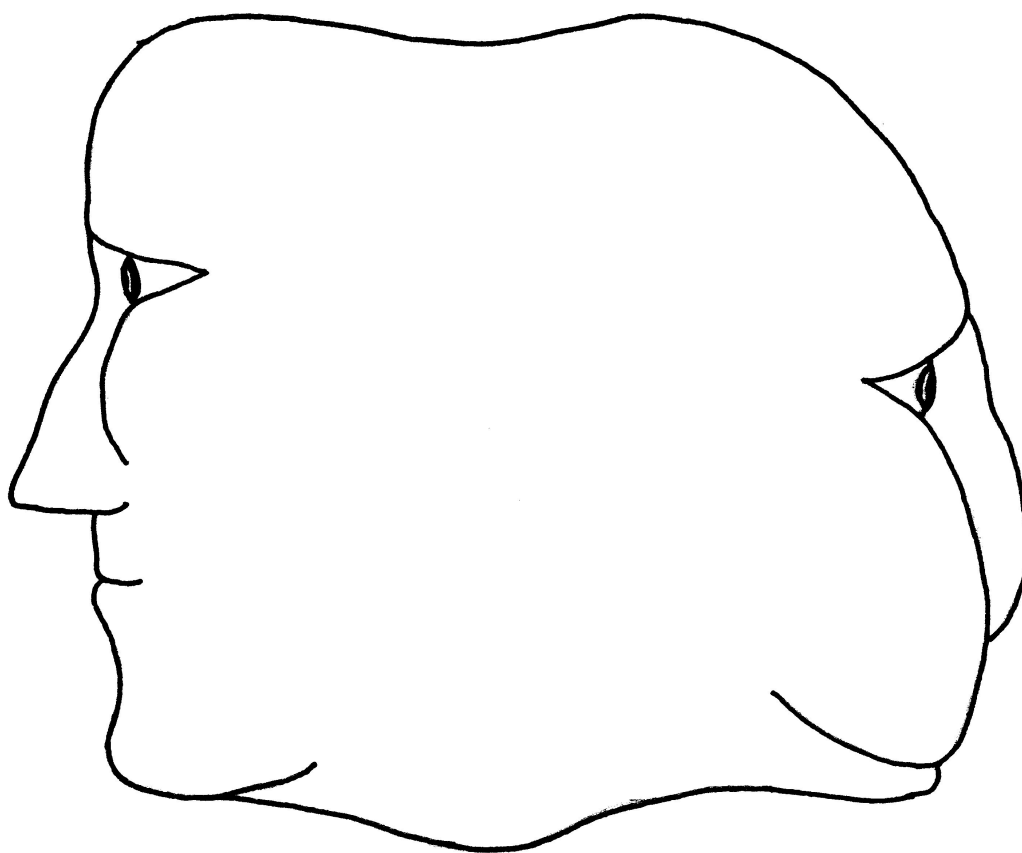


# WANDERER



Øivind Stengrundet

# INTRODUCTION

*The wind swept sharp across the ship's deck, and Gregar was forced to hold on to the railing to avoid falling. The green cloak billowed out behind him as the ship cut slowly through the white waves. He stared intensely towards the little island growing closer out on the ocean, still unable to see anything but the twin mountain peaks rising above the waves. He turned to the dark-skinned Sailor who stood, stone-faced, in the middle of the deck. "Are you sure this is Shinarvon?" The Sailor directed his gaze towards Gregar, and without emotion he answered "I'm sure, Wanderer. But are you sure you want to go there?" Gregar faced the island again, and swallowed cautiously. Everything had seemed very safe and simple as he left the Library, but now he felt doubt stirring in his guts. Did he really want to go there? He thrust his right hand into his pocket, and felt the cool touch of the stone hidden there. Yes, he was sure. This was what he was trained for, and he wouldn't fail. He was a Wanderer, and a Wanderer never fails.*

It is now time to put the person you thought you were aside. Wanderer is a roleplaying game, sort of an interactive book, where the players are the book's protagonists, whereas the gamemaster controls the surroundings and the antagonists. It's time to assume an alternative identity, and try to manoeuvre the many challenges of the planet Terrustor.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED?

