts he often ventures far into the lands surrounding the Wood Elf realm to gain advance warning of impending threats.

Skarloc is skilled in the interpretations of tracks and portents and will sometimes even warn the Bretonnians if he finds signs of their common enemies. Thus he has become a trusted friend of many Bretonnian barons and is welcomed at their castles, especially when he brings the excellent venison of Loren! It is usually Skarloc who acts as the emissary of the King and Queen in the Wood and it is he who is sent to escort friends through the forest to the King's Glade.

Skarloc not only knows the Forest of Loren, but also has intimate knowledge of other great forests in the Old world acquired during his scouting expeditions. It is even said that there are small bands of his kin secretly dwelling in many forests utterly unbeknown to the rulers and peoples of these lands. They are undoubtedly there not only as Waywatchers but to befriend and protect any Treemen or Dryads who may still dwell there. Skarloc's men have been known to turn up unexpectedly on many a far flung battlefield, screaming out of the trees to aid those ambushed or surrounded in the woods by Orcs or other vile foes.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Scarloc	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Forest Strider, Asrai Archery, Scouts.

MAGIC ITEMS:

Runesword of Darkwood (Magic Weapon)

Skarloc found this sword in the darkest part of Athel Loren. There are runes on that sword that even the oldest of the Wood Elf Spellweavers cannot decipher; one believes that the ancient race known as Zoats may have forged the weapon.

This weapon gives Skarloc the Always Strikes First and Armour Piercing (1) special rules.

Asyendi's Bane (Magic Weapon)

This light and elegant bow is exceptionally well-crafted, enhancing the abilities of skilful archers. Legend has it, however, that a malicious spirit dwells within the body of the weapon, ever eager to punish its wielder if a shot misses its target.

Asrai longbow. This weapon allow Skarloc to re-roll all missed shooting attacks. However, if the shot still misses after this re-roll, then he suffers a Strength 3 hit.

"When Kurnous, God of the Hunt, met Rahagra, the father of the White Lions, the fought for days, from dawn to dusk, but neither could claim victory. So began a bond of brotherhood between the hunter and the lion. We are rivals, as brothers are, but our kinship is the stronger for it."
 - Skarloc, Mistwalker of Athel Loren



SKAW

The Falconer

It is said that Skaw dwells in an eyrie in the topmost branches of an old pine tree, hidden away on the slopes of the Grey Mountains. Here, he speaks with the birds of prey that dwell within the forest of Athel Loren, from the lowliest falcon to the mightiest of eagles. Though he cares little for the company of other Elves, Skaw shares their tie to the great forest and fights alongside them in its defence. Then the Scouts and the kindreds will go to the greatest trouble to seek him out to join them in battle.



In battle, Skaw directs his falcons with birdcalls as deadly weapons against the foe as they fly. Swooping out of the sky into the attack, their razor-sharp claws and beaks tear away gobbets of flesh with each strike. These keen-eyed living missiles are more deadly than arrows and always return to their master with blood dripping from their wicked hooked beaks and sharp talons. Once the foe is vanquished, Skaw always returns to his mountain perch without a word. Indeed, many of the Asrai believe him to have forgotten the Elven mode of speech, so long it has been since Skaw was heard to utter any word in a tongue other than that used by the birds of prey.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Skaw	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).



SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Forest Strider.

Falcons: Skaw may use his 3 falcons in addition to another missile weapon during the start of the Shooting phase. The falcons can be directed against any enemy unit within line of sight, regardless of range. The enemy unit must take a Weapon Skill test for each falcons targeting them; if failed, the unit takes a Strength 3 Hit.

In close combat, the falcons give Skaw an additional 3 Attacks that are resolved at Weapon Skill 4, Strength 3 and Initiative 4. These attacks do not benefit from any special rules or items that Skaw might have.

MAGIC ITEMS:

The Lash of Claws (Magic Weapon)

The Lash of Claws is a flail with three thongs each tipped with the talons of gigantic extinct birds of prey. Unlike an ordinary flail made of heavy chains and spiky balls, this flail is light to wield in combat and tears into the flesh of the foe.

The Lash of Claws gives Skaw the Strength Bonus (1) and Always Strikes First special rule. In addition, if the victim is Hit but not Wounded, it is temporarily ensnared by the flail and loses 1 Attack for the duration of the turn.

The Cape of Feathers (Magic Armour)

Crafted by Skaw himself from literally hundreds of shed eagle feathers interwoven into several layers, the weave of this cloak is incredibly resilient to arrows and other missiles. The cape can be spread out resembling the wings of a great bird. Skaw wears this cape not only as protection but to show kinship with his birds of prey.

This armour gives Skaw the following armour profile:

Combat:	Missile:	Special Rules:
-	+3/4+	Ward save (6+)

'There was no warning sir, none at all. What happened to our outriders I can only guess, for we were given neither alarm nor alert. They attacked in silence, like ghosts from the wood and I regret, sir, that half the regiment was struck down with black-shafted arrows before we were even aware of the danger. Yet it was when they closed with us, quicker than my eye could follow, that the real killing began.'

- from the report of Captain Gustav Svarld, Averland Militia

GRUARTH

The Beastmaster

It is said that his name was originally Gruarth, but to most Elves he is known only as 'The Beastmaster'. He has forgotten his name and even the words of Elven tongue if he ever knew it. Now he speaks only to the beasts of the forest with their own calls and gestures. He dwells on the margins of society, but in the depths of the forest. He shares the lairs of wild beasts by night. By day he hunts with his feral brethren and feasts on the same prey.

The Beastmaster has two companions: Fang and Claw, two ferocious timber wolves. Fang and Claw are a pair, male and female, the last of their kind in the forest. When the forest is threatened by enemies, the Beastmaster is summoned and comes forth with his wolves to do battle beside his Elven kindred. He fights alone, controlling his pack as they stalk the battlefield for prey with their long, dagger-like fangs. After the battle, glutted with flesh, Elf and beasts disappear back into the trees.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Gruarth	8	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8
Fang	9	4	0	4	4	2	4	2	5
Claw	9	4	0	4	4	2	4	2	5

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

Fang and Claw: War Beast.

YOUNGER KINDREDS

Kindreds of Haroith

A kindred that tends to attract young Elves. This kindred is typified as being impatient and impulsive.

Many Elves leave this kindred when they are older, though other wilder Elves will stay within the kindred. A mistrusted kindred by other Wood Elves. Most regard them as not understanding balance, and they are therefore dangerous. Often the first to react violently.

The name Haroith has evolved from the Elven root-word Harathoi, meaning youth, boundless energy, and jealousy.

SPECIAL RULES: Animal Form, Elven Grace, Fear, Forest Strider, Mixed Unit, Skirmishers.

Beastmaster: *The Beastmaster controls a pair of timber wolves called Fang and Claw. He doesn't feed them for two or three days before he expects to go into battle!*

During the Movement phase, Fang and Claw may move away from Gruarth if they wish, forming a unit of their own. They may return to Gruarth in the Remaining Moves phase by moving within 1" of him as long as neither of them is fleeing, in which case the unit will revert back to the normal Mixed Unit special rule. While the wolves are more than 12" from Gruarth they are subject to Frenzy. If both wolves are slain, Gruarth becomes subject to Hatred.

EQUIPMENT:

Animal Hide Cape: *The Beastmaster does not wear armour or carry a shield. Instead he wears a cape of animal hide not only as protection but as a mark of kinship with wild beasts. The cape has an animal head with horns attached to it. The beast cape is extremely thick and made of several layers of hide.*

The Animal Hide Cape gives Gruarth the following armour profile:

Combat:	Missile:	Special Rules:
+1/6+	+2/5+	-

MAGIC ITEMS:

The Binding Bolas (Magic Weapon)

The Beastmaster is armed with a bolas – a special hunting weapon. The bolas is made of three leather thongs which are joined together at one end. The free ends of the thongs have heavy stone weights attached to them. The bolas is hurled by being swung around the user's head and released in the direction of the intended target. The thongs entangle themselves around the victim's legs and trip him over. The stone balls can also inflict a stunning wound.

The Blinding Bolas is a missile weapon with the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
18"	1	Armour Piercing (1), Multiple Shots (2), Sniper

If a target has Unit Strength 3 or less and is Hit, but not slain, then it is temporarily entangled and cannot move in their next Movement phase. Entangled enemies may be left behind, counting as casualties, or in the case of a Character, as if they had left the unit.



