



# BACK IN THE CRADLE

*Expansion notes for the famous Scenario from the legendary 'Pavis' box. Inspired by the age-old question: Where exactly did the Cradle come from before it reached Prax?*

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<http://home.primus.com.au/arkat/pavis.html>

## Acknowledgments

Glorantha is owned by Issaries Inc. Map based on 'Dagori Inkarth' map ('Trollpak', Avalon Hill 1988)

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Essential Material: Greg Stafford's original Cradle scenario in the 'Pavis' Box (Chaosium 1983), or the 'Pavis and Big Rubble' Book (Moon Design 1999/2001).

Page references in this piece are to the Moon Design publication.

NOTE: Before printing, please check final appendix (pp 19-23) in case it's not relevant to your campaign.

*Some suggestions are given within the text for both RuneQuest 3 and Hero Wars statistics. RQ2 statistics are of course available within the original scenario, and full HW statistics have been released as an insert with the "Pavis and Big Rubble Companion" fanzine Vol. 2. For availability contact Fabian Kuechler (fabian.kuechle@medien.uni-weimar.de). Eventually these may be made available at the website address above. Where only HW details are given in the following text, in many cases it is a simple skill check that is required for RQ to replace them.*

## 1. The Zola Fel Ceremony

The adventurers may be contacted anywhere along the Zola Fel River, and will be approached by Priests of the River God. They could be the theist church of Zola Fel in New Pavis, or the traditional animist worshippers anywhere up and down the river, or on one of its tributaries.

The reasons why these adventurers are contacted may vary. Most likely they are either known River-Friends, or they are known Lunar enemies. They will certainly be adventurers of some renown, even if only moderately successful. The River Priests have an emergency at hand. They have just found out by magical messenger from the Zola Fel headwaters, that the Rockwood giants have dragged another cradle out of a massive door in the mountainside, and have begun some great ceremony, presumably in preparation for a launch.

The Priests need to at least get some adventurers on board for the first part of the journey, whilst they desperately seek more organized assistance to meet the Cradle when it reaches Prax. Their

own people are not powerful in combat, so the adventurers are approached and offered an armful of whatever cash, gems, or treasure, they can carry off the Cradle as reward when the mission is finished. They are also guaranteed the friendship of the Zola Fel cult for the rest of their lives, a great bonus for anyone living in the River of Cradles region, and still worthwhile across the world, as this friendship will be recognized by many Water Rune cults.

In explanation, these River Priests can tell them only that many people have been awaiting the return of a Cradle and may want to plunder its contents. Once the adventurers have agreed, the Priests will quickly take them to the nearest shrine, hidden in a large reed bed somewhere or at the edge of an island. A number of newtlings and humans are there, with many large fish also visible just below the surface. The Priests advise the adventurers that there is nothing to fear, and also help them securely lash all their possessions to themselves, placing any objects susceptible to damp into waterproof pouches.





The Ceremony is long and incomprehensible to outsiders, and after quite some time, the adventurers will be asked to step into the water up to their waists. With them will be a newtling whom they are told will be their advisor who can help them to deal with any situations that follow. The chanting that surrounds them reaches a crescendo, the newtling calls out “Hold your breath”, and all of a sudden a great current pulls them down below the surface of the water and drags them along the river bed.

Anyone who tries to see what is happening must resist Difficulty 8W to make out blurred underwater shapes rushing past them at a phenomenal speed. The experience is over almost as soon as it began, and the adventurers splutter to the surface of the headwaters at the small lake near the Boathouse Ruins.

## 2. Boathouse Ruins

At one end of this small lake at the edges of which they now wade, is a ruined town of giant-sized proportions. More amazing even than these structures is the huge wooden boat drifting out into the lake away from these ruins. Dusk is rapidly approaching, and the newtling advises them to stay still, pointing out the giant shapes standing in the ruins. After a few minutes, as the Cradle drifts out into the lake, these giants turn and stride to the nearby sheer cliff of the mountainside. There is an enormous sound of stone scraping across stone, and part of the cliff seems to slide sideways. The giants are seen no more.

The newtling, who introduces himself as Stiff-tail (if they haven’t learned his name already), pulls a blue stone out of his waterproof satchel, and chants a few words. The water around them bubbles as a water spirit forms, and Stiff-tail speaks to it in Riverspeech. Quickly the group is carried towards the Cradle, and its true size becomes even more apparent.

As they draw alongside, Stiff-tail holds up another blue stone, much larger than the first, and chants again. A beam of blue magic leaps from the stone and strikes the side of the Cradle. For a moment an energy wall surrounding the Cradle is visible as it fades back, and the stone in the newtling’s hand

turns a dull brown. He commands the water spirit again, and it lifts him up the side of the Cradle, crawling slowly across the surface of the wood. Then it returns for the adventurers, carrying them after Stiff-tail, one by one. Only a few moments after all are on deck, the energy barrier around the Cradle again becomes visible as a coruscating sheen for a moment, as it reforms. The newtling will tell them that from now on until they are relieved they will not be able to get back on board the Cradle if they leave it for any reason.

## 3. Riding the River, and the Dwarf Attacks

*Although it is not specifically mentioned, missiles can be fired off the Cradle against attackers, and may be magically enhanced. However, spells without a physical component cannot pass outwards. Regular spells and all missiles are blocked from reaching those on board. (i.e. must be supercharged to break through the defences.)*

### a. Riding the River: Dusk

The adventurers board the Cradle at dusk, a little way after the Boathouse Ruins. It will take all night to go down the river and reach Leaping Place Lake. The adventurers will probably want to place a watch, and may want to explore. It is certainly cold on deck. Remind the adventurers that they are very tired, and an opportunity for rest should not be ignored.

The scene outside the Cradle will remain the same for this first part of the voyage – they are passing through rocky hills, often with cliffs or hazardous slopes on both sides. Even though it is Sea Season and the river is high, the valley floor is wide enough to accommodate a much larger river. If the adventurers peer over the sides, they may notice (especially at the stern) the water elementals leaping about as they joyfully propel the craft at its reliable pace, occasionally straining as they raise the craft over submerged obstacles. On the valley slopes and on sand islands are stands of fir trees; otherwise there is nothing of note. Many stars overhead make visibility reasonable, and the air is fresh and cool.





**b. Dwarf Outpost: One Hour after Midnight**

About one hour past midnight, more than four hours after they climbed on board, any alert watchers aboard will notice, as the Cradle rounds a bend, a group of about a half dozen dwarves on the top of a small hill close to the river. They are outside a small windowless stone blockhouse, next to which is a huge cairn. Those adventurers with good, or magically aided, sight can notice that the cairn is made up of an enormous number of small empty metal cylinders with their tops somehow peeled off. (Even dwarves must eat, and there has been a watch post here for a long time!)

The dwarves are out of normal bow range, but magically-aided missiles might hit them. They seem startled and baffled, and after a few moments one of their number runs out from the blockhouse blowing a cloud of dust from a large book which he then proceeds to consult whilst the others gather round and peer over his shoulders. As the Cradle drifts on, the dwarves can be seen carrying pieces of equipment from the blockhouse, as the one with the book shouts orders. They quickly erect a mechanical device with a large dish on top. A short while after the dwarves are lost to view, a bright light (which must be visible for miles for someone who knew to look in the right direction) emanates from their location. (The machine is a dwarf heliograph, and these startled dwarf lookouts are warning the main dwarf fort nearby that a Cradle is coming at last.)

**c. Dwarf Boarding Slings: Three Hours after Midnight**

Around three hours after midnight, the Cradle is passing through some tall cliffs either side (which is not unusual), when the dwarves launch an attack.

If the adventurers are keeping watch, they will see something luminous on the cliff tops ahead (the light of dwarf lanterns, although they won't know this). Make this atmospheric and worrying for a little while as they approach. Those with magically-aided vision can then make out dumpy silhouettes, carrying things about, or just standing patiently. Suddenly there are 'whooshing' noises, and fiery objects leap from the cliff tops towards the Cradle. (These are boarding lines, fired by rockets.) However, all these missiles bounce from the magical defenses, being incinerated as they do

so. The adventurers may not even understand what has happened, as the dwarf troopers get no chance to slide down their lines. The Cradle sails on as the dwarves watch from the shadows.

**d. Dwarf Water Cannon: Half Hour Later**

There is brief respite, but for only around a half hour. Then the Cradle approaches another cliff close to the river, and our heroes can see several score more dwarves racing about, clambering around a large machine. This device is as big as a cottage and consists of a main body and a huge nozzle, pointing at the river. A long tail, as wide as a barrel, snakes down into the river itself. There is a trail smashed through the trees along which it has obviously been recently dragged.

What follows should be interspersed with chatting to the players and devising adventurer plans and tactics. As the Cradle draws closer, dwarves shout commands and the metal device roars into action. After a few seconds, a powerful, continual, jet of water bursts out of it, and is soon adjusted so that it strikes the front of the Cradle. It slows and then stops the craft, which skews slowly across the river, but is held in place. The Cradle's undines push harder and harder, and the dwarves crank up their machine so that the water jet is stronger and stronger. More and more dwarves with boarding ladders and muskets hurry out of the hills and line the bank waiting.

Ideally, the adventurers will come up with an amazing plan to save themselves, but if they do not, then eventually the machine explodes, injuring and killing many dwarves, and showering the magical defenses of the Cradle with fragments of red-hot engine casing. Again the Cradle sails on. (It is of course best if the adventurers somehow arrange this explosion, but it could happen spontaneously if they don't.)

**e. Dwarf Exoskeleton: Quarter Hour Later**

After another quarter of an hour, the Cradle rounds a bend in the river, and up ahead is a huge and menacing shape standing in the river. It is a massive mechanical skeletal dwarf. This behemoth is almost as tall as the Cradle, which is as high as a dozen men standing on each other's shoulders. It is a squat metal skeleton, but very bulky, filled with cogs and pistons.





It has with extremely thick poles for leg and arm bones. Within its chest area is a bulky cylindrical metal tank (as big as several men), out of which smaller pipes and black ropes (hoses) run to connect with other parts. Where the head should be is a platform with a seat on it, and many levers. A dwarf sits in a chair, frantically pulling the levers (when the machine is in motion). A metal mesh around the platform protects him. The arms of the metal man hold a huge trunk obviously sawn from a Redwood tree. From time to time, the metal man shrieks and great clouds of steam spring out of a pipe that protrudes from the metal tank.