In order to enter the world of Terrustor, you first and foremost need someone with whom to play, in addition to this compilation. You will also require 2 ordinary, six-sided dice, in addition to something to write on. Last, but far from least, you'll need your imagination.

Once you have all of this, one of you need to assume the role of gamemaster (GM), while the rest become players. Since you're reading this, one can suspect you to be the GM, and so you will be addressed as such. The players need only read pages 3-5, and perhaps the chapter on the planet towards the end, whereas you, the GM, needs to read it all through. The adventure at the end is for the GM's eyes ONLY, and must not be read by the players.

All that remains now is to wish you good luck, and enjoy your trip into the world of Terrustor.

# THE WANDERERS

*I'm a Wanderer.*

*When the first magical storm swept across Terrustor, dividing the islands and changing them, our fellowship was formed. To preserve the knowledge of everything that was.*

*Each storm creates a new picture of reality. We are the memory of the world. Adventurers, sailors, warriors, wizards and librarians. We watch, travel and write down. Intervene with the history of the planet, and form it in line with our ideals;*

*Each conscience holds immeasurable value.  
Words, thoughts and language are valuable – in themselves.  
A safe future is built on an illuminated past.*

*A Wanderer always helps another. We know each other by the green cloaks we bear, our thoughtful eyes, our common tongue.*

*I'm a Wanderer, and I have no home. This is my name, my calling, my life.*

*And the storm is building.*

The planet of Terrustor is a planet in constant change. Islands sprout from the ocean while others sink and disappear. Species and races are born and die, and the present changes into forgotten history. Luckily, there are those among us who work to counter history being forgotten. They call themselves the Wanderers.

## HISTORY

Some 800 years ago, the first magical storm swept across Terrustor. It took the planet's inhabitants by surprise, and the destruction was massive. People reacted in many ways: some thought it was punishment from a higher power, and started praying to gods they thought existed. Some thought it to be a very powerful, yet ordinary, storm, and continued their lives unperturbed. Some thought the end had come, and took their own lives in frustration and despair. And some saw the storm for what it was – colliding streams of energy that got out of control.

Some of the latter tried to find out exactly what had happened, and why. And so it came to pass that four people simultaneously reached the island Cnāwan, which seemed to be the only island unaffected by the magical storm. There, they formed a fellowship, promising to travel the planet to preserve the knowledge of how the world looked, so that the past would not be lost to coming generations. They named themselves the Wanderers.

Of their first tasks, was to build a library on Cnāwan, as a place to store this knowledge. Thereafter they created, through methods kept secret from all but the inner circle

of Wanderers, the Tears Of Luna, small gems with the ability to store anything spoken to them. These stones would help them remember everything they learned on their travels.

Of the four original Wanderers, only one was a woman; Thelmara Sunbreeze. To avoid the Wanderers becoming too dominated by males, the founders decreed that the Wanderers' highest leader always should be a woman. In addition, Thelmara stayed behind on Cnāwan to teach new wanderers, while the three others went travelling. Since then, only women have lead the Wanderers, and the present leader, Ilmare Nightwatcher, is the 37. in the line. All the leaders have been carved in stone and placed in the Hall of Memories, the very heart of the Library. Here can also be found statues of the three male founders; Mattinor Thoughtweaver, Gundar Silverleaf and Olegievo Windcatcher.

## THE LIBRARY

All the knowledge collected by the Wanderers are stored in their headquarter, situated on the island of Cnāwan. This headquarter is simply known as the Library, and consists of a large number of greater and smaller structures. Here all the teaching of new Wanderers takes place, here the collected knowledge is stored, and here they foresee the planet's future so as to guide evolution towards it. The Library was built nearly 800 years ago, and has since been expanded to cover most of the relatively small island. What little of the island is not covered by buildings, is used to grow some of the food needed by the inhabiting Wanderers. The rest of their food-supply comes through fishing and trade with nearby islands.