LORE OF ATHEL LOREN

VERDUROUS HARMONY (Lore Attribute)

At a simple word of command, spring comes again to the Wood Elves, and with it renewal.

Whenever a spell from the Lore of Athel Loren is cast on a friendly unit, that unit immediately recovers 1 Wound worth of models (rounding up to 2 for Cavalry), as described for the *Regrowth* spell in the Lore of Life.

TREE SINGING (Signature Spell) Cast on 6+

The wizard speaks in the dead tongue of ancient days, reminding the trees of the harms wrought upon them by blooded life, and encourages the spirits of Athel Loren to make the forests shift and begin moving.

Tree Singing is an **augment** spell which targets a single forest within 24" of the caster. If there are no units within the forest, it immediately moves up to D6+1" in a direction of your choice. A forest cannot move to within 1" of units or other terrain features.

If there is at least one unit (friendly or enemy) within the forest, then the forest does not move. Instead, choose a single enemy unit at least partially within the forest; that unit immediately suffers 2D6 Strength 4 hits. The Wizard can choose to instead have this spell target all forests within 12". If they do so, the casting value of the spell is increased to 12+.

1. FURY OF THE FOREST Cast on 5+

Twisted branches and thorns burst into spontaneous growth, attacking the enemies of Athel Loren.

Fury of the Forest is a **direct damage** spell with a range of 18". If successfully cast, the spell causes D6 Strength 4 hits. If the target is within 6" of a wood, then this is increased to 2D6 Strength 4 hits. The Wizard can instead choose to increase the range of this spell to 36". If they do so, the casting value is increased to 8+.

2. THE TWILIGHT HOST Cast on 6+

The mage weaves a powerful illusion, and ghostly grey shapes appear at the side of the Wood Elves.

The Twilight Host is an **augment** spell with a range of 18". Until the caster's next Magic phase, the unit causes Fear. If the unit would already cause Fear, it instead causes Terror. In addition, the unit will count as having twice the Unit Strength it really has for the purpose of determining Steadfast and Outnumber. The Wizard can instead choose to increase the range of this spell to 36". If they do so, the casting value is increased to 9+.

3. THE HIDDEN PATH Cast on 7+

Using this spell, the caster moves a single friendly unit out of the corporeal world and beyond the reach of mortals.

The Hidden Path is an **augment** spell with a range of 18". The unit gains the Ethereal special rule until the start of the caster's next Magic phase. If the unit becomes engaged in close combat, the spell instantly ends. The Wizard can instead choose to increase the range of this spell to 36". If they do so, the casting value is increased to 10+.

4. MADRIGAL OF GREENING Cast on 9+

The Spellweaver casts acorns of the ages across the battlefield. As each acorn strikes the ground, a mighty tree springs up – an outpost of Athel Loren in this foreign land.

Madrigal of Greening has a range of 18". Place a forest of your choosing no more than 12" in diameter wholly within the spell's maximum range. Any models under this forest are placed within them (in exactly the same formation and facing).

5. ARIEL'S BLESSING Cast on 10+

The caster calls upon the healing powers of Ariel, undoing even the most grievous injuries, and restoring life to those who have fallen.

Ariel's Blessing is an **augment** spell with a range of 12". The unit gains the Regeneration (4+) special rule until the start of the player's next Magic phase. The Wizard can instead choose to increase the range of this spell to 24". If they do so, the casting value is increased to 14+.

6. THE CALL OF THE HUNT Cast on 11+

The spirit of Kurnous fills the target of the spell, infusing them with a part of his savagery, anger and power.

The Call of the Hunt is an **augment** spell with a range of 18". Until the start of the caster's next Magic phase, the unit gains +1 Attack (except mounts). If the unit is not engaged in combat, it immediately moves forward towards the closest enemy unit using the Random Movement (2D6) special rule. The Wizard can instead choose to increase the range of this spell to 36". If they do so, the casting value is increased to 14+.





SPITES OF ATHEL LOREN

Athel Loren is infested with all manner of capricious and unpredictable nature spirits that exist to protect the forest collectively known as Spites. In their truest form, these spirits appear as shining spheres of light or ghost-like auras. However, they can change form at will, and such is the array of shapes that they can take that it is almost impossible to categorise them. There are as many different kinds of Spite as there are trees in the wood, each kind having different abilities and favoured shapes. Some appear as tiny Elves riding beetles or miniature, skeletal horses, others as beautiful winged humanoids or woodland animals with slightly unnatural features.

They are wilful and highly unpredictable beings, as likely to help a lost traveller out of the forest as to lead him to his doom. In times of peace they may take the forms of benevolent helpers and caretakers of Athel Loren, and appear friendly and harmless even if generally mischievous. The Wood Elves often leave small offerings of food or shiny baubles for the Spites in an effort to distract them from mischief-making, although this is an almost impossible goal. They often associate themselves with a particular household or individual, and routinely steal food and coin, tie hair in knots and play practical jokes. Only Elves and Wizards have any real hope of dealing with them, and even then the history of the Wood Elves is filled with instances in which Spites have turned on them or abandoned them in times of need.

However, Spites are swift to anger and easy to offend, and are quick to shift to more aggressive and vicious forms. Spites are present everywhere in Athel Loren, and often attach themselves to certain places, Elves or creatures. They may occasionally play tricks or malicious practical jokes on that person or residents of the area they are attached to. They are very protective of their hosts, and will lash out with any powers they have at any who wish harm on them or have evil intent. Should the person or area to which they are attached come into trouble, the Spites react violently, with a malicious streak that rivals creatures many times their size.



CHOOSING SPITES

Spites are chosen in the same manner as Magic Items, and count towards the maximum number of points a character is allowed to spend on Magic Items. Therefore each particular Spite choice may only be chosen once in an army. For example, you cannot have two models with A Murder of Spites in the one army. In addition, each character can only choose one Spite from the list below. However, models with the Forest Spirit special rule may have any number of Spites, to the limit of their allowance (100 points and 50 points respectively).

A BLIGHT OF TERRORS

25 points

Terrors are malicious spites that dwell in the dark places of Athel Loren. They delight in terrifying unsuspecting intruders into Athel Loren. They take great mirth in the horrified and frightened expressions of their prey, and even greater hilarity if their target dies of shock. They often hide secreted on a host, and when that host comes near an enemy, they loom out, screaming and wailing, taking on their most fearsome aspect.

A model with a Blight of Terrors causes Terror.

A CLUSTER OF RADIANTS

25 points

Radiants are unusual glowing Spites that usually manifest as little more than a blurred shape of pure light, though they appear in all manner of colours. They are often seen circling the most ancient of trees, and will shy away from Elves or other mortal creatures. Sometimes they will take more solid form, and appear like small Elven figures. They act as sponges for magical energy, sapping the power of enemy mages.

Forest Spirit only. A character with a Cluster of Radiants adds one extra dice to their Dispel pool in their opponent's Magic phase.

AN ANNOYANCE OF NETLINGS

20 points

These spites commonly take the form of spider-like creatures, scurrying over their host with feverish abandon. Any enemy that attempts to strike a being that is under the protection of Netlings is likely to find weapon snagged in a web of magical filaments.

Any enemy attempting to strike a character with an Annoyance of Netlings in close combat will suffer -1 To Hit.

A MUSTER OF MALEVOLENTS

15 points

Malevolents appear in countless guises and are aggressive defenders of Athel Loren, utilising poisoned darts and needlelike arrows, known as Elf-shot to the Bretonnians, to bring down their enemies. Some say that to be wounded by a Malevolent is to suffer a long and painful death, others that their darts can make their victims fall into a nightmarish sleep that can last for centuries.

A Muster of Malevolents is a shooting attack that can be used in addition to the model's other shooting attacks. It has the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
12"	2	Magical Attacks, Multiple Shots (D6), Poisoned Attacks, Quick to Fire

A PAGEANT OF SHRIKES

15 points

Shrikes are malicious Spites that often reveal themselves as diminutive red-capped creatures borne upon the backs of black birds, though they also appear as owls with a fey light in their large eyes. Some take the form of vicious, razor winged pixies or small knights riding upon the backs of insects. They move like quicksilver, darting through the forest to strike at their enemies, targeting vital arteries and eyes. Some say they are able to reach within the bodies of their foes to attack vital organs and the mind, causing great pain and sometimes death.

