

Green Orcs in Purple (Sky Dwarves Doom)

Autumn Quarter, 798WK

The Party:

Amelia “Worldbreaker” Pendragon Hobbit Warrior Party Leader & local contact
Kryan Master Illusionist Scrivener
Britomas Star Celestial
Tixielanif Enchanter
Brigetta Bard
Ned Tanner alleged Necromancer

The Employer:

Maxen the Bard, royal Herald to the Duchy of Atlantis, Purple.

The Mission:

To restore the conversion of Alusian Common from Orcish to La Langue (the *lingua franca* of Purple).

Key Words

Purple; Dwarf; Orc; Bard; ‘Music of the Spheres’; Titan; ‘Demon Shield’; Language; Sceptre.

The Background:

This mission was influenced by the previous mission to Purple “That was then, this is now / The Good, the Bard and the Ugly” that occurred Winter 797WK. This Medium-High party (including Eric the Orc) went back 250,000 years into Purple’s past and messed with 3 Demons, 2 Vampire assassins, some Titans and large numbers of Dwarves and Drow. Up until last year, Purple had no Orcs, and the humans had a Normanesque society. After the time anomaly created by this party, Purple had two known groups of Orcs - the Black Orcs associated with the Necromancer and the barbaric Green Orcs to the south. The humans now have a Celtic style society, with smaller villages and different customs. While no Purple Human or Dwarf was aware of the change in culture (it had been like this for ever), our employer Maxen was still finding out what his ‘new’ title & authority could do.

Before 250,000 years ago, an effect converted the language of visiting Alusians to Dwarvish, but after that time Alusian Common was converted into Drow. At some stage long ago, this effect changed again, to La Langue, the human tongue of Purple. Now Common translates to Orcish. We believe that an artefact, possibly a sceptre, is responsible for influencing this, though we think it is primarily based on the population size. The Orcs have this sceptre.

The Humans of Purple raised a “Demon Shield” approximately 40 months before we visited. This turned off virtually all magic on the plane, apart from a period of a few minutes a month. One of the side effects was to wake the Dwarvish sub-kingdom inland of them. This Dwarvish nation is now allied with the humans. Its ruling Duke is married to the Duchess Dido, and they hold some other Guild members in high regard, particularly Amelia. Amelia won this favour by assisting in bringing down the Demon Shield eighteen months ago (~ Spring 796WK). This involved destroying the moon, as well as wiping out several small countries and raising the global water level by 400 feet. The human (& opposing Drow) nations are slowly recovering from this effect. Many of the human towns and castles are under water, and others are primitive. The portal network was disrupted by most of the route being under water.

The ‘Music of the Spheres’ is a magical effect that prevents tall people from going into mountains. Anyone more than about 4’6” tall has major psychological problems going above 4,500’, and will flee in terror shortly after 5,500’. No magic known in Purple or Alusia prevents this effect. This has protected the Dwarves historically from the Drow, and (retrospectively) from the Orcs. There are many theories on this effect.

Events

The party was briefed by our employer, and did the first two rounds of Astrology readings (1-5 & 6-10). After a small amount of contemplation (see Appendix A), we planned to sneak into the Orcish lands via the north-east border, and expected perhaps a month of guerrilla operations in enemy territory. We thus stripped down to the essentials, taking very little equipment. We portalled through to Fort Carmine in Atlantis on the 2nd of Fruit, and thence to Baranc, the Ducal Capital. Here, we gained our magic licenses and had dinner with the Dwarvish ambassador to Atlantis, with whom we discussed the Music of the Spheres and Dwarvish poetry, theology and history. We then decided that the south-west border was more likely, and changed our plans.

The next day (the 3rd), we arranged a ship - the Golden Chance - to sail south from Port Bell. On the 5th, we put in briefly at Nooky, the most southerly port. The 7th was marked by observations confirming we were passing over the equator. This was good timing, as for the next three days, we sailed through thick cloud banks, inching our way through unknown waters. The clouds lifted on the 11th, in time for us to spot a pirate ship. Using our speed to best advantage, we confirmed the location of their base (an Iron mine) and the number of ships (too many), then left. The 13th to 15th were frustrating days, crawling along at 4 knots during daylight hours only, searching for a lake while looking behind frequently for pirates.

On the 16th of Fruit, we spotted the winter mere, and sailed south towards it. The next day was an exciting day of bracken-crashing and flower-picking, as we searched miles of hillside for a secret entrance lost for a quarter-million years. Fortunately, we had Amelia with us, who spotted it in a way the dwarves would never have guessed. The 18th to 21st of Fruit were hard slog, mapping & searching throughout the huge dwarven city. As it extends over a mile vertically, use of the lift shafts and occasional rest stops are recommended.