The first buildings raised on Cnāwan, were erected through the use of magic, but most of the newer buildings are built by manual labour. Cnāwan is, to the Wanderers' knowledge, the only island on Terrustor protected from the feared magical storms, and as such it's brilliantly suited to store their knowledge. Why this particular island seems unaffected by the storms remains unknown, but the most popular theory says that the high energy levels in the island's foundations works as a repellent towards the storms' energy, causing these to bend off and avoid the island.

## WHO ARE THE WANDERERS?

The Wanderers is a collection of people working towards a common vision: to preserve knowledge of the past, and to guide the planet into a future built on what has passed. The wanderers travel between the islands to observe the world as it stands today, but also to give its inhabitants a friendly push in the "right" direction. However, only a select few know the big picture of the Wanderers' plan; that knowledge is reserved for the high council. Most Wanderers never get to know more than small pieces of this plan, usually during an assignment, although everyone has an inkling as to what it details: To preserve as much of today's multitude as possible, to ensure nothing is lost to the future. What every Wanderer knows, however, as well as most people around Terrustor, are the Wanderers' creed: *"Each conscience holds immeasurable value. Words, thoughts and language are valuable – in themselves. A safe future is built on an illuminated past."*

If the Wanderers believe their actions to be in line with their beliefs, there's virtually no limits to what they will do. They'll intervene stop wars if they believe the war will extinguish a people. At the same time they could just as well start a war, if they thought it would save a people or a species. The Wanderers have also assassinated individuals in order to save many orders, so they are known to take quite drastic measures. However, they are

mainly peaceful in intent, helping people with more mundane matters, such as: Agricultural advice to hunters who have lost their prey, teaching shipmaking to islands who have no contact with the outside world, and removing monsters who threaten villages and island societies. A Wanderer will avoid killing, unless he deems it absolutely unavoidable.

Most Wanderers are selected as very young, although some join as adult, and they get their training at the Library (see above). When they are considered ready, they are given their Wanderer's cloak. This nightgreen cloak is the real symbol of the Wanderers, and they are recognised all over the planet because of it. In addition, each Wanderer is presented with a Tear Of Luna, a small black gem possessing the power to store everything spoken to it. These stones are the Wanderers' tool in storing what knowledge they gain on their journeys. The gems are then brought back to the Library, where all the knowledge is gathered and sorted. Each gem is bonded to one Wanderer, and can only be used by the owner, so that theft will render the stone useless. If the gem is crushed, all its stored knowledge will be lost, and so the Wanderers are trained to destroy the gems rather than have them fall into the wrong hands.

## **WANDERER SQUADS**

A Wanderer is very rarely sent out alone, they usually operate in squads. The members of these squads are selected according to their mission; where they're going, who they'll meet, and what they're supposed to do or discover. Squadmembers are selected in accordance with both skills, knowledge, experience and personality. A squad will usually consist of between 3 and 6 Wanderers.

Regardless of the size of the squad, a leader will always be appointed at the start of the mission, in addition to at least one referrer. The referrers are responsible for recording everything the squad discovers into their Tears Of Luna, and although all members of the group are trained to do this, the referrers have the main responsibility to do so. The leader of the squad will at all times be responsible for decisions that involve the entire squad, such as where to go, who to talk to, whether the squad should split up to cover more ground, and so on. Even though the leaders will always discuss matters with the others, they hold the last word should disagreements occur.

## **DHRALLS AMONG THE WANDERERS**

Ever since its foundation, discussions have emerged as to whether other species than humans should be allowed within the Wanderers. There have been votes several times, but it was only after the dhralls first emerged some 200 years ago that the requirements were loosened. Dhralls were created from humans after a magical storm, and the Wanderers realised that their close kinship with humans demanded that they be given access to the organisation. The rules were altered 140 years ago, making dhralls the only species, apart from humans, allowed into the Wanderers.

Although dhralls have a very low status out among the common humans, they have from the outset been equal among the Wanderers. One of the Wanderers' principles is after all equality, and dhralls now hold positions in all levels among the Wanderers. And although no dhrall has yet been appointed leader of the Wanderers, this remains but a question of time. Wanderer squads are often comprised of both humans and dhralls, quite consciously, to show the world that humans and dhralls are equals.