As the Cradle nears the metal man, several huge boulders sprout legs, and waddle to the river, jumping into the water ahead of the Cradle. This blocks the river somewhat, and the undines must struggle to lift Cradle over them. It is at this point that the metal man surges forward and pushes the Redwood trunk against the Cradle, stopping it in its tracks. Bursts of energy from the Cradle attack the trunk and start to singe it. However, it will take a long time before it is destroyed this way – time the adventurers do not have. The Cradle does not skew in the river this time because the boulders jumped in strategically and are holding it straight.

Once again, dwarves slowly gather on the bank, including mostali sorcerers who probe the defenses of the Cradle with more and more powerful bursts of energy, and various cutting beams of magic that reach out to strike at the vessel. The Cradle’s defenses make laboring noises, as if they are having difficulty dealing with this onslaught. The dwarf workers are assembling boarding ramps attached to stilts and poles for easy lifting, and these are ready to go within half an hour (although it may not take the adventurers that long to break away). Armored dwarves patrol the perimeter and glare menacingly at the Cradle. The few dwarf leaders endlessly consult what must be plans and/or written orders. All in all, the dwarves appear to be executing a well-designed strategy.

Shooting the metal tank (with some high-powered missile) may destroy the metal man, or putting the driver out of action could make it unable to retain balance and, within a few minutes, the Cradle would push the machine over and sail on. Sacrificing a Lancer (racing across the top of the

awning and hurtling through the air) might puncture the tank. However, the party may not think to do this, in which case disabling the driver is the only way. In either case, you may wish to stress the dwarf sorcerers probing away with their spells.

For *Hero Wars*:

**Steam-Powered Jolanti**

*Significant Abilities:* Large 12W2, Strong 9W2

*Magical Protection:* Resist Theist Magic 16W2, Resist Damage 19W2.

**Dwarf Driver**

See ‘Typical Iron Dwarf’ in ‘Anaxial’s Roster’ p131. He is protected by the same mostali sorcery that protects the machine. Even missiles must overcome the ‘Resist Damage’ sorcery.

As the Cradle eventually breaks free (as we hope it will), the dwarves all stop work and look confused. The leader types hastily consult their papers, seemingly searching for the paragraph that tells them what to do next. That paragraph does not exist, and they can but watch, futilely, as the Cradle floats free again, and disappears down the river.

You might like to wind up the players at this point (as they keep watch), reassuringly saying the following: *“The dwarves are left well behind, 10 minutes pass, 20, 30, and the night is undisturbed. You can see the stars above, hear the cries of owls and other night-creatures. Over to the port side, the hills are shrinking away and the great Redwood forest towers leafy silhouettes way above your heads. This is more the home of sylvan elves than mechanical dwarves. All is at peace.”*

**f. The Iron Dwarf Terminator**

Of course, adventurers may or may not fall for this. Eventually, anyone looking behind will see a flash of blue light on a hilltop only a few miles away. A violent hissing noise starts on deck (pick a spot at random). A translucent glowing magical sphere appears from a spot in the air; it expands to the height of a small human in diameter. As it reaches deck level, the sphere chews into the wood, and then vanishes in a flash. Left behind, kneeling in the resulting small depression is a squat metal man, bristling with weapons and strange objects.





This is actually a specially equipped and ensorcelled Iron Dwarf but appears to the mercenaries as a mechanical dwarf made of iron, so encased is he in his armor, and so slow and cumbersome in movement. (Perhaps illustrate with robotic-type gestures, as the humanoid rises to its feet, clanking, and turns towards them with a low screech of metal?) He carries a stubby metal cylindrical object in his left hand and a crossbow of peculiar design in his right hand, and strapped to his side is a battleaxe. Wrapped around his upper torso is a narrow chain, which must be of considerable length, and this is joined to an anchor almost as big as he is that is strapped onto his back. Strapped to each upper thigh is also a small barrel. (If there is a dwarf in the party, this character may know to try and ignite these at range somehow, because they are Blam Kegs. Otherwise, adventurers won't have a clue what they are until the dwarf uses them, and may be in big trouble.)

If there is also a dwarf in the party, this attacker may take special prejudice against this individual, shouting metallically (through his helm) "Heretic!" in Mostali. Regardless of this, he attacks as follows: First, he uses his pistol and crossbow to best advantage, hoping to make many wounds and cause great panic. If he can corner two or more of the defenders he will roll in a Blam Keg. Once the first pistol is exhausted he will draw the second one, but will not need to pause in his crossbow use to do this. If he has the time he will reload his crossbow. Once his special items are used, he has his battleaxe, of course. He uses his magic as and when it can do him the most good. If he is being clearly defeated he will activate a Blam Keg, which in turn may set off the second one if that is still strapped to his person. Nasty! Another option is to use him as a terror, stalking the interior of the Cradle. If he is thrown over the side with a keg or two still attached, have him explode as he passes out of the cradle's defences, showering everyone with bits of dwarf.

*Equipment Note: Dwarf items are usually booby-trapped, exploding (if they have a blackpowder component), warping into odd shapes that include spikes coated with POT 15 poison if touched by non-dwarf sentients, or at the least partially melting to render them useless for their function or analysis.*

For *Hero Wars*: **Iron Dwarf** (also see 'Typical Iron Dwarf' – "Anaxial's Roster" p131)  
*Significant Abilities*: Battleaxe 5W2^5, Roll Keg 16W, Strong 16, Tough 19.  
*Combat Abilities*:  
**Pistol** 14W - Each pistol is enchanted by dwarf sorcery to be able to fire 2 further (magical) shots after the first, before needing reloading.)  
**Repeater Crossbow** 15W (This is enhanced by dwarf sorcery to fire 2 magical bolts for every single regular bolt. Its clip has 9 regular bolts, and can fire one per round. The dwarf has a spare clip, but this would take 2 rounds to reload.)  
*Mostali Sorcery Abilities*:  
**Bend Metal** 3W (targeted at non-magical weapons, won't work on magic), **Heat Metal** 18 (makes armor so hot that it must be taken off),  
**Immovable Body** 6W, **Levitate Metal** 19 (targeted at well-secured armor, to push someone overboard), **Produce Flame** 12W ('flamethrower' vs. statue defenders), **Unstoppable Advance** 7W.  
*Equipment*: Blam Keg x2, Full enchanted Plate ^9, Pistol x2, Repeating Crossbow.  
**Blam Keg**: Each keg is ignited by a lesser use of the dwarf's 'Produce Flame' sorcery, has a 2 round fuse, and attacks as a Simple Contest. A keg attacks with its Explosion 2w2. If rolled, each degree of failure by the dwarf (Roll Keg ability) results in a -10 from the explosion. (*Resist with Tough, Strong -5, Large -10, default, or magic*)  
 Minor Victory - 2 Hurts, recovered as normal.  
 Marginal Victory - 4 Hurts, recovered as normal.  
 Marginal Defeat - Target takes 6 Hurts, recovered at 1 per day or by magic healing.  
 Minor Defeat - Target is Injured. (*Test resistance again. Fail = unconscious through shock*)  
 Major Defeat - Target is Dying.  
 Complete Defeat - Target is Dead.  
**Pistol/Crossbow** (Simple Contest)  
 (*Resist with: Acrobatics -5, Agile -10, Close Combat with shield -10, Close Combat without shield -20, Dodge/Jump -10, Dodge Missiles -5, Large -10, default, or appropriate magic.*)  
 Complete Victory - Pistol explodes (Xb jams).  
 Major Victory - Jams, takes a round to clear.  
 Minor/Marginal Victory - A simple miss.  
 Marginal Defeat - Target takes 2 Hurts, recovered at 1 Hurt per day or by magic healing.  
 Minor Defeat - Target takes 5 Hurts, recovered at 1 Hurt per day or by magic healing.  
 Major Defeat - Target is Injured.  
 Complete Defeat - Target is Injured, and unconscious due to shock.





For *RuneQuest*: **Iron Dwarf**

STR 17, HP 15, POW14, AP 10+D6, MP30 (has 16MP Storage Crystal inside helm)

His MOV is only 5, due to being weighted down, which makes his actions appear mechanical.

Broadsword SR6, 90%/80%, D8+10, with 8 of this being magical damage. Shield 85%

**Battle Magic:** He has Countermagic 3 and Protection 5 on him (dwarfish sorcery equivalents) Once these wear off, in half an hour, his AP will drop by 5. Until this happens he does not parry, but attacks twice, SR 6 and SR10, after that if he has to parry he will grab the nearest solid object, or person.

**Spells:** **Heat Metal** 4MP (targeted at armor, must beat POW, makes it so hot quickly it must be taken off); **Bend Metal** 3MP (targeted at non-magical weapons, won't work on magic, also POW challenge); **Levitate Metal** (targeted at well-secured armor, to try and throw someone overboard. Also a POW Challenge and needs 8MP to lift a person) He will only use this in an emergency due to high MP cost; **Produce Flame** (burst doing 2D4, costs 3MP, and has range 10yds – he will use this against attacking statue defenders)

**Magic Weapons:** **Musket:** 65%, 40m, damage – D10+10 (magically enhanced with a divine attack matrix, so that it fires magical bullets, one per 5SR, starting at SR1 when the attack begins, then going SR5, SR10, SR5 etc. It fires a total of 10+D10 shots before exploding, which doesn't hurt the dwarf inside his armor, but the smoke this causes distracts him for a few moments) (Countermagic also protects)

**Blam Keg:** 15+D10 damage within 5yds, 8+D8 within 10yds, and D6+4 within 10-15yds.

**Repeater** (magically enhanced with a sorcery matrix, so that it fires one magical bolt per 5SR, starting at SR3, then again at SR8 etc) 60%, 60m, D6+4. This will not explode, but fires only 10+D10 shots before running out of power.