A Pageant of Shrikes is a shooting attack that can be used in addition to the model's other shooting attacks. It has the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
18"	4	Magical Attacks, Slow to Fire, Sniper

A BEFUDDLEMENT OF MISCHIEFS 15 points

Mischiefs sometimes appear as glowing spheres of light, or tiny elves that seem to glow from within, with large staring eyes and tattered wings. They befuddle the minds of mortals and send them into sleep-like trances.

Innate Bound Spell, Power Level 3. A *Befuddlement of Mischiefs* is a **hex** spell with a range of 18". The targeted unit must take a Stupidity test using 3D6 in their next Movement phase.

A LAMENTATION OF DESPAIRS 15 points

These three inseparable sister-spirits are much feared within Athel Loren, for they only appear to announce the demise of an individual. Often appearing as withered old crones with twisted twigs for hair and empty eyes, red-eyed ravens, or a triumvirate consisting of a crone, a beautiful woman and a girl-child, those who feel their gaze upon them know their time has come.

Innate Bound Spell, Power Level 3. A *Lamentation of Despairs* is a **direct damage** spell with a range of 12" which can be used to target enemy Characters or Monsters, even within a unit. The targeted model must pass a Leadership test, or else suffer D3 Wounds which Ignores Armour saves.

A RESPLENDENCE OF LUMINESCENTS

10 points

As they bound from branch, to bow, to cloak, Luminescents leave behind a magical spoor. Should they alight upon a weapon of any kind, their presence bestows a minor' enchantment that can prove lethal to magical beings.

A Resplendence of Luminescents give the character and any unit they join Magical Attacks.

A MURDER OF SPITES

10 points

Spites are vicious manifestations that take countless varied forms. Some have barbed, thorn-like limbs and razor sharp talons, others take the form of diminutive winged figures armed with tiny weapons. Some seem to be all teeth and talons, while others may hide their viciousness behind a facade of innocence and beauty. They hide within the cloaks of their hosts, or within the cracks and hollows of ancient Treemen, peeping out maliciously and ready to attack any who draw near.

A Murder of Spites is a close combat attack that can be used in addition to the models other attacks. It has the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
Combat	2	Magical Attacks, Poisoned Attacks, Random Attacks (D6)

When Morrslieb was at its fullest and shone down its sickly light, the night sky blazed with comets that left green trails of fire in their wake. Many eyes tracked the plummeting meteors.

In the meadows and mystically cleared rings of Athel Loren the Elves marked the comets with trepidation. Nothing wholesome ever came from such portentous occurrences. If the path of descent had not been near the borders of their forest, the Elves would surely have left the comets well enough alone. When the whole of Athel Loren shuddered from the resounding impacts of the multiple landings, the Elves knew they must act swiftly to remove the meteors before they stained the lands. The mightiest of warping agents, the pure lumps of Chaotic energy would quickly corrupt the natural world and attract all manner of evil creatures. Already the mutating effects assailed the consciousness of the forest and Athel Loren recoiled against the power of the fallen debris.

The Bretonnians near Athel Loren noted the luminous meteorites landing near the Wild Heath. There were legends that the strange rocks from the heavens were made of a metal that could turn even the surest of lance strikes. Lord Jonson le Grande vowed the comets would not fall into evil hands, or, even worse, his rapsCALLION neighbour, the Duke of Parravon.

Other, more sinister eyes were also watching. Using an array of optic-enhancers, the beady-eyed Skaven spied the falling comets from their nestlairs atop the Grey Mountains. Surely this was warpstone, thought famously greedy Grey Seer Skrikus. Yet he was not alone. Kutt-quick Spiketail, a notorious mastermind and Warlord of the Ghank clan, also saw the comets and wished them for his own.

Many armies set forth and the race to claim the meteorites was on...

HEIRLOOMS OF ATHEL LOREN

This section contains the rules and background for some of the most iconic and powerful magical artefacts used by the Wood Elves. These may be used in addition to the magic items found in the Warhammer rulebook.

THE SPIRIT SWORD

50 points

Magic Weapon

This blade was crafted from the same crystal as the waystones stationed around the Wildwood. Within it are bound a host of nebulous entities, once the most feared denizens of that benighted place. These doomed creatures grant the Spirit Sword its power, for when the weapon draws blood, the wielder can command them to consume his opponent's very soul within their iridescent prison. There is no defence against such a fate save force of will. If the victim's mind is strong enough, he can perhaps resist the power of the sword, at least for a time, but no one can resist the Spirit Sword indefinitely. Only with a great effort of will can the bearer retain control over the Spirit Sword, for if his resolve is not strong enough, it will be his essence that the blade steals, not that of his foes.

Armour saves cannot be taken against Wounds caused by the Spirit Sword. Furthermore, immediately when an enemy single model unit (that is not an Animated Construct) or Character suffers one or more unsaved Wounds from the Spirit Sword, both they and the wielder must roll 2D6 and add their respective Leadership values. If the wounded model's total is higher, or the totals are the same, nothing else happens. If the wounded model's total is lower, it immediately suffers a Wound which Ignores Armour Saves for each point by which its total was exceeded.



DAITH'S REAPER

50 points

Magic Weapon

During the war between the Elven pantheon and the Chaos Gods, Khaine and Slaanesh soon came to blows. Though Khaine was ultimately cast into the mortal realm, he inflicted great harm upon the Dark Prince, and gouged onto his otherwise perfect face a scar that has never fully healed. During that battle, a small shard was struck from Khaine's Widowmaker, and fell upon the realm later known as Athel Loren. It is this shard, reforged and reshaped, that forms the spine of Daith's Reaper, a weapon that many Elves hold to be the smith's finest work. The very pinnacle of Daith's forging skill, a more finely crafted and deadly blade than this is not to be found within the realm of Athel Loren, nor for many leagues past its boundaries.

All failed To Hit and To Wound rolls made with Daith's Reaper must be re-rolled, as must all successful armour saves taken against Wounds caused by this weapon.

THE BOW OF LOREN

20 points

Magic Weapon

Never closer to death has Ariel come than during the assault on Ghroind, when an assassin's knife would have taken her heart, but for the timely intervention and peerless aim of Galed, an archer of Lady Morgalla's household. As reward for this heroic deed, Galed sought only a single perfect hair from his queen's head. This he ever after used to string his enchanted longbow, transforming an already exceptional weapon into a hunter's tool worthy of mighty Kurnous himself. The wielder of the Bow of Loren is therefore considered to be the Fey Queen's champion upon the battlefield, striking down her enemies with unnaturally swift precision.

Asrai Longbow. All shots from the Bow of Loren are resolved at Strength 4 with Multiple Shots (A) special rule. Multiple Shots (A) means the bow fires a number of shots equal to the wielder's Attacks characteristic. It cannot fire enchanted arrows.



THE HELM OF THE HUNT

40 points

Magic Armour

Gwythraul, Lord of Nine Craggs, is a celebrated figure in Athel Loren, his deeds recounted as a mixture of history and wine blurred myth. Bidden to journey within the Dreaming Wood by the goddess Lileath, he first travelled the twelve realms in search of enchanted treasures that would ensure survival in that Daemon-haunted land. In each realm, Gwythraul performed a quest of the ruler's choosing, deeds ranging from the destruction of Beastlord Brokar, to altering the course of the River Brilienne. Laden with magical heirlooms, Gwythraul at last entered the Dreaming Wood, and was lost for many generations. Only one item – the Helm of the Hunt, Orion's last remnant of a mortal life – survived Gwythraul's journey, and only the bravest have dared don it thereafter. Legend counts Gwythraul's quest as successful, though it is silent on its goal, and on the fate of the other treasures. This enchanted helm imbues the wearer with the spirit and fury of Orion.

The Helm of the Hunt has the following armour profile:

Combat:	Missile:	Special Rules:
+1/6+	+1/6+	Frenzy, Forest Spirit, Devastating Charge



THE RHYMER'S HARP

60 points

Talisman

Yimas the Rhymer was a renowned songsmith of Athel Loren, whose errandries at the side of Naieth the Prophetess have long since passed into folklore. Though their journeys were many and dangerous, the enchanted notes of Yimas's harp granted them speed and sanctuary.

The Rhymer's Harp gives the bearer and any unit they join the Ward Save (5+) and Strider special rules.