# YOUR ROLE

It is now time for you to create a role, a sort of alter ego, if you like. This role will represent you in the game world, and is the person you will act to be during play. To help you know and understand this person, we will now look at some steps to help you create your role. As you decide the details around your persona, you should take a note of these on a character sheet. Either you make one yourself, or you can use the one presented a little further out in the rules.

## WHO

So, you're a Wanderer, member of an ancient brotherhood that travels the width and length of the planet Terrustor in order to collect knowledge about the world as it is today. As a Wanderer you may choose to be either a human or a dhrall. If you want to know more about the differences between the two, you should take look at the section on the planet as a whole.

When you're creating your role, you start off with this decision; human or dhrall. Then it's time to come up with a name, so you can present yourself to people you meet along the way. Once you have a fitting name, it's time to move on.

## PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION

Who IS your role, really? How does he behave, what's his attitude towards life? These are issues you have to consider carefully when creating a role. This must be a person you can get under the skin of, making choices as he would, say things like he would, and behave like he would. On the character sheet a space is reserved for you to put down a few short words about "your" personality, in order to make it easier for you to remember who you are at the moment. Perhaps you're afraid of something? Maybe you have an expression you utter frequently? Is there anything you like particularly well? Make a note of it.

Another thing to consider, is why your role ended up a Wanderer. What's your motivation, what make you join this brotherhood? Did your parents abandon you to the Wanderers? Was it a wish to influence the future that made you join? Or was it perhaps a tragedy, leaving you without family, possessions or hope, that drove you into the Wanderers' ranks? Or something else entirely?

These are matters you should think through, and use it to write a short background story on your role: who he is, where he comes from, and what made him a Wanderer.

## SKILLS

The most important thing about your role is now done, insofar as you have decided "your" personality. That is what's visible about your role, and the thing people on the streets and roads of Terrustor notices. However, your role also possesses skills he is more or less adept at. We have divided these into three categories, and it's time to have a look at them:

- [PHYSIQUE]** - Covers strength, dexterity and endurance.
- [PSYCHE]** - In addition to intelligence, also controls magic and willpower.
- [TECHNIQUE]** - A measure of skills with tools and weapons.

As you start out, you get 20 points to distribute freely between these three skills, albeit with two restrictions: Neither skill can have less than 2 points, and neither skill can have more than 10 points. Apart from this, you are free to assign the 20 points as you see fit, but a good idea might be to glance again at your role's personality, in order to know which skill(s) to favour. The assigned points must then be written into your character sheet, where the abbreviations [PH], [PS] and [TE] are used. These abbreviations will also be used during play, as well as throughout the rules.

## **LIFE AND DEATH**

On the character sheet there is a field called [LP]. This is an abbreviation of **[LIFEPOINTS]**, and is a measure of how much damage your role can take before he dies. These points are not assigned, but are calculated like this:

$$\mathbf{[LIFEPOINTS] = [PHYSIQUE] \times 3}$$

Should your [LP] reach 0, you will be rendered unconscious, and if it should fall to -3, either as a result of bleeding or direct damage, your role dies. It might therefore be a good idea to keep an eye on your [LP] total, to avoid going headless into life-threatening situations.

## **POSSESSIONS**

Apart from the clothes he's wearing, including his Wanderer's cloak, your role starts out with only two items: a woollen blanket and his Tear Of Luna. In addition to this, however, he is given 10 trylls, the monetary currency on Terrustor.

This means your role is all done, and you're ready to play. Good luck!

# WANDERER

Name:

Species:

Appearance:

Personality:

PH:

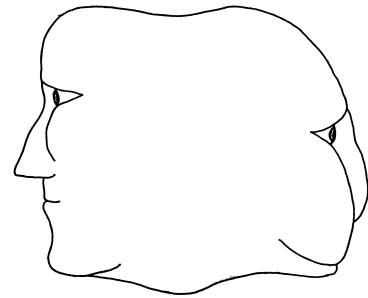
PS:

TE:

LP:

Possessions:

Trylls:



# CHALLENGES

All inhabitants on Terrustor sooner or later bump into tasks that must be overcome, either personal and individual obstacles, against an opponent, or involving their environment. Some of these are dramatic, others involve stretching one's limits according to physical or mental abilities. All of these tasks and conflicts are collectively called **challenges**.