*Warning: This guy can be as deadly as you want, and was responsible for the first Hero's death in the playest.*

If the adventurers fail to act quickly and decisively, the Cradle defenders may try and attack this invader – first of all by sending a Lancer (p49), which the dwarf will flame. Then they will charge him with three Bracketers (p48), which he will also flame and drive off. Finally, a lone Leaper (p48) will have a go, and it too will be flamed. After this all the statues will flee, assuming that the dwarf will otherwise destroy them all. Nemolayope is only prepared to sacrifice them in direct defense of the infant, and withdraws them below decks to wait for this after they have made no initial impression. Only Blorn or Nemolayope can command the statues, so if the adventurers have some plan of attack they will need to communicate this to gain their assistance. Note also that statues that attacked the dwarf might need to have their flames put out by the adventurers.

Once the dwarf has driven them off the deck, his plan is simply to unwind the many yards of magical chain wrapped around him (which is already attached to the anchor), secure it somewhere to the Cradle, and throw the anchor overboard. Within minutes, the following four dwarf attack boats (large skiffs powered by twin treadmills each operated by five running dwarves, and manned by three regular Iron Dwarves) will have caught up, and will board using ladders attached to their rockets (see Saltford attack in original scenario). If this happens, all is lost, and so at some point during the fight they must see these boats following, and realize they **MUST** stop him/it! Whether or not the invader will work out he has to destroy Pinching in order to deactivate the defences is up to the Narrator.

The adventurers must do away with this invader, or at least break the magical chain before dealing with the dangerous dwarf at their leisure.

After this encounter, the Cradle sails for a few hours without any further interruption, and as day breaks they enter Leaping Place Lake (passage is slow across the lake, taking all morning)





#### 4. Trolls, Elves, and Trolls again

After a couple of hours drifting into the middle of the lake, keen-eyed watchers on the Cradle will see a sailing boat pulling out from the shore. Troll lookouts from a small troll cave village have spotted the Cradle. Several brave boat-trolls have cast protections from the sun's harsh rays and set sail to confront this enormous boat, not yet believing it could actually be one of the legendary Cradles at last returned. It is a very small fishing galley, with room for six oars-trolls, a drummer, a helmsman, and three fishermen. In this case, it has only the rowers, the helmsman, and the drummer. Because the wind is low, its sails are furled, and nets can be seen rolled tightly. As it approaches, the drumming can be heard, as a good pace is set. Those with good (or magically-aided) sight will notice early that this is a troll craft.

The Captain is a Kogag (*Drastic: Darkness p 84*) Devotee and the rest are Kogag Initiates (except for the drummer who is a Shaman). Once they get closer (but not too close), the Shaman will send a spirit at the Cradle, but it will be destroyed. He will then cast many detections, and report to the other trolls (in Darktongue) that it is a true Giant's Cradle, and as such they should let it go on its way.

They may then engage in communications, coming a bit closer, and perhaps shouting in Trade to see if anyone is on board (they don't expect anyone to be). The trolls may try and board but if so, their boat is repelled and set on fire by energy beams. They will manage to put this out, and then return to the shore. If engaged in conversation, they will warn the adventurers that the Lunars will probably stop at nothing to get the Cradle, and they have no confidence it will ever reach the sea. Their final shouted comments might be along the lines of "*May you die bravely slaughtering many Lunars before your vessel is finally taken!*"

Eventually, the Cradle drifts out of the lake, and by the afternoon is passing through the Redwood Forest. Sharp-eyed lookouts may see Redwood elves and runners after a couple of hours. As evening falls, the boat passes between two particularly huge trees, and a green energy barrier springs forth, slowing the Cradle almost to stopping. A group of elves step forward onto the branches of the closest tree, and hail the Cradle.

(Their sharp eyes had no problems detecting the adventurers.) These elves are so old that they have started to resemble foliage (a common event for aging elves). They have leafy hair, bark-like skin, and limbs that are beginning to look like branches.

The speaking elf uses oddly-accented Trade and asks where the Cradle came from, where it is going, and why this one is the first after so long. He further explains that three of their number here saw the previous Cradle, seven hundred years ago, and that one had no humans on it. They want to know why it is different this time. Smart adventurers might swap what little they know for information from these elves. Throughout the conversation, the elves are using detections, and probing the Cradle's defenses with magic and spirits, but cannot break through. They remain polite and curious, and as unfathomable as elves always are to non-aldryami, but have only a few minutes of conversation before the Cradle pushes the whole way through their barrier and floats on. Make the most of this encounter.

Throughout the night, the Cradle continues through the forest, passing through several lakes that make progress slow.

On the last lake, as dawn is showing its first hint of light, the elves have all gathered to see this wonder. Hundreds of aldryami are standing on branches around the lake. But the most surprising of all are the elf boats. These are beautiful, shimmering-sailed, silver craft, which move without needing a breeze. When they first appear their passengers throw enormous garlands of flowers and great clouds of petals around and before the Cradle. Each boat holds between five and fifteen elves, who seem content to tack back and forth around the Cradle. Some elves may engage in polite conversation if spoken to, though plainly few of them speak Trade, and even fewer speak it well. Alert adventurers may also notice manatees gliding around the lake, occasionally breaking surface, and occasionally ridden by elves. Before long, the Cradle passes into the last section of river within the forest, and the elf ships do not accompany them.

As day breaks, the Cradle Riders see they have left the main forest behind, although they travel alongside its final spur for a little while. The next day they continue drifting through foothills.





This is largely uneventful, and the region looks inhospitable and difficult to traverse other than by river. It is very rocky and barren with gaunt and sparse vegetation. After only two hours there is an uncomfortable incident when the Cradle shoots some substantial rapids. Then, shortly after noon, the Cradle passes an enormous skull the size of a house, partially buried within a steep hillside (probably having been revealed by a recent landslide). Careful viewing notes that it is the skull of a giant troll. Early in the evening an even larger section of rapids is encountered. (Present both rapids incidents with as much build up, terror, and detail as you wish.)

The next event of any note happens shortly after night falls. Once again, it is a fairly bright night, lit by stars, and the front watch will suddenly observe buildings and movement up ahead.

**Trollville** – “This town holds about 800 trolls and some 30 permanent human inhabitants. They all live in shacks clustered about the questionable inn. Apparently trolls occasionally stay in the inn because it’s the best place in town (to troll tastes). Travelers may prefer to sleep in the fields. Night is the busy time here, as you might expect from trolls. A priestess of Kyger Litor is resident here.”  
*Jane Williams*

With little warning (for the Cradle Riders or the trolls) the Cradle passes alongside a troll village. Many houses are made of domed piles of rocks, doorways covered by animal hides. The central building is large and made in imitation of human architecture. At present the trolls’ ‘morning’ scene is evident, with a few of them newly awake and yawning. Those already up and about, drop their picks and fishing lines, and shout in wonder. Within seconds, many more trolls flounder out of their houses, and then a human voice shouts out in Trade “Ho there, anyone aboard?”

This is an Argan Argar cultist who is staying with the trolls, and is most interested to know what is going on. Anyone who is able, including this trader, is firing off detections. Three small fishing boats also launch and approach the Cradle. A single beam of energy sinks the first, and then the second as they draw close. Each blast comes from one of the carved heads in the Cradle, and drills a neat hole in the hull floor. The third boat picks up the swimming trolls, none of whom appear to have

been injured. The adventurers may engage the trader in conversation if they wish, and several troll boats pursue the Cradle at a discreet distance after it leaves the settlement behind. They follow for a few hours, casting detections, and probing the magical defenses, but eventually turn back a short way before yet another section of rapids (which fortunately is the last).

## 5. Onto the Praxian Plains

The Cradle emerges from the foothills shortly before daybreak, with the first signs of light appearing at the edge of the sky. Suddenly, the horizon is stretching; the Cradle Riders have made it safely out of the hills and onto the plains. They are floating across Prax on the first Cradle in seven and a half centuries. (Allow the adventurers some moments for celebration and self-congratulation.)

Then the forward watch sees something up ahead, possibly a stand of trees? No, it is a group of about sixty warriors with no particular uniform identifiable. Also, along the riverbank are drawn up several dozen boats of the type commonly seen around Pavis. More humans and newtlings are in, or near, these. As these people spot the Cradle, several humans and newtlings wade into the shallows of the river, and begin gesticulating, presumably casting magic. This is all well out of range of anything the adventurers can do, and just as they get into range, they hear the worrying sound of Pinchining falling over.

At this, the Cradle defenses switch off instantly, and a murmur of awe comes from the band of mercenaries beside the river, as the shimmering wall of magic is briefly seen collapsing. Newtlings carrying rope swim quickly out to the Cradle and scamper up its sides, clearly aided by magic. If left alone, they will drop ropes to the others. The mercenaries will be ferried out and clamber eagerly aboard, as will a group of trolls who were hiding under nearby cottonwood trees. Once Garrath and his people are aboard, the Zola Fel Priests will chant together and the defenses will come on again as Pinchining springs back to life.

Garrath will be delighted to see these heroes, and congratulate them when told of their deeds. He introduces them to Jarang Bladesong and will split the defenders up into groups, as described in the original scenario.







The lower Cradle decks are declared off limits, as Lunar aggression is expected within a few hours, and everyone must become used to battle drill. Garrath also issues scarves to all the defenders, which are to obscure their faces. These have all been sanctified in the waters of the Zola Fel, and will prevent any magical or mundane identification by the Lunars that would surely lead to aggressive reprisals.

*Note: The scenario now continues as stated in the original, with alterations as suggested below.*

## 6. The Death of Garrath

*This extra detail for the Saltford battle is to not only add drama, but to indicate clearly to the adventurers when it is time for them to jump overboard. I have removed the below decks escape option in this version, since the main adventurers have not yet had a chance to engage in the beginning section of the scenario set in Pavis. That beginning section can instead be inserted after this part, either as bedraggled survivors converge in Gimpy's, or as new rebels are recruited to replace the heroic dead.*

After as many rounds of terrible fighting as required, the adventurers see that they are losing badly. Many rebels lie dead, as of course do many attackers, and the deck runs red with blood. Small knots of rebels fight fanatically on, yet it is obviously hopeless. Within a few minutes, they will definitely be overrun. Adventurers may wish to try and escape below decks, but this is not an option, as Lunars have already secured the forward hatch near them.