On the 22nd of Fruit, we sent the Golden Chance back to notify the Dwarven Duchy of the discovery of the city and its recent destruction. We they travelled back up the city, then walked around the lake, to the destroyed hills. The 26th found us descending to the montane, where upon we were ambushed by kobolds. At its conclusion, we descended further to the tree-line and rested, questioning our captives and healing slowly. By the 30th, we were fit to travel, and flew over the scree slopes of the hills, searching for clues. We then returned to the coast to await the Golden Chance. It was proposed that we infiltrate the Orcish cities, but this would have been fatal given the people involved.

On the 6th of Harvest, the Golden Chance and a serious strike-force of 120 dead-keen dwarves & 3 siege engines led by Count Blood-Axe arrived - running up the mountain! We briefed them and showed them the city, then left them to their mourning. Two days later, we flew down to the road near two of the Orc cities and kidnapped two Orcs and a Black Lotus, returning by noon. The information thus gathered was used by the dwarves to plan a revenge strike on the city directly. While willing to help, we decided that this cultural exchange would be lost on us, and we returned to Nooky. This time, without the searching, cloud banks and pirates, we made good time, and arrived back on the 15th of Harvest. A couple of day's relaxation and briefing in Atlantis, and the rest of the party returned to Seagate on the 19th of Harvest. Oh, yes, and we squabbled constantly.

I then returned to the dwarven city, this time with Maxen, descended to the orcish city of Arsenal, and lived there for a month, gathering valuable intelligence on the enemy. The danger level is less than impersonating Drow in their home city, but higher than impersonating Aquillan nobility at court. If you don't do those sorts of things, don't go to Arsenal. You will die.

Loot Gained

1 Dwarven City - given to other dwarves for sentimental reasons.

1 Ring of Invisibility - 4 charges of Rank 16.

1 Handaxe - good to throw

6 pairs of Ear Studs for Titans - apparently useless.

1 Ring of Repetitions

1 pair of dwarven ear studs - spy hearing

Notes on People & Places

Duchy of Atlantis

This is the largest of the human Duchies in the southern continent (colonies). It is very coastal, with major islands. The low-lying plains have been lost to the flooding. Popn. 120-140k, incl. 5k hobbits.

Fort Carmine - A large, spectacular castle - circular, with large graceful arches, good defences, and many portals on the King's Highway. This is where we arrived from Alusia, and is a primary defence for the Duchy of Atlantis.

The King's Highway - The network of rune portals between human cities on the southern continent, with most cities connected directly to two or three other cities. The Dwarvish capital is also connected. Some of the portals are now underwater due to the rise in water level, disrupting traffic flow. The King's Highway has public access.

Baranc - Capital of Atlantis, and large hamlet. This sprawling village was much diminished from the fine city that was standing before the last party (see Background). It is primarily wood & stone one story buildings, with many trees, and a pleasantly homely, rustic atmosphere. As an analogy - it has been reduced from MMH to Gracht.

City Magic - Any mage needs a license to cast any magic in or around a city. The Baranc Magician's Guild is a gentleman's club concentrating on large meals and fine wine. Sir Radagast (Hobbit) is the best contact there - he thinks highly of previous Guild parties, and will bypass red tape as needed. If you are going to cast magics that have even the smallest chance of backfiring (1%), you must use the **Foundation** - a island in the portal network where backfires are allowed. Otherwise, you may lose your license.

Dwarvish Ambassador - The Ambassador to Atlantis is a pleasant if overly dignified gentleman who is amenable to being gently pumped for information by being plied with food & spirits. He is a very highly ranked Bard and Troubadour.

The Golden Hind

Captain "**Frank**" (known by many varied pseudonyms by other parties), a Water Mage; his right-hand man and First Mate "**Mr Long Dill**", an Air Mage; the "**Golden Chance**" (aka Golden Heinie, aka Golden Hind, etc.), fastest ship on the high seas of southern Purple; and his scurvy crew, mainly hobbits - they are all look-outs & scouts, as the Mages propel the ship faster than mundane methods could. Many previous parties have had contact with this vessel - they are good people, but will make money out of the situation - the more information you give them, the more money they make and the less the party makes. Trust them with your lives but not your purses. The ship easily travels 3 degrees (180 nautical miles - 200 miles) in a day in open waters - more if they sail fast at night as well.