## RESOLUTION

To decide the outcome of these challenges, we use what is called a TEST-ROLL. In order to perform a test-roll, you first need to determine which of your three skills ([PH], [PS] or [TE]) can be used to overcome the challenge. Once this is done, you throw two dice, add them up, and compare them to your relevant skill score. If your roll is equal to or below your skill score, you succeed. Should you roll above your skill score, you fail. The consequences of success or failure will depend on the challenge, as will be discussed later.

## DIFFICULTY

Some challenges are more difficult to resolve than others. Depending on the difficulty on the challenge, the GM can give a modification to your skill score before you make the test-roll. This modification will vary with the degree of difficulty and the type of challenge, but a rough guide is given below.

DIFFICULTY	MODIFICATION
Routine	+1
Easy	0
Medium	-1
Hard	-2 to -3
Very hard	-4 to -5
Extremely hard	-6 to -7

Remember: this modification is applied to the skill score BEFORE the test-roll is made.

## DIFFERENT TYPES

Challenges can, as already mentioned, be divided into several categories. Most types follow the three skills, but some might border between two of them. We will now try to list some common challenges, sorted by skill:

**PHYSIQUE:** This does not include more mundane physical tasks, such as riding a horse, lifting a bucket of water, or climbing a ladder. Rather, these challenges include tasks such as doing acrobatics, lifting heavy objects, jumping chasms, squeezing through narrow openings,

pulling yourself onto outcroppings, scaling a wall, holding your breath for a prolonged period of time, and so on. In short; manoeuvres that stretch the limits of your body, in regards to both strength, dexterity and endurance. But: please note that wrestling is considered a contest, and is covered by the rules for contests (see below).

**PSYCHE:** The most common mental challenge is that of magic, but this is covered by separate rules a little later. But, other challenges are also considered mental: photographic memory (the ability to remember a document or a map after skimming through), perception (seeing details in a picture or a situation that no one else recognises), discovering hidden doors and traps, and so on. But: please note that resisting mental attacks is considered a contest, and is covered by the rules for contests (see below).

**TECHNIQUE:** These challenges do not include armed combat, as this is covered by the combat rules (see below). Technical challenges do however include the ability to use tools, such as: whittling advanced forms, using (relatively) unknown technology, building things from known materials, performing simple surgical procedures (amputation et al), arming and disarming traps, and so on.

As mentioned above, some challenges may turn out to require a combination of two skills. You will then have to perform a test-roll against an average of these two skills (rounding up). As an example, an attempt to build a stone hut (building, heavy lifting) would trigger a test-roll against an average between [PH] and [TE].

## CONTESTS

Some challenges might take the form of a contest, with two opponents competing for the same outcome. If this is the case, both opponents make a test-roll against the relevant skill. Whoever makes his roll by the largest margin wins the contest. Time for an example:

*Arti and Borom are wrestling, and both make a test-roll against their [PH]. Arti rolls a 6, and with a [PH] of 9, this gives him a margin of 3. Borom rolls a 9, and with a [PH] of 8, this gives him a margin of -1. Arti had the largest margin by 4 (3 against -1) and wins the wrestling-match.*

Some conditions (surprise, special situations) might give one of the opponents in a contest modifications to his skill before the roll is made, but this is something the GM must decide prior to each contest.

## COMBAT

Every now and then, some challenges can not be resolved by peaceful means, and so combat ensues. Magic has made much of the violence on Terrastor superfluous, but has unfortunately not eliminated it. And so it is still a fairly common sight to see people armed, both lightly and heavily, around the planet.

If you wish to attack someone, you must make a test-roll against [TECHNIQUE]. If you succeed, you hit, and you throw one die to determine how much damage is done to your opponent. The opponent must then detract this amount from his [LP] total. In a battle the opponents make alternate attacks (the initiator attacks first) until one of them is dead or unconscious, or until they agree to stop.