Through the mass of fighting burst two men side by side, red cloaks flashing. They are Count Julian and Nose-Ring of the Coders, and they cut their way with seeming impunity through the chaff, attacking Garrath and his champions directly. (Jarang is not close by, being caught in melee some distance away.) The fighting is awesome, Garrath spins and leaps, but is immediately on the defense. One by one, his companions go down. Julian and Nose-Ring are both wounded, but not seriously, and Garrath fights on alone. (Adventurers may of course try to smash their way to his defense, in which case they arrive a moment too late, or possibly manage to aid Garrath for a few rounds.) Julian strikes hard and fast, taking Garrath in the neck, and almost severing his head.

Down he goes, blood spurting on the deck, drenching any nearby adventurers. There is a clap of thunder, and a bolt of lightning hits Garrath's body, totally vaporizing it. All attackers on deck are thrown about and momentarily blinded, but the defenders are left unaffected. This gives all surviving defenders valuable moments to escape over the side, as Jarang gives the orders to retreat before vaulting the rail.

**Capture** – an option for horribly wounded adventurers. Once the main carnage is over, the Lunar Coders will come aboard. They will wander about examining the dead and dying, looking for wanted criminals, and anyone they have previously had dealings with. Anderida will chastise a soldier who is killing the wounded. Julian will see to it that injured warriors are carried away on stretchers, and Nose-Ring applies slave shackles. Julian or Nose Ring might congratulate them on a heroic fight. This bit can be ignored if no injured adventurers remain. If they do, then a few other rebels will also have survived. Those prisoners who surrender are likely to have been incapacitated by wounds, and will be stretchered off, under close guard. They will only be healed sufficiently to prevent their deaths. The best time to rescue captured adventurers is 'now', in the few minutes that the Lunars are overconfident. The precise best moment is as the crowds arrive, running up to the Cradle as if spurred on by hidden instigators. These crowds cause problems for the Lunar stretcher parties trying to get their wounded prisoners away. Fast acting adventurers can disable a few guards and rescue one or two of their own, but must have some way of then fleeing very swiftly.

Aided by water-breathing magic, rescued defenders are taken down river, and helped ashore out of sight of the commotion, and away from the few patrols. Such characters will be healed, and magic applied to dry their clothes and hair. They may then wander back with the crowds that now surge forwards, but are better advised to return to the city. The Lunar troops are unable to hold the crowd for a short while, and hundreds of curious Pavisites crowd the area, shouting and trying to get a closer look. Now is the time for any Cradle Riders to make themselves scarce. The Lunars use huge chains, teams of oxen, and the muscles of their soldiers to drag the Cradle onto the beach, although it takes an hour to complete.





Governor Sor-Eel arrives and begins to talk to the troops and to take credit. Radak and various other Lunar champions protect him, and Bor-Eel is also there. The Lunars begin to dig a moat around the Cradle. By now even more troops are arriving, and are beginning to harass and question observers and make a few arrests.

## 7. Back to the City

Lhankor Mhy Sages from the crowd are divinely guided to any defenders here, and cast magic-blocking spells upon them to protect them from detection, suggesting that it is safest to return to the City immediately and “take a drink at Gimpy’s”. The guards on the city gates are as vigilant as ever, but the magic of the sages allows entry without being revealed as Cradle Riders. Within the gatehouse, an Irripi Ontor sage, augmented by several tired acolytes, asks the standard questions but detects no lies. At Gimpy’s the crowd is abuzz with talk of the Cradle. The Cradle Riders are given free food and drink, and over the next half an hour, a mere handful of other surviving defenders straggle in and join them. Hope is given up on any other survivors as evening arrives, and from time to time a small group of powerful seeming Lunars comes in and casts detection magic upon the crowd. One such Lunar group can be led by Maculus the Monitor, who perhaps pauses in front of the Cradle Riders, checking his detections, pausing suspiciously as if to speak, but then departing. A storm begins outside, and dust and debris blow about the streets of New Pavis.

The status with the Cradle at the start of this section is described under ‘Preparations’ in the original scenario. Jarang Bladesong suddenly appears amidst the crowd, looking beaten and tired, and soaking wet. (He was rescued by river folk, and has been hiding in the Rubble.) He reports that Garrath is off on a HeroQuest for new magic to protect the Cradle, but is believed dead by the Lunars, and Jarang needs to rally any rebel sympathizers to recrew the Cradle. (He is confident it will break free.)

Go to ‘The Hiring’ section of the Pavis Scenario (p132), although, of course, it will be slightly different in this version. Many of the regulars were already on the Cradle and are missing and presumed dead. Outside, the storm is becoming

fierce. Jarang says that Orlanth and Zola Fel are with them, and the Cradle will ride free tonight. The growing storm outside adds weight to his words. More Orlanthi are scouring other Inns and dives in Pavis. Around midnight, they all meet in a hidden room beneath Gimpy’s, are taken through a secret door in the basement, and descend to an even more secret sub-basement that very few are aware of. This room has shrines to Pavis and Orlanth, and is as old as New Pavis itself.

Jarang explains that the Lunars are being thwarted in their spells and ceremonies by the power of the storm, and that few guards are on the Cradle itself. Sor-Eel doesn’t want anyone to loot it before it is safe for him to go on board, nor for anyone to be injured by the powerful magic is sensed and yet to be deactivated. Therefore, Jarang is taking a handful of elite champions to board the Cradle and kill the Lunars on it after it breaks free. The others will join the Cradle as it passes through the Rubble. (From the Central Bridge, but Jarang is unlikely to tell anyone this.) If asked how this will all work, Jarang refuses to comment, but says to trust in the storm.

He leads them out the dwarf tunnel beneath Gimpy’s. It is a long and damp walk; however the tunnel is large and extremely well crafted, tall enough for a rider on a horse, and wide enough for three men to walk side by side. This exits up some wide stairs, between New Pavis and the Real City, and this entrance is obscured by dwarf technology. Turning a large bronze wheel activates pistons. These lift a section of ground, and the wall of a half-buried ruin, which make an effective disguise from the outside. Once closed again, it is impossible to tell it was there. The storm is now in full swing, and a great monsoon is smashing across the Rubble. If it adds to the atmosphere of your game, a large group of dwarf Rubble Trackers appears, and they escort the rebels across the Rubble, picking their way south of the Zebra Stockade.

## 8. Retaking the Cradle

At the river, newtlings call water breathing spirits, and conjure Detection Blocks, and Jarang leads the adventurers underwater to the Cradle. The River itself is now running very high and fierce.





The adventurers are to hunt down any Lunars aboard as soon as the Cradle breaks free, and to cut any ropes still attached. The others are to board from the Zebra Bridge (aided by dwarves) when the Cradle passes, as the rebels can't imagine getting a large force aboard without being spotted. Check 'the Trip' section on p156 for atmosphere, but remember that there is no band dashing out of the city: the adventurers **are** this relief force, coming from the river.

They travel some distance underwater. The current is incredibly fierce, but somehow it does not pull at them. Upriver to Salford, they bob up in the water near the Cradle, amidst the thrashing rain, and see that the river is already near to bursting its banks. Crimson Lunar magic forms a dome around the Cradle, but as they watch, a huge fish surfaces, and a circular hole opens in this glowing defense at water level. The adventurers can swim through, one by one, but Jarang then makes them wait for a few minutes until a newtling emerges at his side and clasps him on the shoulder.

The adventurers board the Cradle, with climbing magic cast on them by the newtlings, so as to gain the deck as quickly as possible. Jarang indicates the rebels to a halt as they are close to the top. He raises his face into the driving rain, stretches out an arm and gestures upriver. Even over the noise of the storm, the adventurers hear something, and within moments can see a 10m high wave rushing at them. Jarang leads them quickly onto the deck of the Cradle. Only yards away, a group of Lunars is surprised and they move into defensive formation, but then the wave hits, lifting the Cradle free and swamping the deck. Lunars and defenders are washed against the bulwarks, but the defenders are prepared.

On deck are only one or two groups of Lunar soldiers, who are only average fighters. They will defend themselves, but when threatened will attempt to escape or surrender.

Jarang will then send the player's Heroes below decks to search for any other Lunars. He himself has ceremonies to perform and will stay on deck alone, confident in his own safety. These ceremonies are essential and cannot be disrupted. The Cradle is once again drifting down river.

Below decks, the adventurers will soon find the marks of muddy Lunar boots on the floor. All of a sudden, they will come across an Irripi Ontor Scribe and his assistant who were assigned to observe the baby, and are now wondering what is going on.

For *Hero Wars*: **Scribe**  
*Significant Abilities*: Blast Enemy's Mind 11W, Divert Spell 7W, Scimitar and Shield 7W^3.  
 The sage is fanatical and attacks with spells and then his scimitar. His assistant cowers in terror, unable to do anything. Both know that a Lunar group of ten or so was below decks earlier, but don't know where they are now.

For *RuneQuest*: **Scribe**  
 POW 20, INT 18, HP 14, AP 2, RMP 6, DI 40%  
 Scimitar SR6 70%/60% D6+6, Shield 65%  
*Spirit Spells*: Countermagic 3, Heal 4, Spirit Shield 3, Disrupt (1)  
*Rune Spells*: Madness (2), Mindblast (2)

Now is a prime time to place a Lunar attack on the baby, as suggested in the original scenario. A desperate group of mixed Lunars sees a last chance to succeed at thwarting the rebels, making it pointless for them to continue with the Cradle's defence, or perhaps they wish to hold the baby to ransom for their own security?

## 9. Through the Rubble

*Generally, play this section as set out in The Journey (p156). Note that I have moved the boulder and cauldron to the exit wall of the Rubble. Remember that Pinchining is inactive and the Cradle has no magical defenses any longer. Even the undines are greatly reduced.*

Lunar Bridge (p 156) – If required, a couple of Lunar Champions survive to land on deck and must be fought.

Zebra Bridge (p 157) – To avoid further combat at this stage, Hargran's men are attacked by the 'Pavis Survivors' Zebra Gang just as the Cradle draws close, and the adventurers can see Pavic loyalists taking this opportunity to slaughter the usurpers (cries of 'Pavis!' and 'Opili!').





Central Bridge (p 158) – As well as the watching dwarves, ropes are lowered and the bulk of rebel allies board. This is the ideal point to drop in any known supporting characters from your campaign that will not be required in the future and could be rebels. Rebels now aboard total 84, all tough. These include a few more survivors from the first attack, who escaped at Saltford and came through the Rubble.