CALAINGOR'S STAVE

15 points

Arcane Item

Crafted from an undying bough taken from the Oak of Ages, this staff still pulses with the vibrant life force of Athel Loren, connecting the bearer to the hearts and minds of the forest's trees. By reaching out through the Winds of Magic, the bearer of the staff can rouse woodland to life, urging the trees to move, or assail those within their midst.

When casting the Tree Singing spell, the bearer may re-roll the distance the forest moves, or the number of Hits it inflicts.



MOONSTONE OF THE HIDDEN WAYS

35 points

Enchanted Item

In ages past, the worldroots linked Athel Loren not only with every forest upon the face of the world, but those further afield also. Though the world is much changed from the early days and many pathways are now forever closed, to the wise there are still paths that link all forests together. Yet sometimes, simple knowledge is not enough for the pathways are locked and those that remain can be unsealed only through the use of the ancient Moonstone that Adanhu gifted to the Elves in the wake of the first great council.

If the bearer's unit is wholly within a forest at the end of your Movement phase, and is not in close combat, it can forestwalk. If it does so, remove it from the battlefield and immediately replace it, wholly within any forest on the battlefield, in the same formation, but facing any direction. A forestwalking unit cannot be placed within 1" of an enemy unit or impassable terrain. A unit that forestwalks counts as having marched in the Movement phase.

HAIL OF DOOM ARROW

35 points

Enchanted Item

Created and bound with magics as old as the Elven race, when released the magical Hail of Doom arrow splits into dozens of deadly shards upon release, each one seeking its target with unwavering purpose. The Wood Elves consider a Hail of Doom arrow too unsporting a weapon for the hunt, but a fit chastisement for barbarians too stupid to respect the sovereignty of Athel Loren.

One use only. Model with Asrai longbow only. The Hail of Doom arrow can be used instead of making a Shooting attack with the bearer's Asrai longbow, though it cannot be used with the Sniper rule. Declare that the Hail of Doom Arrow is being used before any dice are rolled.

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
30"	4	Multiple Shots (3D6)



THE BANNER OF THE ETERNAL QUEEN

55 points

Magic Standard

This banner was woven by no lesser hand than that of Ariel, Mage Queen of Athel Loren, and is said to have been woven from the fey-queen's own hair. The magic of her touch lingers in every gossamer thread, protecting her kinsfolk from the onset of foul sorcery. It is beyond doubt that a portion of her power resides within this standard, for those who fight beneath the Banner of the Eternal Queen can hear Ariel's voice whispering in their minds, filling them with courage in the face of impossible odds.

The bearer has the Magic Resistance (3) special rule. In addition, once per game, all models in the same unit as the Banner of the Eternal Queen have the Unbreakable special rule until the end of the turn, or until the bearer is slain (whichever comes first). Declare you are using this ability at the start of any phase.

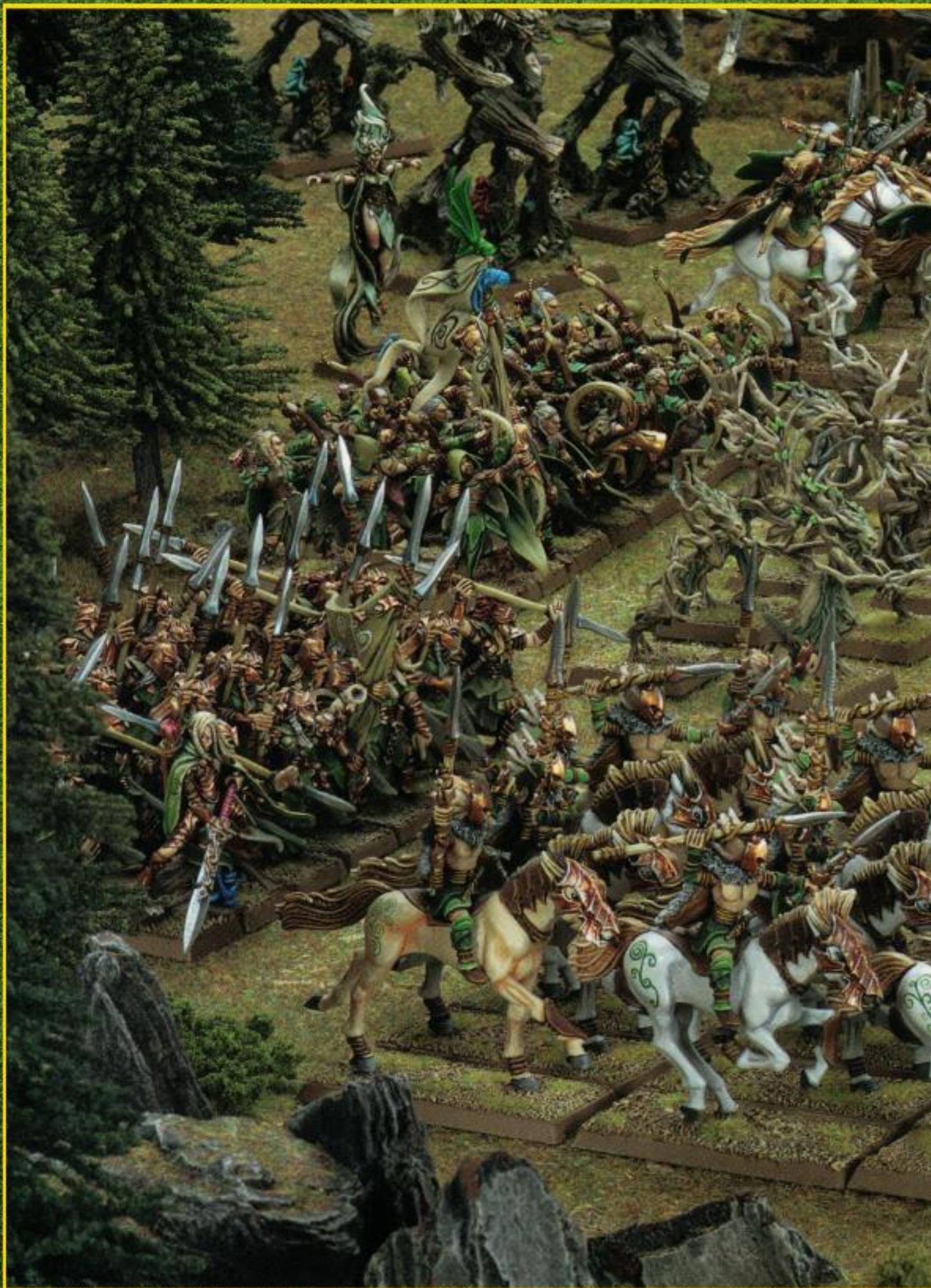


THE BANNER OF THE HUNTER KING 30 points

Magic Standard

The tattered threads of this ancient standard resound with Orion's eagerness for battle. None who fight in its shadow can help but be overcome by the glory of the hunt; they close with the foe as fast as they are able, the better to prove themselves in Kurnous' eyes.

The unit carrying the Banner of the Hunter King add +D6" to their charge range.





WOOD ELVES ARMY LIST

The army of the Wood Elves is a force fit to face any foe. It can harry the enemy from range, trounce them with bladework or trample them with the unstoppable spirits of the forest. With longbow and spear, magics of light and dark, you will see the invaders cast into the wilderness beyond the forest's eaves.

A Wood Elf army can seek victory in many ways, and has access to many skilled warriors with which to destroy the enemy. As its lord or lady, it is your duty to muster and command the perfect assemblage of Elves and forest spirits to win another great triumph for the realms of Athel Loren.

This section of the book helps you to turn your collection of Wood Elves miniatures into an unstoppable host, ready for a tabletop battle. At the back of this section, you will also find a summary page, which lists every unit's characteristic profile for quick and easy reference during your games.



USING THE ARMY LIST

The army list is used alongside the 'Choosing an Army' section of the Warhammer rulebook to pick a force ready for battle. Over the following pages you will find an entry for each of the models in your army. These entries give you all of the gaming information that you need to shape your collection of models into the units that will form your army. Amongst other things, they will tell you what your models are equipped with, what options are available to them, and their points costs.

UNIT CATEGORIES

As described in the Warhammer rulebook, the units in the army list are organised into five categories: Lords, Heroes, Core Units, Special Units and Rare Units.