Please note that unarmed combat only does half the damage, so you have to divide your damage roll by 2 (rounding up) to find the damage inflicted.

# MAGIC

## WHAT

The planet of Terrustor is swept, day and night, by large magical waves. These waves cannot be seen, but they can be felt by all who make contact with them. It's these waves that emit the energy that people may channel to create "magical" effects. Unfortunately, the nature of these waves makes magic somewhat unstable, and so only a few dare to try advanced magic.

Every person on Terrustor is born with the ability to perform magic. To a lesser or greater degree everyone will sooner or later attempt it, and this has to a large extent contributed to the slow evolution of technology on the planet. Magic is frequently used in all aspects of life; housekeeping, agriculture, transport, bureaucracy, and so on. Magic has become an integrated part of people's everyday life.

## HOW

Most anything can be done by magic, and there are no set formulas or spells. Anyone wishing to perform magic need only concentrate on the desired effect, and release the energy through a single word (e.g.: "burn", "dig", "sweep" etc).

In order to use magic, one needs to make a test-roll against [PSYCHE]. If one succeeds, the desired effect occurs. If one should fail, one loses one [LP] as a result of the magical energy backfiring. However, if one is in direct contact with a wave as one performs the magic, one is guaranteed an automatic success.

As with challenges, different types of magic have different levels of difficulty. Depending on the magic attempted, a modification may be given to the magic-user's [PS] before the test-roll is made. This modifications must be considered by the GM In each case, but to give an indication of such modifications, some examples of magic are given in the table below.

DIFFICULTY	MODIFICATION	EXAMPLES OF MAGIC
Routine	+1	Dusting, melting snow, opening regular locks, making beds
Easy	0	Digging earth, lighting wood, boiling water
Medium	-1	Befriend an animal, cause direct damage, finding water
Hard	-2 to -3	Changing appearance temporarily, lifting heavy objects
Very hard	-4 to -5	Burrow through rock, shaping metal, healing injuries
Extremely hard	-6 to -7	Gradually change weather, controlling other persons

Even though one should fail, either through modifications or through unlucky rolls, there is still a small ace up the magic-user's sleeve; if the situation is desperate, one can choose to spend up to 2 [LIFEPOINTS] in order to boost one's [PS]. Each [LP] spent in this matter gives the magic-user +1 to his [PS], and this may be done after one has made the test-roll.

Although magic is nearly limitless, some restrictions apply. Magic can never take away more than 6 (one die) [LP] in direct damage (and so not heal more than 6 (one die) [LP] either). Neither can magic instantly kill a person (unless the victim has less than 6 [LP]), and it can not bring a dead person back to life. In addition, magic cannot lift more weight than 100 times the magic-user's [PS] kg. (in other words, a person with a [PS] of 6 can lift up to 600 kg using magic).

# TERRUSTOR

## THE PLANET

Terrustor is a planet without any large bodies of land. Instead, it is a water planet, covered in myriads of smaller and larger islands. This has led to a widespread use of boats and ships, and these come in all sizes and shapes. But, despite this, there have never been made a lot of accurate maps charting the oceans. The reasons for this are the unpredictable currents that run through the deeper parts of the ocean. The only ones who brave the vast open seas, are the mysterious Sailors, mute humans who communicate through telepathy. No one knows where they come from, or who they are, but they traverse the oceans in large crewless ships obviously driven by magic. They charge reasonable prices for transport, and they never get caught by the deceptive currents. They also seem to hold the Wanderers in high esteem, as they never charge the Wanderers more than one tryll apiece to transport them.

Terrustor is circled by two moons; the red Luna and the white Seolfor, but of which follow similar orbits. Luna rises first, giving the planet a “Red hour” before Seolfor rises. Then, after Luna sets, Seolfor provides a “White hour” before the sun rises.

The thing which sets Terrustor apart, are the forceful waves of energy sweeping the planet. These waves emit the energy that its inhabitants are able to channel into “magic”. These waves are normally quite slow and stable, but around every 100<sup>th</sup> year, a magical storm brews. These storms cause violent eruptions of energy, capable of altering or destroying both life and landscapes. The last such storm took place 96 years ago, and people have started preparing for the next storm, which could come at literally any time now.