Ogre Island (p 158) – As scenario.

Boulder and Cauldron (p 156-157) – As scenario, except as they exit the Rubble.

Down river (p 158) – Jarang will order (and may lead if he is being run by one of the players) further exploration of the Cradle during this time (by the adventurers, coincidentally enough, especially if their previous examinations were incomplete). As a counterpoint to the earlier section, Nemolayope may disappear with the most attractive adventurer of the opposite gender to the one before.

**Optional Attack:** It suited the game at this point, that wyvern-riders were spotted approaching the Cradle from the Rubble behind them. When the adventurers were exploring below decks, the wyvern riders (Lunar Rune Lords) attacked the rebels on deck above and were defeated, with heavy losses to the rebels. However, one Lunar managed a DI and sent himself below decks, sealing the hatches and putting powerful wardings on them. Thus the unknowing adventurers heard someone walking around, tried to chase the Lunar, and were ambushed by him, although he did give them the chance to surrender. One adventurer was still in the bilges, so the other two took the Lunar on. I used Julian's statistics from 'Strangers in Prax', adjusted as if he had already used most of his resources in the fight upstairs. It was still a tough fight which the PCs only just won.

For *Hero Wars*: **Lunar Champion** (with standard magic cast and regular augments made).

*Significant Abilities:* Jump 16W, Listen 8W, Scan Terrain 10W, Run in Armor 4W.

*Magical Feats:* Charge of the Ram 12W, Stand Against Many 12W, Destroy Enemy Morale 8W, Raise Courage 8W, Perceive Enemy Weakness 9W.

*Combat:* Scimitar and Shield Fighting 10W2

*Relationship:* Devotee of Yanafal Tarnils 10W

*Equipment:* Scimitar (enchanted to ^7), Chain Armor with Shield (enchanted to give ^8AP)

For *Rune Quest*: **Lunar Champion**

STR 18, DEX 17, CON 19, INT 17, POW 19, APP 17, HP: 19, MP: 29, AP: 7 (11), DI: 40%

Scimitar SR4 120%/90% D8+4(8) (Fireblade – 3D6), Shield 100%

Choose Magic as best suits:

*Yanafali Spirit Magic* (including matrices):

Befuddle (2), Glamour 2, Bladesharp 4, Fireblade (3), Protection 4, Detect Enemies (1), Demoralize (2), Disrupt 3, Heal 3, Repair 2, Strength 2, Spirit Screen 3, Vigor 2, Countermagic 3

*Yanafal Tarnils Rune Magic:* Madness, Mindblast(2), Reflection, Truesword, Detect Truth, Sever Spirit(3), Absorption(2), Find Enemy, Heal Wound, Sense Magic, Resist Affliction, Shield, and Spirit Block

*Seven Mothers Spirit Magic* (including matrices):

Befuddle (2), Glamour 2, Protection 4, Bladesharp 4, Disrupt 3, Spirit Screen 4, Detect Enemies (1), Heal 4, Demoralize (2), Farsee 3, Countermagic 3

*Seven Mothers Rune Magic:* Chaos Gift, Madness(2), Mindblast(2), Regrow Limb, Truesword, Absorption(2), Find Enemy, Heal Wound, Sense Magic, Resist Affliction, Shield, and Spirit Block

*Nifty Chaos Rune Magic* (for those especially naughty Lunars; this might be known, or in Truestones):

- Bagog: *Claws* turns arms into claws SR4 2D6+DB
- Thed: *Crack* non-living/magical items (including items with spirit magic cast on them), *Fumble*, *Reverse Chaos/Curse of Thed* (2)
- Crimson Bat: *Batwings*
- Krarsht: *Image/Disguise* (2), *Tongue* (2) – DEXx5% to hit + does 4D3 disrupt, *Conceal* (2) – user visible if attacking
- Cacodemon: *Vomit Acid* (3) POT=MP used





## Appendix 1: Narrator’s Timeline for the rest of the Scenario

- Night 1 Cradle breaks free and travels down river halfway to Garhound.
- Day 1 Cradle passes Harpoon about 1.30pm. In the evening, adventurers who left the Cradle when the rebels boarded arrive back at Pavis, and may, or may not, be arrested, depending on their smarts.
- Night 2 Cradle travels through the rest of Sun County and passes Helmbold about 3am.
- Day 2 Cradle continues south, passing Chomorro and Arrowsands at around 1.30 and 2pm respectively
- Night 3 Cradle slows a little as it goes through the North Bog, passing Raus Fort at around 6am
- Day 3 Cradle goes south through the Great Bog, passing Five Eyes Caves around 5pm
- Night 4 Cradle goes on through the South Bog and passes Lokazzi about 5am (The stupid broo attacks occur during the 2 hour voyage between Five Eyes Caves and the closest edge of the South Bog)
- Day 4 10am sees them enter the Corflu Delta. About an hour after noon sees them approach Corflu and suffer the Lunar attack. By 6.00pm it reaches the open sea.

## Appendix 2: More Broo Bits

The broo encounters are only a single suggestion under the South River section on p160 of the original scenario. Here are a few more that may follow that idea. The location of these attacks is the river section between the South Bog and Lokazzi. It is marked as being a floodplain, however some of what follows depends on bluffs standing next to the River, therefore it is judged that the floodplain also scattered large rocky hills of extruded material uneroded over the years. Each encounter should be presented seriously, not hinting that all these are pretty much doomed to fail. If anyone wonders how the broo had sufficient warning to prepare these devices, likely they were warned by spirits sent from their allies in the Big Rubble.

### a. Catapult

The broo on the rope are left quickly behind, and the rebels roar with laughter. However, a few minutes later the lookouts spot a large group of broo gathered on a small rise to the side of the

river. These have a large arbalest, or similar device, made from tree trunks and ropes, and it is weighted down with huge stones around its base. As the Cradle draws closer, the rebels can see that broo shaman are casting spells on a small group of tough-looking Rhino broo who are armed to the teeth. Then, as the Cradle draws level, smaller goat broo are whipped and kicked into action, dragging the arbalest’s string back, and preparing what looks like a giant sling pouch. One of the Rhino broo steps quickly into the sling, and a Shaman looks carefully at the Cradle before shouting an order. With an audible twang, the arbalest fires, and the Rhino broo is thrown through the air, swinging his sword, and screaming as he flies towards the deck of the Cradle. (Pause to ask adventurers what they want to do.)

The Rhino broo passes only feet above the far side of the deck, slashing ineffectually at the ducking rebels. He plunges headlong into the rocky bank on the far side of the river, striking with resounding crunching and snapping noises. His body slides slowly under the water.

The remaining broo are now racing around. Obviously, they have realized that the Cradle is moving at such a speed that they will only get off another shot or two at the most. The next Rhino broo is loaded into the throwing pouch, and the Shaman in charge is kicking and screaming at the haulers, and flailing away with a small carved stick. The arbalest fires again, but something is wrong: it’s not just the Rhino broo flying through the air this time, but also the Shaman who must have been in the way. Both of them howl as they hurtle out of control through the air towards the Cradle. (Pause to ask adventurers what they do.)

With a great thudding splat, the two broo strike the Cradle a full ten feet below its upper edge. The resulting mess clings for a few moments, and then drops into the river, disappearing with only ripples to mark its passing. There is loud disbelieving laughter from the rebels on board. Up on the bluff, the remaining three Rhino broo have rounded on the other Shaman and are smashing him to pulp. A few of the goat broo join in, but most stand on the bluff watching the Cradle roll on. This time they don’t even shout insults. (If no adventurers do it, a rebel stands on the edge of the deck and shouts abuse at the broo.)





**b. Rolling wooden wagon**

A few more minutes pass, and the Cradle approaches one of the isolated uneroded escarpments that are scattered across the river plain in this region. It is certain the broo must have somehow heard about the Cradle at least a day ago, because they have built a battlegon. This thing was fully 6m high and 10m long, with four huge wheels each almost 3m high themselves. Built of huge timbers held together with great hawsers and presumably adherence magic, it also has a large horned goat's head carved crudely at the front. Surely it would never last any distance, but then it was clear it is not meant to. The cunning broo have cleared a runway down to the edge of the bluff, cut channels for the wagon's wheels, and built a great wooden ramp held up by closely-packed earth and rocks. This is surely the greatest engineering feat any broo have ever accomplished, they must want to raid the Cradle very badly. (Pause to ask adventurers if they wish to make special preparations to deal with the unorthodox boarding party?)

Once again, a larger broo stands close to the edge of the bluff, shouting orders. Many broo rush around in panic, climbing through hatches into the wagon, about twenty or thirty of them at first glance. The hatches are pulled closed, and the broo closest to the edge keeps looking anxiously back and forth between the approaching Cradle and the wagon, obviously judging the distance. He raises his arm and holds it there.

Ask the players again what the adventurers are doing – this broo is obviously about to give a signal. He is mostly protected from missile attack from the Cradle by rocks and also has magical protection, resulting in a defence against missiles of 18W.

If the adventurers somehow manage to kill or seriously wound this broo, then their action is what causes the wagon attack to fail. Another broo, further up the slope, gives the signal, and the wagon rolls too late, caroming off the stern dragon head (happily not damaging it) before disintegrating and plunging, into the river. In this case, one broo makes it on board, but is dead with a broken neck.

If the signal broo is not killed, the attack fails through simple broo ineptitude. Suddenly, the watcher shouts loudly and drops his hand sharply.

The broo next to the front of the wagon haul on ropes, pulling chocks aside, and the wagon begins to move. Slowly at first, but rapidly picking up speed, it creaks and groans its way down the steep slope, until it reaches the ramp, moving at a surprising pace. (Perhaps those inside have been casting some kind of Mobility magic upon it?) There is a tremendous crash as it hits the ramp, which shifts dangerously but holds, and the broo battlegon is propelled through the air, heading straight for the Cradle's deck. Rebels leap for cover. (Another Pause to ask players what exactly the adventurers are doing.)

The wagon was aimed well and lands squarely amidships (pause). However, it is traveling at such a speed that it performs a bouncing skid across the deck, hits the rail on the far side, and crashes over it into the river, disintegrating as it goes.