The Music of the Spheres

This very powerful fear effect prevents sentients over 4'6" from getting over 5,000 feet up, whether by flight or climbing. Powerful magics can alleviate the effect by a few hundred feet. People may be rendered unconscious and transported higher, but may still die. Children are not affected while below the height limit, but adults shape-changed into small creatures (e.g.; rabbits) are. Tall animals (e.g.; horses) are not affected. The party was the first group known to bypass this effect. Method classified - apply Kryan or Amelia.

Green Orcs

An empire of "Green Orcs" - who look almost identical to humans, but DA as Orcs and have slight orcish features - exists beyond the mountains to the south of the Purple Colonies. Until the party visited, there were believed to be only a few thousand primitive, psychopathic orcs who would come out of the jungles in the South-East and attack southern Arac (see map) every few years. The party discovered an empire of 20+ million predominately urban Orcs with an advanced, theocratic culture. These Orcs are planning to invade the Purple Colonies in the next two years and wipe out the humans, hobbits and dwarves. We believe that this is eminently possible and reasonably easy, apart from the dwarves, who may retreat into the mountains and be sieged out over generations.

Orc Religion

The Orcs have a fanatical religious belief in not harming plants. The centre of their religion is a network of **Black Triads/Druids/Dryads**, three of these priestesses per city. They are located in large groves of trees outside the walled city proper, and were not protected when we visited (this is likely to have changed since the dwarvish raid). These triads advise the King and the leader of each city. Their advice is almost always followed to the letter. They communicate between cities using Black Lotus plants, which can remember short messages. These sentient courier plants are sent between cities regularly.

The religious tenants include never harming any plants - they may eat fruit that falls naturally, but never roots or leaves. They may hunt & eat herbivores (including humans). They will not eat carnivores, who are seen as fellow believers. They may eat plants from the river - this doesn't count as greenery to the Druid Earth mage Dryads.

Orc Cities

There are 23 Orcish cities containing 90% of the population. They are segmented into first, second and third divisions - with 4, 8 and 10 cities respectively (2 more third division cities were wiped out when the moon fell). A third of Second division orcs serve the first divisions, and a third of third division orcs serve the second division. A form of ritualised warfare between cities is used to establish the hierarchy of power, but as the first division cities can use their second division servants as well, and are larger (over 1 million Orcs each), they tend to stay dominant. First division orcs have gold jewellery and no ear notches.

The capital city, which contains the King, is called **HighCastle**, but is known as the King's **Arsenal** (or Arsenal for short), after its impressive main keep. It is 80 miles from the scree slope - the closest city, along with **Wolftown**.

BridgeKirk, **Broadford** and **Otherfield** are the other division one cities. Wolftown is one of the division three cities and is close to Arsenal. Each city is ruled by a mage-prince.

The cities are up to 1 mile square, and live in dense multiple layers of square stone buildings, with each roof being a courtyard of those above - it reminds me of Novadom and other Arabic cities. The density of Orcs is about 4-5 times that of the densest human cities. Plague is stopped by their diet and the priestesses. The river downstream for the cities is unbelievably foul, and they get their water from the aqueducts and river upstream. Arsenal has 10 aqueducts, the rest less. The pollution explains the layout of the cities - one per major river.

All the Orc cities are connected by massive stone highways. They are 50' high, in 3 distinct terraces, 50' across in total. You can land on the top terrace, but this is used solely for king's messengers and people of import. The cities lie in a series of lines defined by the splitting of major waterways from a 2,000 miles long river. See the map.

The females are artisans, traders and asset holders - including men - they are polyandrous. Males are husbands, labourers or slaves. Death by ritual combat is an honour, and is preferable to their mundane life. The other major part of life is religion.

The Orcs are currently led by **King Oliver Orwell**, a powerful military leader and water mage who has the Dryads' full support. He is organising the cities like they have never been before, with a holy purpose - to invade and destroy the humans & their allies. This will happen between 799 and 803WK. This ties in with the population explosion in the last 18 months since the moon fell - lots of multiple births, low infant mortality, high fecundity (for orcs!).