ARMY LIST ENTRIES

Each army list entry contains all the information you need to choose and field that unit at a glance, using the following format:

GLADE GUARDS

13 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Glade Guard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Lord's Bowman	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Asrai longbow

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider

- May upgrade one Glade Guard to a Lord's Bowman.....10 points
- May upgrade one Glade Guard to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Glade Guard to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....25 points
- The entire unit may take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point per model
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points per model
 - Starfire Shafts.....1 point per model
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points per model
 - Trueflight Arrows.....1 point per model



- Name.** The name by which the unit or character is identified.
- Profiles.** The characteristic profiles for the model(s) in each unit are provided as a reminder. Where several profiles are required these are also given, even if they are optional (such as unit champions).
- Troop Type.** Each entry specifies the troop type of its models (e.g. 'infantry, monstrous cavalry' and so on).
- Points value.** Every miniature in the Warhammer range costs an amount of points that reflects how effective it is on the battlefield.
- Unit Size.** This specifies the minimum size for each unit, which is the smallest number of models needed to form that unit. In some cases units also have a maximum size, or can even comprise just a single model.
- Equipment.** This is a list of the standard weapons and armour for that unit. The cost of these items is included in the basic points value.
- Special Rules.** Many troops have special rules that are fully described earlier in this book or in the Warhammer rulebook. The names of these rules are listed here as a reminder.
- Options.** This is a list of optional weapons and armour; mounts, magic items and other upgrades for units or characters, including the points cost for each particular option. Many unit entries include the option to upgrade a unit member to a champion, standard bearer or musician. Some units may carry a magic standard or take magic items at a further points cost.



LORDS

ORION

425 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Orion	9	8	8	5	5	5	9	5	10	Monstrous Infantry (Special Character)
Hound of Orion	9	4	0	4	4	1	4	1	6	War Beast

Magic Items:

- Hawk's Talon
- Spear of Kurnous
- Cloak of Isha
- Horn of the Wild Hunt

Special Rules (Orion):

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Spirit
- Frenzy
- Orion's Equerries
- Terror
- Unbreakable
- The Wild Hunt

Special Rules (Hounds):

- Forest Spirit
- Frenzy
- Unbreakable

Options:

- May be accompanied by two Hounds of Orion.....20 points



ARIEL

520 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Ariel	5	5	5	4	4	5	7	0	10	Monstrous Infantry (Special Character)

Magic Items:

- The Dart of Doom
- The Heartstone of Athel Loren
- The Wand of Wych Elm
- The Acorn of Ages
- The Berry Wine

Special Rules:

- Aura of the Fey Queen
- Blessings of the Ancients
- Earthbind
- Fly (9)
- Forest Spirit
- Loremaster (Lore of Athel Loren)
- Screech

Magic:

Ariel is a level 4 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Athel Loren.

DURTHU OAKHEART

320 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Durthu Oakheart	5	6	6	6	6	6	2	5	10	Monster (Special Character)

Magic Items:

- The Sword of Daith

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Flammable
- Forest Spirit
- Frenzy
- Hatred
- Natural Armour (3+)
- Strangleroots
- Stubborn
- Tree Whack
- Unburden of Thieflings

Magic:

Durthu is a Level 1 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Beasts.

ARALOTH

195 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Araloth	5	8	7	4	3	3	8	5	10	Infantry (Special Character)

Equipment:

- Spear
- Shield
- Light armour

Special Rules:

- Boldest of the Bold
- Forest Strider
- Ward Save (4+)
- Skaryn the Eye-Thief



LORDS

THALANDOR

235 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Thalandor	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10	Monstrous Cavalry (Special Character)
Gwandor	2	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	8	-

Equipment:

- Shield

Mount:

- Gwandor (Great Eagle)

Magic Items:

- Spear of Daith
- Talisman of Qwarr

Special Rules:

- Fly (9)

GLADE LORD

120 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Glade Lord	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider

Options:

- May be armed with one of the following:
 - Additional hand weapon.....3 points
 - Spear.....4 points
 - Great weapon.....8 points
- May be armed with an Asrai longbow.....5 points
- May wear light armour.....3 points
- May take a shield.....3 points
- May take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points
 - Starfire Shafts.....2 points
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points
 - Trueflight Arrows.....2 points
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Elven Steed.....21 points
 - Warhawk.....30 points
 - Great Eagle (see Rare Units for options).....45 points
 - Great Stag.....55 points
 - Meadow Chariot (replacing one of the crew).....70 points
 - Forest Dragon.....325 points
- May take one spite and/or magic items up to a total of.....100 points



SPELLWEAVER

185 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Spellweaver	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	1	9	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider

Magic:

A Spellweaver is a Level 3 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Life, Beasts, Light, Heavens, Shadow or Athel Loren.

Options:

- May be upgraded to Level 4 Wizard.....35 points
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Elven Steed.....21 points
 - Warhawk.....30 points
 - Unicorn.....40 points
 - Great Eagle (see Rare Units for options).....45 points
- May take one spite and/or magic items up to a total of.....100 points

LORDS

TREEMAN ANCIENT

235 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Treeman Ancient	5	4	4	5	6	6	2	3	10	Monster (Character)

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Flammable
- Forest Spirit
- Natural Armour (3+)
- Stubborn
- Tree Whack

Magic:

A Treeman Ancient is a Level 1 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Life or Athel Loren.

Options:

- May be upgraded to a Level 2 Wizard.....35 points
- May take Strangleroots.....20 points
- May take spites up to a total of.....100 points

WARSONG REVENANT

260 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Warsong Revenant	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	1	9	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Fly (5)
- Forest Spirit
- Regeneration (5+)
- Natural Armour (6+)

Magic:

A Warsong Revenant is a Level 3 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Life or Athel Loren.

Options:

- May take one spite and/or magic items up to a total of.....100 points



CHARACTER MOUNTS

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	War Beast
Unicorn	10	5	0	4	4	2	5	2	8	War Beast
Warhawk	2	4	0	4	3	2	5	2	5	War Beast
Great Stag	9	5	0	5	4	3	4	2	7	Monstrous Beast
Great Eagle	2	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	8	Monstrous Beast
Forest Dragon	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Monster

Special Rules:

- *Elven Steed*: Forest Strider.
- *Unicorn*: Forest Strider, Impale, Magical Attacks, Magic Resistance (2).
- *War Hawk*: Fly (10).
- *Great Eagle*: Fly (9).
- *Great Stag*: Forest Strider, Impact Hits (D3).
- *Forest Dragon*: Fly (7), Forest Spirit, Natural Armour (3+), Soporific Breath.

HEROES

DRYCHA

170 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Drycha	5	7	6	4	4	2	7	4	9	Infantry (Special Character)

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Eternal Rage
- Fanatical Resolve
- Flammable
- Forest Spirit
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Roused to Wrath
- Spirit-walk
- Tree Aspects

Magic:

- Drycha is a Level 2 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Life or Athel Loren.

NAESTRA & ARAHAN

175 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Naestra	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)
Arahan	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)
Ceithin-Har	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Monster
Gwindalor	2	5	0	4	4	4	4	3	8	Monstrous Beast

Equipment:

- Spear
- Light armour

Magic Items (Naestra):

- Talon of Dawn

Magic Items (Arahan):

- Talon of Dusk

Special Rules

(Naestra & Arahan):

- Asrai Archery
- Conjoined Destiny
- Sisters of Twilight

Special Rules

(Ceithin-Har):

- Fly (7)
- Forest Spirit
- Impetous
- Natural Armour (3+)
- Soporific Breath

Special Rules

(Gwindalor):

- Fly (9)
- Hunter's Mount

Note:

- Must be mounted on one of the following:
 - Ceithin-Har (Forest Dragon).....320 points
 - Gwindalor (Great Eagle).....100 points

NAIETH THE PROPHETESS

155 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Naieth	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8	Infantry (Special Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Magic Items:

- The Rod of Divination

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider
- Othu the Owl

Magic:

- Naieth is a level 2 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Beasts, Life, Light, Heavens, Shadow or Athel Loren.