## THE PEOPLE

Terrustor is mainly home to two civilized species: Humans and dhralls. Humans are the elder of these species, having lived on the planet for thousands of years, while the dhralls were created by a magical storm just short of 200 years ago. In addition to these two, some islands sport other sentient species, but these islands are quite rare. We will now examine humans and dhralls, to compare similarities and differences.

**Humans:** Humans come in all sizes and shapes: light and dark, tall and short, stocky and skinny. Their ability to adapt have ensured that they have created homes for themselves on most of the planet, and they continue to evolve every year.

**Dhralls:** The dhralls first appeared after a magical storm on the Island Gherennor nearly 200 years ago. Humans first thought them to be a subspecies of trolls, and so named them dhralls. However, it soon became evident that they were created by a human town by the foot of the mountains in the north of the island, but that their minds had been wiped clean of any previous consciousnesses. Humans taught the dhrall language, and used them as servants. The dhralls turned out to reproduce at a very large scale, and have now spread to large portions of the planet. Most dhralls still live as servants to humans, but a growing consciousness and a wish for equality have started rising among the young race. More and more dhralls have begun dreaming of a life in freedom, and the few living outside of servitude have taken to

speak up for their brethren's right as equals. Change is on the wind, but there is still a long way to go before humans will accept dhralls as equals.

The dhralls resemble humans, but have a lesser degree of diversity when it comes to appearance. They have greyish brown skin, lack any body hair, and are recognized by a slightly stooped stance and long arms. In addition, they don't have the marked noses of humans, but rather a broad, more snout-like face.

## TRADE AND GOODS

### MONEY

Money have never played a major part in life on Terrustor, but the need for a currency in trade has forced itself on the people. The Terrustorians have but one currency: Trylls. A tryll is made from a bright red metal alloy, and sports a wave on one side, with a mountain depicted on the other. The trylls are about the size of a thumbnail, and quite light.

Considering that money never has had much status on Terrustor, then neither has HAVING money been a cause of much status. Very much of life on Terrustor is based on the swapping of goods and services, as well as tending to one's own needs, and so it's only in the larger towns and cities that the trylls have become important.

### PRICES

The Terrustorians earn trylls by performing services and work for which it is considered unsuitable to be repaid in labour or goods. Examples of such work and services include housing, guards, renting horses and wagons, and so on. In addition, trylls are used to purchase food and sundries in the markets in towns. Out in the countryside, trylls are less commonly used, although their use is slowly spreading.

In order to indicate the level of prices on Terrustor, some examples of goods and services are given here. These prices may vary from place to place, so this list should only be treated as a rough guide:

1 tryll	Vegetables, messenger inside a city
2 trylls	Small pieces of meat, housing for one night, rope, canvas
3 trylls	Larger pieces of meat, tools, a meal, renting a horse, clothes
5 trylls	Small weapons (knives, staffs etc), renting a wagon, messenger between cities
10 trylls	Larger weapons, party dress, one week's housing

### AVAILABILITY

Most Terrustorians have what they need, and if you want something, you might have to work for it. Should you for instance implore a farmer for some vegetables, he might require you to put in an hour or two's worth of labour in his fields. This swapping of goods and services has worked on Terrustor for a long time, and most people, especially outside of the towns and cities, stick to it.

In addition, not all goods are easily accessible anywhere. The further you go from the coast, for example, you might find it harder and harder to get fish or sailcloth, while coastal towns may have a shorter supply of beef and herbs.

# AN ISLAND: GEMBIANNA

Gembianna is an island in turmoil. Not the largest of islands (one could easily walk across it in little over a week), it still seems to have developed more trouble than it can take. It all started 15 years ago...

The island is a lush place, filled with deep green forests. It doesn't hold any real mountains, but six rather steep hills run in quite straight lines from north to south. The valleys between them sport small rivers running both north and south, filled with water from the hills and the frequent rainfalls blessing the island. The outlets thereby provide excellent conditions for population, a fact the inhabitants have exploited. On the south coast, towns have sprung up by the three western outlets, called Westria, Orianna and Calonia, ranged from west to east. On the northern shore, only one town currently exists, Mordenia, by the westernmost outlet.