Miscellaneous Orc facts

- They use Jaguars as hunting cats (a Jaguar is a jungle leopard, slightly stronger, at home in water, trees or land, and absolutely fearless).
- Green Orcs do not sweat at all. They have no hair.
- A full physiological & cultural description is available from Kryan. Only useful for infiltration.
- The Orcs are cross-breeding with Kobolds to create short, specially trained warriors which are tougher and better trained than normal Orcs, and short enough to avoid the Music of the Spheres. This group will be the shock troops when invading the human Purple colonies.
- These Orcs may be bred from Eric the Orc and purple humans.
- Kobolds are known as the **King's Peculiar**, and are owned by him directly - they may not be thumped by orcs. Their home town is ~60 miles north of NE from the scree slope. Their life span is ten years, but they learn fast. They have half a dozen mages in total - we wiped most of them out, but more breed.
- A Hobbit (Dr. Sweetum's - off-plane wine trader) has been in contact with the Orcs. Never tracked him down.
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Titans, Demons & Vampires

The last party had been involved in a struggle between some Titans (12/14?) and Guissean (Mind), Zagan (Illusion) & Haagenti (E&E), plus two powerful vampires, around 210,000 years in the past. Their history was relevant, but did not directly impact this adventure. See last set of scribe notes.

Lost Dwarven City

The Dwarven city that we found was located between 2,000 and 12,000 feet above sea level. This city had been occupied between 240,000 and 210,000 years ago by a Kingdom of Dwarves, famed for their dreams & visions. At the end of that time, they went into hibernation in their floating Sky City that they had constructed over this time.

The entrances were at 4,000' on the coast and 12,000' on the altiplano.

Below the coastal entrances lie catacombs with perhaps 1 million dead dwarves lying in state, either on biers or in urns. Above this is a complex and layered city. The oldest areas of the city are lowest down, with most of the larger

communal areas & more family-oriented higher up. Some working mines were also part of the complex. A population of 2,000 to 5,000 Dwarves could have lived in this areas at any one time, though in total, perhaps 20,000 dwarves could live comfortably in it. A model/map of the major passage-ways and rooms, plus entrances and typical tunnel lay-outs is available from Kryan.

Most of the tunnels & rooms have a 7' to 20' stud. Perhaps 1 in 5 of the tunnels or rooms light up automatically on approach - the rest are broken. Many fountains are found at intersections & public areas. Jewels, gold leaf, etc was used to decorate the walls of the richer areas. One of the more impressive rooms, and Geographically central, was "The Hall" (Dwarven naming conventions never fail to astound). This is a Cathedral or Amphitheatre, with a 200' ceiling and scores of exits. From this, the city is a flat circle of about a 1½ to 2 ½ mile radius, lying on a steep slope parallel to the mountain side. The catacombs & mines lie outside this circle. To deal with the vertical nature of the city, several great drop-shafts were created. These allow people to descend (or even ascend) great distances by stepping off the edge and waiting. However, a few of these shafts no longer operate.

This city has been systematically looted and despoiled by Kobolds & ½Orcs, and contains very little of value. It has been reclaimed by the only surviving sub-Kingdom of Dwarves, the Duchy of Amalfi.