*For Hero Wars:*  
Any adventurers that didn't specify taking cover must resist difficulty 19 with any agility skill, or find themselves in the path of this wagon.  
Complete or Major Victory – avoid the wagon easily  
Minor Victory – avoid the wagon, but only through sheer luck  
Marginal Victory/Defeat – clipped by flying fragments for 2 Hurts.  
Minor Defeat - clipped by flying fragments for 4 Hurts.  
Major Defeat – clipped by the wagon, and Injured.  
Complete Defeat – swept along by the wagon and smashed into the side of the Cradle. Dying.

*For RuneQuest:*  
Any adventurer that didn't specify taking cover and rolls 10 on a D10 will find themselves in the path of this wagon, and must make a Dodge or Jump. If they fail, they take D10+10HP crushing damage to total HP.

Anyone perusing the wreckage will see broken timbers, floating ropes and spars, a few floating dead broo, and a mere handful of injured broo thrashing around in the water. The few broo remaining on the bluff roar and cry in frustration.

**c. Floating tower**

The Cradle winds through a few small rocky outcrops before entering the wider floodplain.





Immediately, the lookouts can see, a key-mile or so ahead, some kind of construction in the river. Using magic that aids sight, or as it draws closer, it can be made out as a great wooden scaffold built on a huge raft, moored by ropes into the center of the river. For broo work (yes it is them again), it is remarkable, and seems sturdy indeed. There are no features on its sides, other than a crude ladder, but on top is platform onto which are crowded at least two dozen armed and slaving broo of different types. (Anyone who scans with magic can make out Rhino, Bison, Crocodile, Rubble Runner, as well as the regular goat broo. Several of them carry large coils of rope.) Along the riverbank, many other normal broo (perhaps 200 in all) wait, armed to the teeth, and chomping at the bit.

(Pause to ask players what they wish to do. This time this is actually crucial. If they think to ask Nemolayope, she may suggest sending the few remaining Cradle elementals ahead to try and break up the raft. The adventurers may think of this themselves also, or of another way to destroy the raft, but remember they don't have much time, only a few minutes before they reach it.)

*If the raft is not destroyed before they reach it, the Cradle will crash into it, and the tower tips towards the deck. It is high enough that it will certainly clear the bulwarks and deposit its foul cargo on deck. Roll D20:*

- 1-8: Tower deposits its load well, and a fight ensues, with adventurers facing two broo each whilst other rebels are fighting broo too. Around 20-30 broo gain the Cradle.
- 9-12: Tower tips left and only nine broo succeed in their leaps to get aboard. The rest fall screaming into the river.
- 13-16: Tower tips right, otherwise as 9-12
- 17-18: Tower tips far left (see destroyed raft below)
- 19-20: As 17-18, except tower tips far right

*If the raft is destroyed by elementals (or by other means with results adapted from the following), the elementals race forwards; they can be viewed as churning wakes with no visible cause. The water in front of the raft becomes extremely choppy. The broo on the banks become alarmed, and several step forward and begin casting spells. For a couple of minutes, there seems to be no change, but then, as the Cradle draws close, the*

great logs of the raft can be seen to be splitting apart, the ropes and vines tying them together are bursting. It will be touch and go. (Roll dice here for effect!)

Almost at the last moment, the raft disintegrates. Deprived of its stable base, the tower suddenly tilts and sinks, toppling dramatically. However, it does fall vaguely towards the Cradle and several broo try heroic leaps onto the foredeck (against Difficulty 12W for Hero Wars).

**For Hero Wars: Broo**  
*Significant Abilities:* Tough 1W, Ugly 15.  
 Bison (three of these): Jump 19, Close Combat 16W^2 (shortsword and horns), tough hide ^2.  
 Rhino (two of these): Jump 15, Close Combat 12W^4 (spear and horn), tough hide ^4.  
 Crocodile (one): Jump 2W, Close Combat 14W^5 (spear and bite), tough hide ^3  
 Goat (three): Jump 8W, Close Combat 8W 8W^3 (spear), shield and hide ^2

**For RuneQuest: Broo**  
 Bison (three of these): Jump 25%  
 Rhino (two of these): Jump 20%  
 Crocodile (one): Jump 30%  
 Goat (three): Jump 35%

Jarang leads his group (the players' Heroes) into the foray, other rebels will of course aid them as required.

### Appendix 3: Extra details for the Cradle Interior.

The section of Deck B that is visible through the transparent section of Deck A can be seen to be overgrown with tall grass that is 2-3 feet high. (Pinching races along a furrow he has created, and other tracks indicated that other beings must wander around down here. Away from the sunlight that filters past the awning the grass is sparse and yellow.)

#### a. Deck B – pp 150-153

**B1** - This is an empty room in the official scenario. In this version it contains wooden disks in three stacks of 8. The disks are four feet in diameter, and 6" thick; each pile is a different color, black, white, and red. All will radiate magic if detected. The way to use them is to stand upon one and call on the spirit within.





**For Hero Wars:**

If a character can beat 12W with any suitable ability (6W if an animist, and 2W if a shaman) they gain the effect. The effect of each disk can only be called once per 24 hrs, and a person can only gain one such benefit in a day. The black discs bestow Tough 15 (or +5 to Tough), the white discs bestow 'Heal Self Beforehand' 16W, and the red discs bestow Strong 15 (or +5 to Strong).

**For RuneQuest:**

Expending 1MP will activate the effect: red disks cast Shimmer 3 on the user, white disks increase MOV by 3, and black disks increase STR by half again. The duration is always the user's POW in minutes, and the effect of each disk can only be called once per 24 hrs.

**B2** –As well as the official details, there are also five giant scrolls written upon in Auld Wyrnish. To read them, at least three people are required: two to unroll and one to read. This is a tough job unless more people, or heavy objects, are also employed.

- i) A story about Arachne Solara's creation of the Universe (HW: adds 2 to Myths of Glorantha ability; RQ: +5%).
- ii) A quaint story about a talking rock (perhaps you need to be a giant?).
- iii) A description of the creatures of the Rockwood Mts.: lizards, trolls, giant birds, elves and more (sort of an *Eye Spy* book of little bitty animals).
- iv) The story of Thog the giant, who went down to Prax to wreak vengeance on the City that had dared to begin capturing Cradles again. It is written in oddly dispassionate perspective, and may give insight into the manner in which giants think.
- v) A map of Dagori Inkarth (use Dagori Inkarth Map).

**B3** – (see Scenario) – Also a 10m long giant's cudgel is here. (In truth see Drastic: Prax p99. This is Tada's Cudgel, and any follower of Waha, or of a deity acceptable to Waha - including Orlanth the Little Brother - may sacrifice for the magical ability 'Crushing Blow' (HW: 1W; RQ: 'Crush' Rune Spell). This item is hugely valuable to the nomads and also acts as an altar to Waha.) The other three scene spheres (not described in the original scenario) are:

- i) Mirrorsea Bay, glimmering in the sun of Fire Season. Islands and boats can be seen, and the City of Wonders in the distance
- ii) Caladralland – an enormous volcano, endlessly spewing lava
- iii) The Block – standing proud above the Praxian plains – tiny birds (griffins) circle above it

**B4** – Entry via the huge doors is simplest. This area is foliated as described, which makes travel slow, except for the outer track worn by Pinchining. Pinchining will, of course, be seen at regular intervals rolling past.

**B5/B6** – Also foliated around the edges, but central path worn by Pinchining.

**B7** – Central section of foliage worn clear by the Piglings (description p44) and Blorn (pp44/45). The Piglings merely loiter around Blorn when not at work, so they may be sleeping here. Blorn's work mostly consists of moving things around, so this space is more worn. Probably he will be first encountered here simply murmuring to the piglings and scratching them behind the ears.

**B10** – Piles of archaic silver pieces. They are illusory and will disappear when taken from Cradle, or when baby dies. Also in here is an enormous needle made out of silver (2m long), and three huge rolls of silver thread. The needles are magical and can be instructed to mend or create (giant) garments, providing the raw material is around. A magical ability must overcome 6W activate one (RQ: POW 11), after which they will perform the whole job at high speed, by attaching to a piece of thread and flying into action. The thread must be within normal spell casting distance to function. If difficulty 6W is beaten for each command, the user can order unusual things done, like 'Sew those soldiers to the ground!' (Two soldiers will be sewn per command. RQ: D3) Or "Tie this thread to that tree across the ravine!" Or "Wrap that group of broo tightly together!" etc. The needle is as heavy as a small lance or large spear, but is extremely tough (19W). If one hand is used to secure a hold through the eye, it can be used as a spear after a little practice, and damages at ^5 (RQ: +2). If its magic is dispelled, it will reactivate at the next dawn. The thread is virtually unbreakable rope (Tough 3W3), but the needle can snap off exactly what it needs. Each bobbin holds 115m of thread.







It can be cut with magical blades and has the weight of regular rope. It is fireproof.

**b. Deck C – p153**

**C2** – As well as the ‘rug’ (see scenario), there are also five barrels in here, each marked with a large elemental rune. Each contains a raw element (darkness, fire, water, earth, and air). What the giants intended for them is unknown (for the child somehow to learn about the elements?). They can be used to summon elementals from (simply by opening them), but are awkward to carry around. Possibly they could be sold to an associated Temple for a huge sum or in exchange for favors. The elemental will obey anyone whose cult is tied to the appropriate Rune, who opens the barrel. (In both playtests, one or more of these barrels were used at critical moments.)

**C3** – Ladders and archaic gold coins (see scenario) There is also a wooden statue of a man, 1.5m tall. Examination shows he has pointed ears, a crown, and wears a loincloth made of leaves. (He is High King Elf.) If this statue is placed in a garden, that area (up to half a key-mile in diameter) will triple its fertility at no extra cost to the soil. The statue will shrink to a quarter of its size if grasped by a worshipper from a cult attached to the Life, Plant, or Sun/Fire runes. It has the Life/Fertility Rune engraved on its base, and can be used once per day by a cultist as just mentioned as a Heal Injury 14W matrix. (RQ: Heal Body matrix at the cost of just 1MP.)

**C4** – Along this entire wall is a carved fresco, showing giants kicking Robcradle down.

**C5** – Along this entire wall is a carved fresco, showing dwarves, giants, elves and trolls all associating as if at a great market in a mountain pass. (Careful study may show this to be Gonn Orta’s Castle a long time ago.)