The island is mostly populated by humans, although some dhralls inhabit the towns as well. However, 15 years ago, about 400 dhralls set out from the southern cities, determined to leave the humans behind and start a new life further east and north, in the uncharted parts of the island. They never came back.

Several human expeditions were sent out some years back, to try and discover what happened to the dhrall settlers. They all came back empty-handed. The only thing they ever discovered, were some ruins that seemed to be hundreds of years old. The human leaders shrugged it off, saying the dhralls probably starved to death, or left the island in homemade boats. However, among the general population, rumours of the settlers living in hiding out in the forest never died, and many still believe they made a hidden home to the east. And then the dying began.

About a year ago, seven women turned up dead in a stream outside Mordenia. The same day, two boys were found, skinned and hanged in a tree east of Calonia. The rumours about the settlers immediately sprang up again, but the four mayors all dismissed them, and set about searching for the killers inside the four cities. No murderers were found, until a lumberjack was found nailed to his front door in Orianna, with the word "murderer" written in blood over his head. People might have thought it a vigilante response to a discovered murderer, had it not been for the forest. It had claimed his house. Where the day before were spotless windows and white walls, could now be found vines, moss and shrubs growing through the wall. No one could explain it, and although the lumberjack was killed by repeated stabs with a knife, murmurs of "evil trees" arose.

People began fearing the forest, not daring to enter it, and some even talked of leaving the island behind. Two weeks ago, however, that plan was cut short. That morning, people on Gembianna awoke to find their boats gone. Every ship, fishing boat and raft - gone, like they never existed. Now, people take shifts guarding their shipyards day and night as they try to construct new vessels to take them away from the island. And the forest is alive with screams and voices at night.

# SAMPLE ADVENTURE

## WHAT

The mayor of Calonia, the easternmost of the cities on the south coast of Gembianna, was once very adept at magic, although he's not used it for years. Now was however the time for desperate measures, and so he's used it to call for help. The mayor, Andar Greenleaf, has a brother who joined the Wanderers at age six, and so he sent a magical message to their headquarter at Cnãwan to ask for help. The Wanderer council were intrigued by the request and Gembianna's predicament, and so has dispatched a squad of Wanderer's, the players, to help the people there, and to record all they can learn from the island.

## WHO

The mayor of Calonia will meet them at the harbour when they arrive. The Sailor who transports them there, will use magic to shield his ship from entrance, so as to keep the people of Gembianna storming onto his ship. The Sailor will not stay, but will leave as soon as he has delivered the squad. The mayor will be overjoyed to see them, and will promise to help them in any way he can. If they want to explore the forest, he will provide them with a team of guides, led by the hunter Oidon Swifteye. The guides will not be happy, but have enough faith in the Wanderers to go with them.

## HOW

The dhrall settlers who set out some 15 years ago, didn't enjoy their freedom for long. They found ruins of a settlement in the northeastern corner of the island, and built themselves homes there. However, within 3 months, they all fell ill to a strange disease.

In fact, they were poisoned, by a race of semi-sentient trees, who also were responsible for wrecking the last settlement. Tapping into the dying dhralls, the trees kept them alive in earthy caves, sustained by the trees' roots. The trees then slowly absorbed the minds and memories of the dhralls, leaving them as empty, barely living shells. Now, finally, the process is complete, and the trees have started attacking the human towns, using some of the remaining dhrall shells as unthinking agents.

In order to save the island, the Wanderers will have to discover the real culprits, either through exploring the forest in daylight, or through hazardous spying in the dark. The sentient trees are only afraid of three things: fire, sunlight and salty seawater. The Wanderers need to make use of this if they are to save the inhabitants of the island. In order to fully destroy the trees, however, they need to make their way to the ruined settlement and destroy the ruins through fire and/or magic, as the ruins are linked with the trees' life energy.

The only question remaining then, is this: will the Wanderers eliminate the race of sentient trees to save the humans of Gembianna, or will they deem the trees worthy of their own existence, and so only help the humans escape?