Recent History

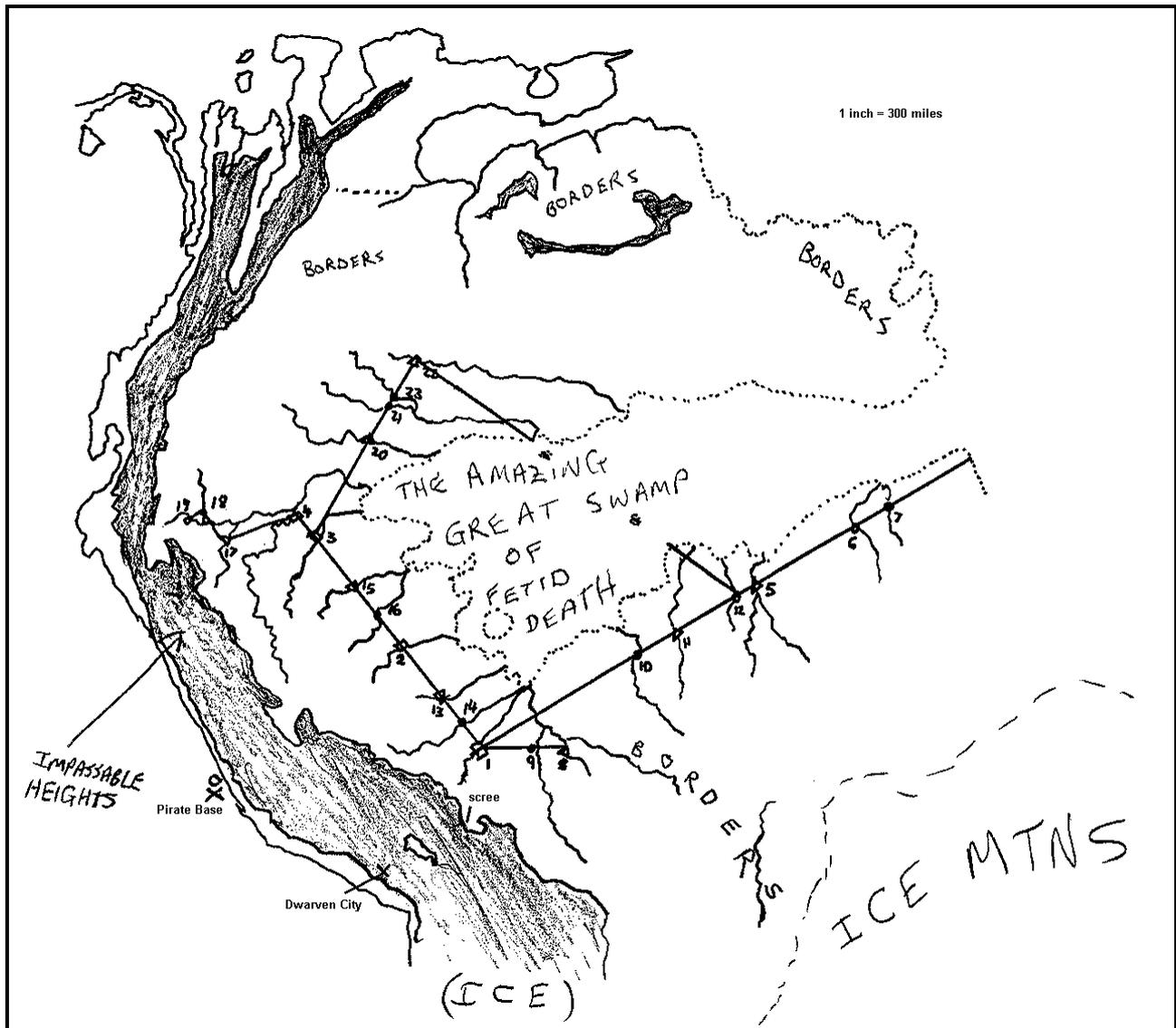
When the **Demon Shield** was first constructed by meddling humans (40 months before our trip?), the magic holding the Dwarven sky city up failed. The plummeting city destroyed a portion of one of the mountains we call the Three Titans, and created a dangerous but usable pass from the inland montane to the high altoplano. After some months, a band of Kobolds investigated. They noted that the dragon who usually patrols the area was missing, and that a great deal of food was lying around. Encouraged by this, they pressed on up the scree slopes, past the altoplano, and into the top entrance to the dwarven city. After many (100's?) of casualties from traps, wards, etc, they got down into the city proper, and looted the city. Eventually invisible attackers (Phantasms?) drove them out. They returned to the Orcish Empire, whereupon the Orcs confiscated the loot and drove them back into the city again. The magic & dragon came and went due to the infrequency of magics while the demon shield was up. The kobolds stripped most of the city & catacombs a couple months before we arrived, but had run out of mages. Another party, with the remaining 3 Kobold mages was returning to complete the looting. We informed the Amalfi Dwarves, and the city is now secured against anything short of full-scale invasion by 1,000's of ½Orcs.

Secrets

- Find secret entrance to mines through Hobbit Ranger trick - see Amelia
- Way of nullifying Music of the Spheres - see Amelia or Kryan
- Avoiding the steam dragon - its just machinery and illusion. It can't leave the lake area, as it is powered by the lake and the Music of the Spheres. We think it is harmless - let us know, please.
- To manage doors in the dwarven city, rap once to open, rap twice to close. Do not rap three times.
- The Amazing Swamp of Fetid Death. The secret of this is not to visit. Readings indicate that Aquatic Adepts who create food and water and have high defences will not survive. Forty foot alligators were not the main danger.