LOTHLANN THE BRAVE

160 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Lothlann	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Light armour

Magic Items:

- The Battle Standard of Athel Loren

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider

Options:

- May be mounted on an Elven Steed.....14 points

HEROES

SCARLOC

110 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Scarloc	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)

Magic Items:

- Runesword of Darkwood
- Asyendi's Bane

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider
- Scouts

SKAW

85 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Skaw	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8	Infantry (Special Character)

Magic Items:

- The Lash of Claws
- The Cape of Feathers

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Falcons
- Forest Strider

GRUARTH

75 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Gruarth	8	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8	Infantry (Special Character)
Fang	9	4	0	4	4	2	4	2	5	War Beast
Claw	9	4	0	4	4	2	4	2	5	War Beast

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Animal Hide Cape

Magic Items:

- The Binding Bolas

Special Rules:

- Animal Form
- Beastmaster
- Elven Grace
- Fear
- Forest Strider
- Mixed Unit



HEROES

GLADE CAPTAIN

55 points

Profile

Glade Captain

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 6 6 4 3 2 7 3 9

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider

Options:

- May be armed with one of the following:
 - Additional hand weapon.....2 points
 - Spear.....3 points
 - Great weapon.....6 points
- May be armed with an Asrai longbow.....5 points
- May wear light armour.....2 points
- May take a shield.....2 points
- May take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points
 - Starfire Shafts.....2 points
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points
 - Trueflight Arrows.....2 points
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Elven Steed.....14 points
 - Warhawk.....20 points
 - Great Eagle (see Rare Units for options).....45 points
 - Great Stag.....55 points
 - Meadow Chariot (replacing one of the crew).....70 points
- May take one spite and/or magic items up to a total of.....50 points

ARMY BATTLE STANDARD

One Glade Captain or Arch-Revenant in the army may carry the Battle Standard for +25 points. The Battle Standard Bearer can have a magic banner with no points limit. However, a model carrying a magic standard can only take a spite and/or magic items up to a total of 25 points.



SPELLSINGER

85 points

Profile

Spellsinger

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 4 4 3 3 2 5 1 8

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider

Magic:

A Spellsinger is a Level 1 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Life, Beasts, Light, Heavens, Shadow or Athel Loren.

Options:

- May be upgraded to Level 2 Wizard.....35 points
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Elven Steed.....14 points
 - Warhawk.....20 points
 - Unicorn.....40 points
 - Great Eagle (see Rare Units for options).....45 points
- May take one spite and/or magic items up to a total of.....50 points

SHADOWDANCER

110 points

Profile

Shadowdancer

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 8 6 4 3 2 8 4 8

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider
- Immunity (Psychology)
- Shadow Dances of Loec
- Talismanic Tattoos

Magic:

A Shadowdancer who is a Wizard uses spells from the Lore of Shadow.

Options:

- May be upgraded to a Level 1 Wizard.....35 points
- May take one spite and/or magic items up to a total of.....50 points



HEROES

WAYSTALKER

90 points

Profile

Waystalker

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 6 7 4 3 2 7 2 8

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons
- Asrai longbow

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Stalker
- Forest Strider
- Lethal Shot
- Scouts
- Sniper

Options:

- May take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points
 - Starfire Shafts.....2 points
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points
 - Trueflight Arrows.....2 points
- May take one spite and/or magic items up to a total of.....50 points

BRANCHWRAITH

85 points

Profile

Branchwraith

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 6 6 4 4 2 7 3 9

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Special Rules:

- Blessings of the Ancients
- Forest Spirit
- Flammable
- Hatred
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Tree Aspects

Magic:

A Branchwraith who is a Wizard uses spells from the Lore of Life or Athel Loren.

Options:

- May be upgraded to a Level 1 Wizard.....35 points
- May take spites up to a total of.....50 points

ARCH-REVENANT

120 points

Profile

Arch-Revenant

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 6 6 4 3 2 7 4 9

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

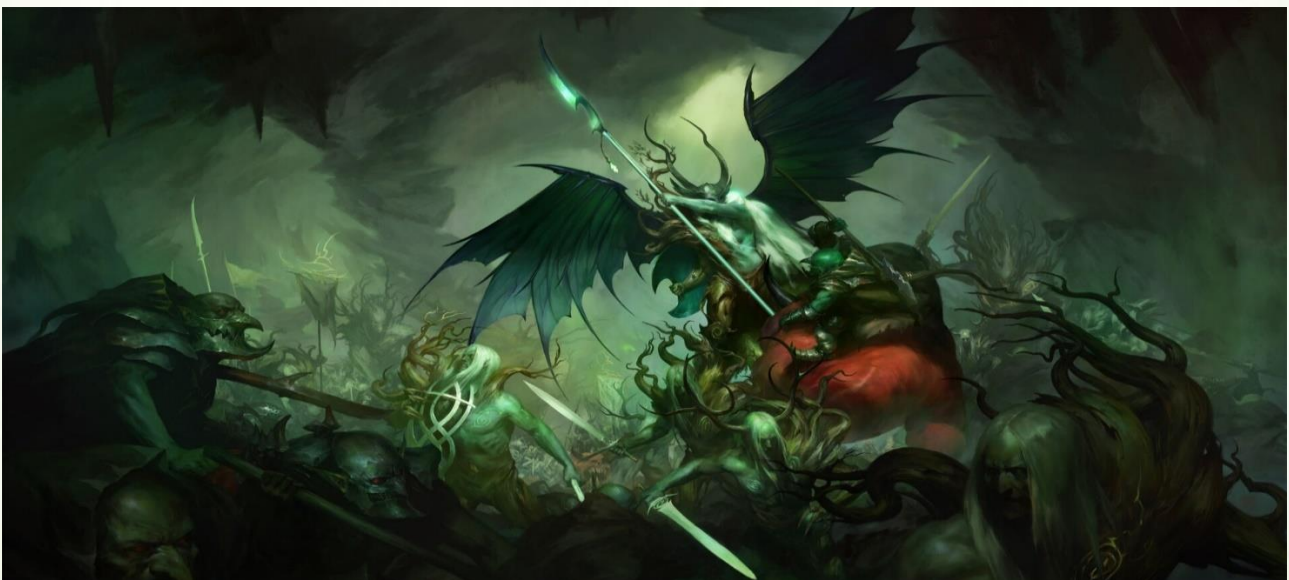
- Polearm
- Shield

Special Rules:

- Call to Battle
- Fly (10)
- Forest Spirit
- Natural Armour (6+)

Options:

- May take magic items and/or spites up to a total of.....50 points



CORE UNITS

GLADE GUARDS

12 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Glade Guard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Lord's Bowman	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Asrai longbow

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider

- May upgrade one Glade Guard to a Lord's Bowman.....10 points
- May upgrade one Glade Guard to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Glade Guard to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....25 points
- The entire unit may take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point per model
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points per model
 - Starfire Shafts.....2 points per model
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points per model
 - Trueflight Arrows.....2 points per model

DEEPWOOD SCOUTS

14 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Deepwood Scout	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Master Scout	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Note: You may not have more units of Deepwood Scouts than you have units of Glade Guard.

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Asrai longbow

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider
- Scouts
- Skirmishers

- May upgrade one Deepwood Scout to a Master Scout.....10 points
- May upgrade one Deepwood Scout to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Deepwood Scout to a standard bearer.....10 points
- The entire unit may take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point per model
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points per model
 - Starfire Shafts.....2 points per model
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points per model
 - Trueflight Arrows.....2 points per model

ETERNAL GUARD

11 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Eternal Guard	5	5	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	Infantry
Eternal Warden	5	5	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Saearath
- Light armour

- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider
- Stubborn

- May upgrade one Eternal Guard to an Eternal Warden.....10 points
- May upgrade one Eternal Guard to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Eternal Guard to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points
- The entire unit may take shields.....1 point per model

CORE UNITS

DRYADS

11 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Dryad	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry
Branch Nymph	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

- Flammable
- Forest Spirit
- Hatred
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Tree Aspects

Options:

- May upgrade one Dryad to a Branch Nymph.....10 points
- The entire unit may be upgraded to Skirmishers.....1 point per model

GLADE RIDERS

17 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Glade Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Cavalry
Glade Knight	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Cavalry
Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	-

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery
- Forest Strider
- Fast Cavalry

Equipment:

- Spear
- Asrai longbow

Mount:

Elven Steed

Options:

- May upgrade one Glade Rider to a Glade Knight.....10 points
- May upgrade one Glade Rider to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Glade Rider to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....25 points
- The entire unit may wear light armour.....1 point per model
- The entire unit may take shields.....1 point per model
- The entire unit may take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point per model
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points per model
 - Starfire Shafts.....2 points per model
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points per model
 - Trueflight Arrows.....2 points per model



SPECIAL UNITS

WILDWOOD RANGERS

13 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Wildwood Ranger	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	9	Infantry
Wildwood Warden	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	9	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider
- Guardians of the Wildwood
- Immunity (Psychology)

Equipment:

- Great weapon
- Light armour

Options:

- May upgrade one Wildwood Ranger to a Wildwood Warden.....10 points
- May upgrade one Wildwood Ranger to a musician...10 points
- May upgrade one Wildwood Ranger to a standard bearer.....10 points
- May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points



WARDANCERS

14 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Wardancer	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	2	8	Infantry
Bladesinger	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	3	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider
- Immunity (Psychology)
- Magic Resistance (1)
- Shadow Dances of Loec
- Skirmishers
- Ward save (6+)

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons

Options:

- May upgrade one Wardancer to a Bladesinger.....10 points
- May upgrade one Wardancer to a musician.....10 points
- The entire unit may swap their hand weapons for Saerath.....free

WILD RIDERS

22 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Wild Rider	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	9	Cavalry
Wild Hunter	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	9	Cavalry
Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	-
Steed of Kurnous	9	3	0	4	3	1	4	1	5	-

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

- Devastating Charge
- Fast Cavalry
- Forest Spirit
- Frenzy

Equipment:

- Spear

Mount:

Elven Steed

Options:

- May upgrade one Wild Rider to a Wild Hunter.....10 points
- May upgrade one Wild Rider to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Wild Rider to a standard bearer.....10 points
- May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points
- The entire unit may wear light armour.....1 point per model
- The entire unit may take shields.....1 point per model
- The entire unit may replace their Elven Steeds with Steeds of Kurnous.....2 points per model

SPECIAL UNITS

MEADOW CHARIOT

70 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Meadow Chariot	8	-	-	5	4	4	-	-	-	Chariot (Armour save 5+)
Charioteer	-	5	4	3	-	-	5	1	9	-
Elven Steed	-	3	0	3	-	-	4	1	-	-

Unit Size: 1

Crew: 2 Charioteers

Drawn by: 2 Elven Steeds

Equipment (Charioteers):

- Spear
- Asrai longbow

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery

Options:

- May take two extra Elven Steeds.....5 points
- May take two extra Charioteers.....10 points

TREE KIN

50 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Tree Kin	5	4	4	4	5	3	3	3	8	Monstrous Infantry
Tree Kin Elder	5	4	4	4	5	3	3	4	8	Monstrous Infantry

Unit Size: 3+

Special Rules:

- Flammable
- Forest Spirit
- Natural Armour (4+)
- Stubborn

Options:

- May upgrade one Tree Kin to a Tree Kin Elder.....10 points

ALTERS

14 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Alter	8	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	8	Infantry
Wild Kin	8	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

- Animal Form
- Elven Grace
- Fear
- Forest Strider
- Skirmishers
- Swiftstride

Options:

- May upgrade one Alter to a Wild Kin.....10 points

WARHAWK RIDERS

25 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Warhawk Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Cavalry
Wind Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Cavalry
Warhawk	2	4	0	4	3	2	5	2	5	-

Unit Size: 3+

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery
- Fast Cavalry
- Fly (10)

Equipment:

- Spear
- Asrai longbow

Mount:

Warhawk

Options:

- May upgrade one Warhawk Rider to a Wind Rider.....10 points
- The entire unit may take shields.....2 points per model
- The entire unit may take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point per model
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points per model
 - Starfire Shafts.....2 points per model
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points per model
 - Trueflight Arrows.....2 points per model

SPECIAL UNITS

TREE REVENANTS

15 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Tree Revenant	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry
Scion	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	3	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

- Forest Spirit
- Martial Memories
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Spirit-walk

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Options:

- May upgrade one Tree Revenant to a Scion.....10 points
- May upgrade one Tree Revenant to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Tree Revenant to a standard bearer.....10 points
- May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points

SPITE REVENANTS

14 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Spite Revenant	5	4	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry
Shadestalker	5	4	4	4	3	1	5	3	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

- Ambushers
- Forest Spirit
- Hatred
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Skirmishers
- Unbridled Malice

Options:

- May upgrade one Spite Revenant to a Shadestalker.....10 points



RARE UNITS

WAYWATCHERS

20 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Waywatcher	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Waywatcher Sentinel	5	4	6	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery
- Elven Grace
- Forest Strider
- Forest Stalker
- Lethal Shot
- Scouts
- Skirmishers

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Asrai longbow

Options:

- May upgrade one Waywatcher to a Waywatcher Sentinel.....10 points
- The entire unit may take additional hand weapons.....1 point per model
- The entire unit may take one of the following:
 - Arcane Bodkins.....1 point per model
 - Hagbane Tips.....3 points per model
 - Starfire Shafts.....2 points per model
 - Swiftshiver Shards.....3 points per model
 - Trueflight Arrows.....2 points per model
- The entire unit may be upgraded with Traps.....15 points

SISTERS OF THE THORN

24 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Sister of the Thorn	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	Cavalry
Handmaiden of the Thorn	5	4	6	3	3	1	5	1	8	Cavalry
Steed of Isha	9	3	0	4	3	1	4	1	5	-

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

- Asrai Archery
- Blessings of the Ancients
- Forest Strider
- Fast Cavalry
- Poisoned Attacks
- Ward Save (4+)
- Deepwood Coven

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Javelin

Mount:

- Steed of Isha

Options:

- May upgrade one Sister of the Thorn to a Handmaiden of the Thorn.....10 points
- May upgrade one Sister of the Thorn to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Sister of the Thorn to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points

GREAT EAGLES

45 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Great Eagle	2	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	8	Monstrous Beast

Unit Size: 1-3

Special Rules:

- Fly (9)

Options:

- May have any of the following:
 - Shredding Talons.....5 points per model
 - Swiftsense.....5 points per model

Note: You may take 1-2 units of Great Eagles as a single Rare choice.

SYLVAN HUNTERS

48 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Sylvan Hunters	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	3	8	Monstrous Infantry
Huntmaster	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	8	Monstrous Infantry

Unit Size: 3+

Special Rules:

- Flammable
- Forest Spirit
- Natural Armour (5+)
- Tanglethorn Thicket

Equipment:

- Great weapon

Options:

- May upgrade one Sylvan Hunter to a Huntmaster.....10 points
- The entire unit may replace their great weapons with one of the following:
 - Polearms.....free
 - Great bows.....free

RARE UNITS

GOSSAMID ARCHERS

23 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Gossamid Archer	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry
Flitwing Scion	5	5	5	4	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Elven longbow

- Fly (10)
- Forest Spirit
- Larval Shafts
- Martial Memories
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Zephyrspites

- May upgrade one Gossamid Archer to a Flitwing Scion....10 points



SPITERIDER REVENANTS

60 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Spiterider Revenant	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	Cavalry
Spiterider Scion	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	3	8	Cavalry
Dragonspite	3	3	0	4	4	2	4	2	5	-

Unit Size: 3+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Shield

- Devastating Charge
- Fly (9)
- Fast Cavalry
- Forest Spirit
- Martial Memories
- Natural Armour (5+)
- Regeneration (5+)

- May upgrade one Spiterider Seeker to a Spiterider Scion....10 points
- May upgrade one Spiterider Seeker to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Spiterider Seeker to a standard bearer.....10 points
- May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points
- The entire unit may take spears.....2 points per model

TREEMAN

215 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Treeman	5	6	6	5	6	5	2	5	9	Monster

Unit Size: 1

Special Rules:

Options:

- Flammable
- Forest Spirit
- Natural Armour (3+)
- Stubborn
- Tree Whack

- May take Strangleroots.....20 points

FOREST DRAGON

325 points

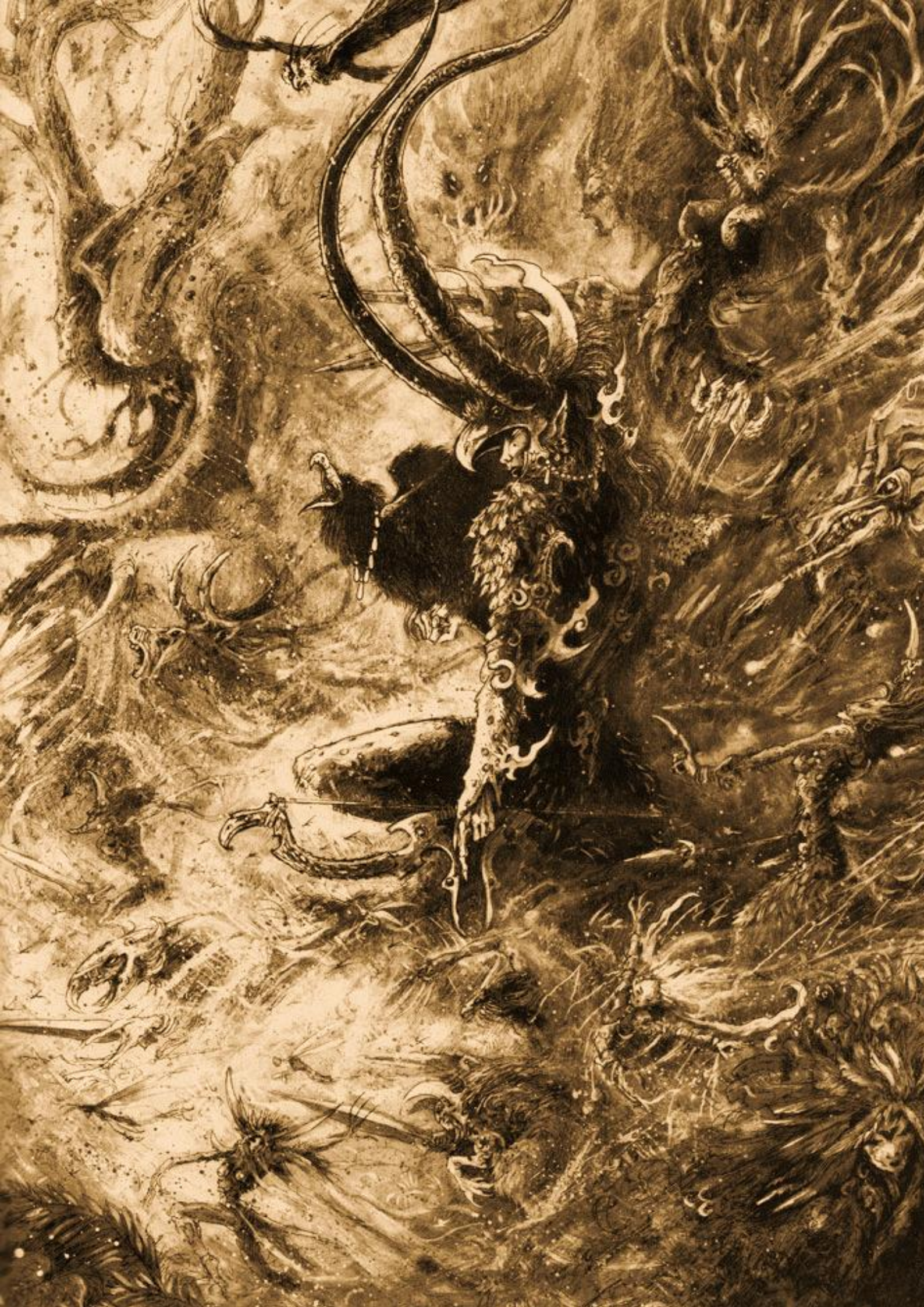
Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Forest Dragon	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Monster

Unit Size: 1

Special Rules:

- Forest Spirit
- Fly (7)
- Natural Armour (3+)
- Soporific Breath





SUMMARY

LORDS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Araloth	5	8	7	4	3	3	8	5	10	In
Ariel	5	5	5	4	4	5	7	0	10	MI
Durthu Oakheart	5	6	6	6	6	6	2	5	10	Mo
Glade Lord	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10	In
Orion	9	8	8	5	5	5	9	5	10	MI
- Hound of Orion	9	4	0	4	4	1	4	1	6	WB
Spellweaver	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	1	9	In
Thalandor	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10	MC
- Gwandor	2	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	8	-
Treeman Ancient	5	4	4	5	6	6	2	3	10	Mo
Warsong Revenant	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	1	9	In

HEROES	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Arch-Revenant	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	4	9	In
Branchwraith	5	6	6	4	4	2	7	3	9	In
Drycha	5	7	6	4	4	2	7	4	9	In
Glade Captain	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Gruarth	8	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8	In
- Fang	9	4	0	4	4	2	4	2	5	WB
- Claw	9	4	0	4	4	2	4	2	5	WB
Lothlann	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Naestra	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Arahan	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
- Ceithin-Har	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Mo
- Gwindalor	2	5	0	4	4	4	4	3	8	MB
Naieth	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8	In
Scarloc	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Skaw	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8	In
Shadowdancer	5	8	6	4	3	2	8	4	8	In
Spellsinger	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8	In
Waystalker	5	6	7	4	3	2	7	2	8	In

CORE UNITS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Deepwood Scout	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Master Scout	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
Dryad	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	In
- Branch Nymph	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	8	In
Eternal Guard	5	5	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	In
- Eternal Warden	5	5	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	In
Glade Guard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Lord's Bowman	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
Glade Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Ca
- Glade Knight	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Ca
- Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	-

SPECIAL UNITS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Alter	8	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	In
- Wild Kin	8	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	8	In
Meadow Chariot	8	-	-	5	4	4	-	-	-	Ch
- Charioteer	-	5	4	4	-	-	5	1	9	-
- Elven Steed	-	3	0	3	-	-	4	1	-	-
Spite Revenant	5	4	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	In
- Shadestalker	5	4	4	4	3	1	5	3	8	In
Tree Kin	5	4	0	4	5	3	3	3	8	MI
- Tree Kin Elder	5	4	0	4	5	3	3	4	8	MI
Tree Revenant	5	4	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	In
- Scion	5	4	4	4	3	1	5	3	8	In
Wardancer	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	2	8	In
- Bladesinger	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	3	8	In

SPECIAL UNITS (Cont.)	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Warhawk Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Ca
- Wind Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Ca
- Warhawk	2	4	0	4	3	2	5	2	5	-
Wild Rider	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	9	Ca
- Wild Hunter	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	9	Ca
- Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	-
- Steed of Kurnous	9	3	0	4	3	1	4	1	5	-
Wildwood Ranger	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	9	In
- Wildwood Warden	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	9	In

RARE UNITS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Gossamid Archer	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	In
- Flitwing Scion	5	5	5	4	3	1	5	2	8	In
Great Eagle	2	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	8	MB
Sister of the Thorn	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	Ca
- Handmaiden of the Thorn	5	4	6	3	3	1	5	1	8	Ca
- Steed of Isha	9	3	0	4	3	1	4	1	5	-
Spiterider Revenant	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	Ca
- Spiterider Scion	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	3	8	Ca
- Dragonspite	3	3	0	4	4	2	4	2	5	-
Sylvan Hunters	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	3	8	MI
- Huntmaster	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	8	MI
Treeman	5	6	6	5	6	5	2	5	9	Mo
Waywatcher	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Waywatcher Sentinel	5	4	6	3	3	1	5	1	8	In

MOUNTS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Elven Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	WB
Forest Dragon	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Mo
Great Eagle	2	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	8	MB
Great Stag	9	5	0	5	4	3	4	2	7	MB
Unicorn	10	5	0	4	4	2	5	2	8	WB
Warhawk	2	4	0	4	3	2	5	2	5	WB

Troop Type Key: In = Infantry, WB = War Beast, Ca = Cavalry, MI = Monstrous Infantry, MB = Monstrous Beast, MC = Monstrous Cavalry, Mo = Monster, Ch = Chariot, Sw = Swarms, Un = Unique, WM = War Machine.











WOOD ELVES

For millennia, the Wood Elves have dwelt beneath the leaves of Athel Loren, defending their greenwood home from the perils of the world. When the King in the Woods sounds his horn, longbows are strung and spears are sharpened as the hosts of Athel Loren assemble beneath ancestral banners. In the depths of the forests, enchantresses sing songs of awakening, rousing the ancient spirits of the waking wood, and begging for their aid in the battle to come. Let those who would despoil the forest beware; the Wood Elves march to war!

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