**C6** – See scenario, and also here is a gold statue of a dragonewt, 1.5m tall. It carries no weapons and has its palms spread wide. It has the Issaries (Trade/Communication) Rune carved into it, underneath the base. If someone attempts to remove it from this vicinity, the toucher(s) must attempt overcome 11W resistance (RQ: attune to POW 16). On a success, it shrinks to one fifth its original size and weighs only as much as a sword. The holder (it may be in a backpack or specially

adapted sling etc) finds that they can automatically speak Auld Wyrnish at 12 (RQ: 25%) and read and write it at 14 (RQ: 40%). This does not mean that dragonewts will automatically be best friends with the holder.

**c. Deck D – pp 153-155**

**D5** – Passageway down center (beneath baby) Along the walls are huge (1m tall) carvings of all the known Runes (except Chaos), plus a few more. Once every day, an Initiate (or higher) in a cult tied to one of the Runes can touch one and have all their magic from that cult be enhanced by +4 for the following day (RQ: have all their MP restored), OR can touch the Life Rune and have any wounds healed.

**D9** - Storage, as scenario. Also in here are piles of gems, hidden amongst which are several crystals. (See Elder Secrets to determine type.) There may also be one or more pieces of Truestone.

**D10** – See p55 for this large room, entered only from below. As well as the scenario details, there are small blind runners in the tunnels, and in the central room is a large nest made of huge multi-colored feathers. In both playtests, Nemolayope’s character was that of a kind-hearted, and erotically-overcharged, stereotypically zany west coast type, luring (or kidnapping) one or more adventurers to her nest, to zap them with her Seduction enchantments. She also turned out to have a taste for the exotic! This was always the most fun before the Players knew what was there, when the first character failed to return from her tunnels. (Visions of ‘Aliens’ made everyone very nervous!)

**d. E – The Bilges – p 155**

This is a place to duck and hide. The fungus forest reaches the roof and many of the growths have trunks thicker than trees. It is a large area and a total maze, shrouded in shadows, mire, and noxious spores. If the trolls are hiding here, they have Healing magic for anyone suffering spore effects. There could also be a Vorulan Priest who lives here and tends the forest if that adds to the fun, especially if the adventurers go investigating well before the rebels board, or if they decide to hide here. The Vorulan will be able to communicate with Nemolayope if necessary.







## Appendix 5: To Giantland

Use this appendix to attach the Cradle Scenario after 'To Giantland' from the Borderlands campaign, as an unconventional means of returning the adventurers to Prax. This is likely to be the least relevant section of the whole piece, and is positioned at the end so that it can be easily left out of the printing if you so desire.

### Introduction

In playtest, this rather contrived link worked very well geographically, but in official terms is a few years out, historically. The actual reason I gave for the adventurers to be asked by Gonn Orta to go aboard the Cradle was that the experienced Rebel Warriors he was awaiting hadn't turned up. (The adventurers passed their bodies, slain by a nomad warparty, at an oasis on the way up.) I elaborated this idea when I ran the extended scenario a second time recently, using Rune level Rebels as the adventurers. They were all outlaw characters (mostly Sartarites) living in safe houses around Pavis County, and were summoned to Garhound by a secret sign that was delivered by messenger.

At Geo's in Garhound (see 'Sun County', *Avalon Hill 1992*) they waited until late, and eventually some Bison Riders came in out of the desert. One of these was Argrath Whitebull himself (pause for gunslinger background music, and much tobacco spitting) who explained that the rebels were cultivating friendship with the giants, and that Gonn Orta had asked for some champions to be sent to his Castle as quickly as possible. The adventurers, of course, are the only highly competent rebels available at short notice, and so were instructed to go straight to Far End and make contact with the Oasis People's Chief Elder, using a code phrase. The Elder would then introduce them to a guide who would take them to the Fort. Argrath declined to tell the adventurers what the mission would be, stating that it was better they didn't know this information and could therefore not ever be able to give it away.

You can devise any introduction that suits your campaign, although, due to its high level of fatalities, running the scenario as a one-off for cameo characters has also got to be a possibility. Parts of the following text assume the use of fairly powerful rebel adventurers, and may have to be adjusted if you are not following that idea. With this assumption in mind, Argrath remains

'Argrath' throughout this piece, although he is commonly referred to in the original scenario text as "Garrath", since his Pavis alias is "Garrath Sharpsword".

### 1. To Giantland

Using the scenario of the same name from the 'Borderlands' campaign (*Chaosium 1982, or the third scheduled Moon Design reprint*), or your own ideas, take the adventurers from Garhound to Gonn Orta's Castle.

I was intrigued by the idea on the Glorantha Digest that Far End has a Lunar fort, a total dead-end position strongly resembling the British Fort from the bizarre English movie "Carry On Up the Khyber". The adventurers arrive, equipped with their code-phrase "I see the Red Moon shines tonight", and eager for the reply "Although it may not shine forever". However, the Elder has recently been taken into custody by the Lunars, as a suspected rebel sympathizer. He was seen by a patrol talking furtively with a group of Bison Riders – actually Argrath's agents – last week.

The first challenge the adventurers face is to get him, or the information he carries, out of the Fort, and make the rendezvous with the guide. What the adventurers do not know is that several key-miles to the north of Far End a small group of rebel Llama Riders are waiting. One of these is the guide and the others are just bodyguarding him until contact is made.

### 2. Far End Oasis

*The objectives of the characters at Far End are simple, to find the Elder, get him to guide them (or give directions) to the Mountain Guide who will take them to Gonn Orta's Castle, and to survive the raid on Far End Fort by the rhino nomads. The objective of the Storyteller is to illustrate Lunar decadence, inefficiency and insanity.*





As the adventurers get closer, they will see the oasis up against a rocky hillside. Amongst the large stand of date palms and banana trees, they can see the huts of the local oasis people. Closer to the cliff are the tents and beasts of a nomad tribe (ostriches can be made out as they get even closer or use Farsee). A short distance away from the oasis is a rectangular Lunar Fort of the desert variety. (As they get closer they can see that this is in a poor state of repair, and masons and carpenters are trying to patch it up). For game cohesion, it makes sense that they arrive at the oasis sometime in the late afternoon, giving them time to discover the fate of the Elder, and be invited to the dinner. Whilst some might think it odd that rebel characters would be invited to dinner with the Lunars, remember that Kurtz is raving mad beneath a thin veneer of sanity, and that his word is law at the Fort.

**a. The Scene**

**Fort Walls:** There are three dead Lunar soldiers crucified to the walls and two older skeletons. Beneath each one, chalked on the wall itself, is a Pelorian motif that reads ‘Disobeyed Orders’.

**b. The Characters**

**THE NATIVES**

**The Ostrich Riders:** These wanderers will have little to say to outsiders, they are willful savages, but not murderers or desperadoes. If approached with nomad protocol, they may trade some meat for metal goods or money. If anyone does have a way to make closer contact, these nomads will warn against tarrying at the Fort, and say there is much bad medicine here, and the Lunars at the Fort are all either mad or doomed.

**The Oasis People:** Some of them speak Trade, there is a population of maybe 60. They are rather aloof, and speak in riddles about things like the desert sands. They do not go into the Fort and only laugh if it is suggested that they might. They worship a local spirit of stars and water, which they define in their own unusual way. Careful questioning might confirm that not only is their Elder in the Fort (having been taken there about five days ago) but there are also several Oasis Folk who work as servants in the Fort.

**The Oasis Elder** – Despite being imprisoned, this old man is in good humor. Everything that happens is merely the ‘will of the desert winds’. He has only been associating with rebels due to the heroic persuasion methods of Argrath, who has promised to provide the oasis with permanent protection should the rebels succeed. Even so, Argrath needed to double-talk until he was blue in the face before convincing the Elder that if all things were one with the winds then the Elder might as well choose actions that benefit his Clan.

**THE LUNARS**

**Lunar Grunts:** This is a ‘hell’ posting. The grunts are forbidden from discussing their grievances with outsiders, so they will simply be unfriendly and perhaps a little sickly and nervous-looking. If someone succeeds with a friendly approach, they may learn that the fort was established only in 1613, and has been over-run three times since then with almost total fatalities (unless patrols happened to not be in the Fort at the time).

**Lunar Sergeant Nalez:** Nalez will be the officer the adventurers are referred to. He is officious and demands to know their business and will take them to the Fort Records Officer, Olbaji Penman a slightly camp Scribe.

**Olbaji Penman** – An Irripi Ontor Initiate, it is his job to make them fill in forms in triplicate about their purpose for visiting, traveling through, and what they want at the Fort. They cannot progress further without doing this, and will be watched by a dozen soldiers at all times. Olbaji is officious and, whilst never rude, is a most unhelpful bureaucrat (protecting his own skin by following the letter of his orders, just hoping to survive until he gets back to Pavis). He will want to know everyone’s name, cult, cult status, and reason for being in the Fort and the local area.

**Commander Kurtz** – The Fort Commander, sent here due to madness and an embarrassing Chaos Feature. He is unavailable today, and only will speak to them at dinner later this evening. If the role-playing is gifted and they see him earlier, he will insist that they attend his dinner that evening. Kurtz should be played as an eccentric and egoistic imperialist in the formal British Raj style, and is from an old Carmanian family.





He is Illuminated and has the Chaos Feature that he can breathe Fire at will (1x/5MR, 15ft range, 3MP, Damage D6+4 – against lowest armor value only). Also his eyes glow slightly silver in the dark.

For *Hero Wars*:

**Commander Kurtz**

*Significant Abilities:* Jump 14W, Listen 11W, Running 7W, Scan Terrain 18W.

*Affinities:* Chaos 8W, Combat 17W, Madness 19, Military Magic 15W, Warlord 13W.

*Combat Abilities:* Scimitar and Shield Fighting 14W2.

*Chaos Feature:* Breathe Flame 16W.

*Flaws:* Divorced from Reality 2W2, Enraged if Opposed 10W.

*Relationships:* Initiate of Yanafal Tarnils 16W, Initiate of Rufelza 5W.

*Equipment:* Scimitar (enchanted to ^7), Chain Armor with Shield (enchanted to give ^8AP).

**Others:**

Ludya Kurtz – The commander’s fawning and deluded wife.