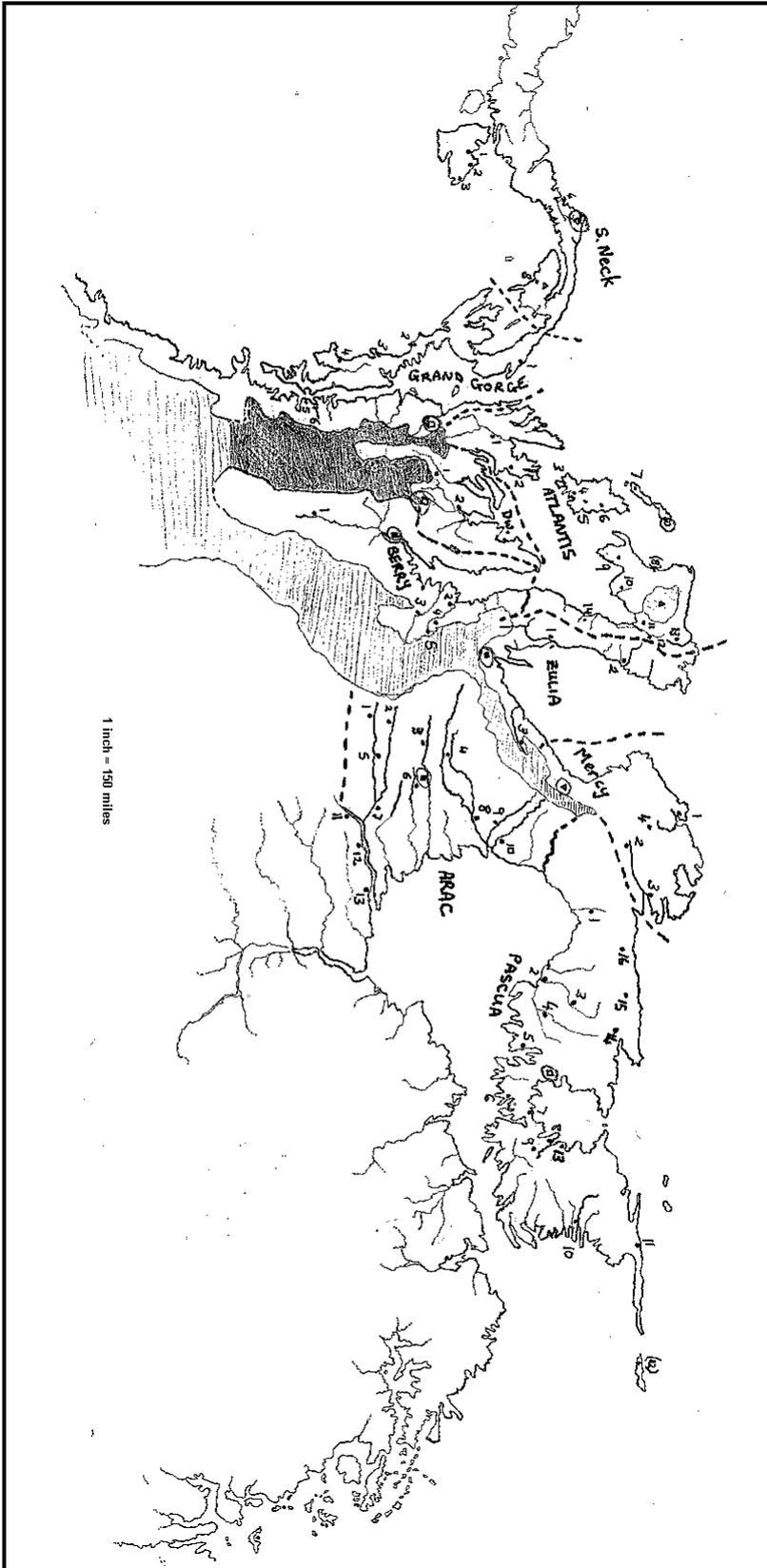
Appendix A - Maps

Map of Orcish Empire - Human Colonies shown in top 10%.



- 1 Arsenal
- 2 BridgeKirk ?
- 3 Broadford ?
- 4 Otherfield ?
- 9 Wolftown

Map of Purple Colonies



S. Neck

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|
| 1 | Maracas | a |
| 2 | The Tables | a |
| 3 | Seafoot | a |
| 4 | Fort Chagre | a |
| c | Portobelo | a |
| 8 | Shinon-la-Princess | a |
| Δ | Mesoceanic Observ. | b |

Grand Gorge

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---|
| 1 | Acandy | a |
| 2 | Cupis | a |
| 3 | Mutis | b |
| 4 | Nuqui | b |
| 5 | Condoto | a |
| 6 | Tado | a |
| c | Old Dabeiba | d |

Atlantis

- | | | |
|----|----------------|---|
| 1 | Alterr | b |
| 2 | Richfields | c |
| 3 | Shinu | b |
| 4 | Corozal | b |
| 5 | Egghold | c |
| 6 | Fort Carmine | c |
| 7 | Turbaco | b |
| 8 | The Foundation | b |
| 9 | St Angel | b |
| 10 | Caracol | c |
| 11 | Valledupar | c |
| 12 | Newville | c |
| 13 | Barrancas | c |
| 14 | The Jaguar | b |
| c | Barranc | a |

Amalfi Dwarves

- | | | |
|---|----------|---|
| 1 | Val'Dido | d |
| 2 | Pato | b |
| c | Amalfi | e |

Berry

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|
| 1 | La Dorada | c |
| 2 | Provins du Pavon | b |
| 3 | Amilyaville | e |
| 4 | Blamange de Brillett | e |
| 5 | Whichfoot | e |

Zulia

- | | | |
|---|--------------|---|
| 1 | Salad | c |
| 2 | Moyenn | b |
| 3 | Merry de May | e |
| c | Zulia | c |

Mercy

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| 1 | Fairfoot | c |
| 2 | Blackwater | d |
| 3 | St Filip | b |
| 4 | New Falcon | c |
| c | Fort Mercy-Valera | d |

Pascuala

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|---|
| 1 | St Charles | b |
| 2 | Eastprei | b |
| 3 | Sombrero | b |
| 4 | Palenc | b |
| 5 | San Mauris | b |
| 6 | Three-Mats | b |
| 7 | Ipir | b |
| 8 | Toco | b |
| 9 | Paragon | c |
| 10 | Santa Barbera | b |
| 11 | Paria City | b |
| 12 | Dragon's Port | b |
| 13 | Anarcko | b |
| 14 | Ocumare del Tuy | b |
| 15 | Victory | d |
| 16 | Balans du Buron | e |
| c | Valle de la Pascua | b |

Arac

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Hato de Corozal | c |
| 2 | Tame | c |
| 3 | Arackett | b |
| 4 | The Canton | b |
| 5 | Rondon | b |
| 6 | Delights | b |
| 7 | Cato | b |
| 8 | Surfield | b |
| 9 | St Silvestre | b |
| 10 | Liberty | b |
| 11 | Newport | b |
| 12 | New Antioc | b |
| 13 | The Redwind | b |
| c | Arac | b |

Heights

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| a | -500' to +50' |
| b | +50' to +300' |
| c | +300' to +1000' |
| d | +1000' to +3000' |
| e | +3000' upwards |

Appendix B - Astrology

Round One: Questions 1 to 5
(Frederick Toadswart in Seagate)

Q1: What is cause of people of non-Purple origin speaking Orcish whilst on Purple, when trying to speak Common?

Ruled with courage / a sacred King,
born, entrusted / with ancient treasures
and cities full / of strong hearted soldiers;
his vanity swelled him / so vile and rank
that he heard no voices / but his own. He deserved
to languish and be ravished. / Lost be the relic
most high, profaned; / his kin made holocaust.

Toadswart: Some sort of alliterative verse?

Amelia: A king with a holy relic. He became corrupted and his people (or relatives) caused massive destruction. 'languish and be ravished' sound feminine rather than masculine.

Q2: What will stop or remove this effect?

Strive, seek, find, and never yield.

Toadswart: This is so short that it may be deliberately ambiguous or suspect. It will answer the question, but you may not be aware of what it is you asked — or perhaps you are intended to misinterpret the answer. Because of its "punch," it sounds like a first or last line.

Amelia: short readings have a bad habit of being literally true. Maybe the 'item' corrupts and must be resisted.

Q3: How do orcs detect plant eaters or non-orcs?

Since terror, they learnt, / is theirs alone,

May they come for people, / with no fear of reprisal,
Except over-eating, / no harm or fighting,
Liking to murder / and gorge without mercy,
Lusting for flesh, / but fearing no trouble.

Toadswart: This does not appear to be an answer. Indeed it has the form of a wish (May...), a very unpleasant wish. Perhaps there is no answer, or none which is known to the stars. It may contain a cryptic hint. Same type of verse as A1.

Amelia: this is a why not a how! Wrong question I think

Tixie: The initial letters of the poem spell SMELL.

Q4: How can we avoid being noticed by orcs?

Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs : the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.

Toadswart: This sounds like a quote from some poem. It has a much more Alusian sound to it.

*Amelia: twilight or moonlight maybe?
Can we find the rest of the poem?*

Q5: Where is the best place to go to stop or remove this effect?

A land of streams / like downward smoke,
slow-dropping veils / of sheerest lace,
shimmering lights / and shadows broke.
They saw the river / seaward race;
in the distance behold / three holy tops,
three silent pinnacles / of aged snow,
sunset flushed; / and shower-dewed of drops,
the shadowy vine / ensnaring below.

All day long / the alarum rolled
amongst the mountains / by the winter mere;
on one side lay / the Ocean, on the other
lay a great water / where was the relic
with all good things, / when war was not.