Chaplain Zogir - an Initiate of the Seven Mothers. Irritatingly pious.

Chief Cartographer Bylidd – an Initiate of Irripi Ontor (another imperial pip-squeak).

Minor Officers – Initiates of Seven Mothers, two are female, four are male (none will ever admit that anything is wrong at the Fort).

Grunts – Lay Members or Initiates of Yanafal of the Seven Mothers (63 in all).

Fort Staff – a mixture of slaves from nomads and oasis people. All are downtrodden and depressed but doing their best to show a good face. They don’t look well-treated (and aren’t).

**c. Events**

**The Dinner:**

It is a Carmanian minor Holy Day, and the Commander has decided to celebrate with a dinner for the Officers and invited guests (the adventurer party) only. Attending, are the dozen important folk mentioned so far, plus two half-drunk oasis women who are the lady-friends of Bylidd and Nalez. There are also three rather badly-off looking Pelorian minstrels. The Commander will start off with a toast to the ancient Carmanian spirits who are being honored, and all will join in. Throughout the

meal, it is impolite to talk across the table (as will be told to anyone who tries). It is also impolite to leave, and an officer will escort anyone who does, for whatever reason, and ensure that they return. They may only address business issues to the Commander after dinner when drinks are served (and will be told this if they try otherwise). Causing trouble should be discouraged, with the players’ attention drawn to the Rune Level Kurtz and the various Lunar Initiates who would defend his person with their lives, as well as the 60+ soldiers outside. However, some strong parties may just decide to massacre everyone at some point, in which case you should have a few standard Lunars drawn up.

First Course – Praxian Quail, served with herbs, Drinks – Llama Yogurt Drink

The servants fawn and hang around passing drinks and mopping any mess, as well as serving.

Second Course – Ostrich Roasts with potatoes, Drinks – Carmanian White Wine

It is as they tuck into the second course that a great crashing noise will be heard and some running about and shouting outside. None of the regulars will pay attention, and if the adventurers press – supporting characters will not – they will be told “It’s just the nomads attacking the Fort again. They do it every week more or less.” The noise will die down for a little while. One of the junior officers will seem marginally concerned and ask if he may be excused to go and check on the Watch, he will not refer to an attack. The Commander will refuse politely, saying he is sure that all is well. PAUSE to let adventurers consider what to do, and maybe chat amongst themselves. As the second course progresses, the noises will begin again, plus some screaming and strange magical noises like spells are being cast. The junior officer will apologize for raising the matter again, but “I feel it might be a good idea to check on the Watch this evening, keep them on their toes.” He will look worriedly sidelong at the adventurers as the Commander considers it. After a pause, the Commander says: “Oh very well.” The officer walks briskly but calmly to the door, but after it closes behind him, they hear him run hell for leather down the corridor. The Commander turns to the Sergeant and says “Make a note to have that man disciplined for running in the officers’ quarters.” The Sergeant nods and writes in his little book.





If any adventurers ask to leave, the Commander will absolutely refuse them permission. After all, one person has left already and this is a special occasion.)

Third Course – Llama Haunches and Oasis Greens, served with a local wine.

As they tuck into this, the noises outside have clearly become a battle, with things periodically thudding against the Fort walls. A Spirit comes into the room through the wall, obviously a nomad wraith of some kind and attacks an officer, who wrestles about in Spirit Combat, before a Lune also comes in and attacks it, and both spirits flee through the wall. The officer slumps forwards into his dinner and is comatose. A colleague pulls him back upright and makes apologies. The Fort Sergeant now makes his excuses to do his security rounds and leaves the room. Once again, absolute refusal meets any other requests to leave. However, the commander may appear a little stressed if anyone makes a Special Scan. Before they can finish this course, or even get halfway, the sounds outside change – firstly a terrific crash and the sound of beasts – Rhinos having at last broken in through the gate – followed shortly by fierce fighting just outside the building. At last, the Commander leaps up, his grip broken, smoke coming out of his nostrils and eyes glowing silver. “These interruptions are intolerable!” He strides out onto the balcony and uses Rune Magic to attack the invaders, also using his flame breath. The other soldiers at the table race off to take command of the troops, leaving the adventurers and the Irripi Ontor guys and the two inebriated oasis women, all looking blankly.

**The Battle** – Massed Rhino Nomads take the Fort. Eventually a Rhino Shaman kills the Commander (unless the adventurers get him). Adventurers fleeing through the house will have to make Listens and Hides from approaching Rhino Raiders or else do battle with them, or surrender claiming neutrality. At last the fighting dies down, with most Lunars killed, a few taken prisoner, and a few escaped. The adventurer party must convince “Army Rhino’s Bastard”, the rebel leader, that they were merely toadying to the Lunars to get supplies for their expedition, and a gift to the Rhino Chief would be advised. If they mess up Orate or Bargain rolls, they will all be taken prisoner for their case to be dealt with later.

If the adventurers attack the nomads and mess up badly, have them overwhelmed by Rhino Warriors, and forced to surrender with severe subdual damage. (*If you are running this variation on, from the ‘To Giantland’ Scenario in Borderlands, Army will try and confiscate the eggs, but can be threatened by mentioning Gonn Orta’s probable disappointment.*) If all goes well, however, Army will allow them to resupply. If the worst comes, then a Lunar relief column will arrive by surprise, and besiege the fort again. The adventurer party will be freed along with Lunar prisoners, in exchange for a two-hour head start for the surviving Rhino Riders. (The Lunars will offer this deal, as it does not feel like a nomad kind of option.)

**Rescuing, or Communicating with, the Oasis Elder** – Most likely, this man can be approached during the siege. Depending on the way things are going, the adventurers might sneak him away and protect him, or might manage to get him killed. (In the latter option it is preferable if he can pass on the whereabouts of the Llama scout before expiring.)

### 3. Gonn Orta’s Castle

*The castle itself is detailed in the new (second) Moon Design book “Griffin Mountain”, which is now (April 2001) available from Wizard’s Attic and Moon Designs themselves (rmeints@ford.com). It is also, of course, detailed in the original Chaosium (1982) book of the same name.*

Chakeye the Llama Rider has been twice before to Gonn Orta’s Castle, and will lead them happily. If you like, there are opportunities along the way through the mountains to devise additional encounters. (I used a haunted castle ruin, and a brush with dwarves who wanted to steal the party’s pack animals.)

Once at the castle, Gonn Orta (despite the extreme urgency of the situation) is busy thinking, and cannot be disturbed. (This is an unashamed manipulation to have the adventurers spend a day or so at the Castle, interacting with the various denizens.) Eventually, possibly whilst they are drinking or dining in Greatness Hall, the ground will shake and the roof of the hall is lifted off. Gonn Orta will peer at them for a few moments and then replace the roof.





Shortly afterwards, Boshbisil will arrive and announce that Gonn Orta wishes to speak with them

To 'speak' with them, Gonn Orta lifts them in his hand from the market area to his eye-level. Then he uses multi-Mindspeech to question them as to their motivations for helping him. He trusts them anyhow, as he trusts Argrath, and will explain that for the first time in seven centuries the giants are launching a Cradle from the Boathouse Ruins. Apparently, the baby is particularly important to Gonn Orta himself, and so he has gone against the wishes of other giants and asked Argrath to provide some strong warriors to protect it as it passes down river.

Gonn Orta does not know what Argrath has planned for later, but suspects that others will join the Cradle when it reaches Prax. For now, the launch has been delayed long enough, and he wishes them to be ready to leave immediately. If the adventurers ask what dangers they might face on the way to Prax, Gonn Orta will tell them that not only the giants have long memories, but otherwise give nothing away. (He is, after all, a strange and inscrutable non-human.)

Gonn Orta will put the adventurers back down, and then give the Mindspeech equivalent of a high whistle, which shortly brings a huge Roc flying down into the valley. The giant reaches out, and lifts off a section of the cliff-face. Behind it is a giant-sized equivalent of a storage space. He pulls a huge harness out and straps it on the back of the Roc. The adventurers see that it is a device designed to seat six people and their baggage. They are asked to strap themselves in, and may climb aboard using rope-ladders. In the harness already are several hides, perhaps designed as insulation from the mountain air?

Once they are ready to go, Gonn Orta will hand them a silver hoop about 6ft in diameter and suggest that they secure it to the platform they are on, as they should secure themselves with the ropes available. He informs them that the Roc will fly above the Cradle and stay in place. They must then give the hoop to the bird, letting him take it in his beak, and the bird will let them get on board. Finally, Gonn Orta warns them that the Cradle is well defended, and that should they leave it they will not be able to get back on board. Magic, he tells them, cannot pass through

the defenses either way, and missiles, life-forms and spirits cannot pass inwards through the defenses.

The Roc will take off carefully (which is still a bone-jarring nightmare as far as the adventurers are concerned) by running down the valley. It will climb slowly, and then fly west, skirting around the mountains rather than flying over them. It is worth describing the awesome views this gives of the Rockwoods, and the freezing temperatures they experience.

#### 4. Boathouse Ruins

After only a few hours in flight, the adventurers see a small lake ahead of them, at the edge of which is a town. Closer observation reveals that it is a ruined town and that there are people standing in it, and that a boat appears to have just been launched. Observation closer still shows that it is of giant-size proportions and that the people are giants and the boat is shaped like a baby's Cradle. The time of day is rapidly approaching dusk.

The giants walk back to the mountainside, and enter a door that closes behind them. By now, the Cradle is moving out across the lake, and the Roc flies over to it. It flaps its wings to stay above it and cries out. When the adventurers pass it the hoop, it carefully drops the hoop onto the deck of the Cradle. As it falls, the adventurers observe that just before it hits, it strikes an energy barrier around the Cradle and this becomes visible as a coruscating sheen for a moment, then collapses. The Roc lands gently (for him) on the main deck, although the passengers perceive this as a great jolt. It then waits for them to disembark. Gonn Orta told the bird not to delay in case the protections come back on again sooner than expected, and to present as slim a chance as possible that anyone will observe them boarding. Consequently, the great bird springs into the air as soon as they have disembarked, and flies away low over the water. Only a few minutes after the bird flies away, the crackle of magic accompanies a momentarily visible sheath of air around the Cradle. The defenses are active once more.

*Now continue at '3' on Page 2 of this piece.*