The one, the holy, / whom held shall rule;
Or else to slay / the fertile seed
till fewer remain / than the fairest of men
that have the words / that all may harken.

Amelia:

Verse one: river delta or glacier (didn't Maxen say there were glaciers at the source of the river. See titan notes for holy tops. Snow never melts. western side of the mountains

Verse two: something noisy (avalanche, water fall, wind). Peaceful lake above snow line. View of water in both directions.

This could mean look in the lake's reflection for the object's location, or another place or the same place later/earlier in time

Verse three: refers to a person or thing

Toadswart:

The 3rd verse seems to be a "how" answer, rather than a "where" answer — implying that what you do is important, or affects where you do it, or that there is a fundamental aspect of the change/transition involved. Furthermore the 3rd verse doesn't sound like a complete sentence.

Poetic Commentary on Answers One to Five:

Toadswart: Answer 2 & A4 are clearly of different poetical form to A1 & A3, in clearly a much more Alusian style or sound than A1 & A3. A5 is the only one in 3 verses, or perhaps the other four answers are in non-verse form.

In A5, all 3 verses have an alliterative basis, but only the first verse rhymes. I thought it was going to be a standard sonnet (8 rhyming lines on one theme, followed by 6 rhyming lines on a complementary theme, both themes then unifying to make a single whole). Because the second verse has 5 unrhyming line, I suspect that the answer is NOT one place but two — suggesting that there are two places, or the one place you seek to make the change in is a reflection, echo, or presentiment of an other place. Furthermore the first transition is probably from a **poetical** tongue, and the 2nd is not. The 3rd verse may be an expansion, or substitution, of the missing 6th line of the 2nd theme.

Maxen: All traditional Purple poetry, in La Langue or halfling, rhymes and should have a regular rhythm. However dwarves **do** have an alliterative **identical** to that of A1 and A3 and the last 2 verses of A5; and it usually is about great fights or the glories of ancient times. The first verse of A5 appears to be a hybrid of real poetry and dwarvish stuff — or perhaps a parody? Answer 4 has the rhythm of poetry, but doesn't rhyme; also the epic is unknown. Thus A4 is foreign. Answer 2 has a foreign sound also.

In Dwarvish epics and poems, when **both** accented syllables are alliterated over the break in a single line, then one or both of the half-lines are very important, or there is an important dichotomy (these lines underlined in above poems).

As an aside: syllables which start with H, W, or any Vowel are presumed to alliterate with each other.

Note that Answer 3 has NO critical lines, again implying that there is something wrong or incomplete about this answer.

Kryan: A3 is a Dwarvish poem from a different lyric tradition from those in contact with the human kingdom. Instead of initial letters for alliteration, they use the initial letter of the emphasised syllable. This makes all lines valid poetically and gives emphasis to the first line.

Amelia's summary:

- *We are probably looking both for a place and a thing.*
- *We don't have enough info to find it. At this stage there is no way I would lead a party into the Green Orc territory.*
- *Most of Toadswart's poetry comments went right by me. Follow this up if they make sense to you. Could A2 belong to the same poem?*
- *Maxen's comments imply that we may find answers amongst the legends of Purple Dwarves. I think that would be the best source for clues about the thing*
- *We need a new question to figure out how to travel in the orc lands. Any suggestions?*

Round 2 - More Astrology Questions (from Toadswart again, - some questions lost)

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Section 1 — Q & A

Q6: About who has the relic (and how).

A runaway slave / stole the relic
and, begging mercy, / bought forgiveness
from his LORD, his MASTER, / who took it delightedly;
and turned in His hands / the ancient carvings:
Peace to a slave, / pleasure to a MASTER.

Q7: about ???

The blood was everywhere / as bands of Orcs
fall on the foreigners, fighting mightily
on all sides, / butchering the others.
Sadly O— / ordered his “soldiers”
back to the heights / whereupon was built
a fortress; he’d heard / of A— and knew
the boldness and strength

Q8: unanswerable?

No answer was obtained

Q9: About how can the orcs (or why is it that some do) speak the language of the Purple Kingdom [of the Federated Duchies].

That which we are, we are

Q10:

What is the spiritual or religious affiliation of the Orcs w.r.t the Powers of Light & Dark?

Since terror, they learnt, / is theirs alone,
May they come for people, / with no fear of reprisal,
Except over-eating, / no harm or fighting,
Liking to murder / and gorge without mercy,
Lusting for flesh, / but fearing no trouble.

Section 2 — Commentary.

6: About who has the relic (and how).

Is the typography and punctuation significant?
Similarly, how many grammatical subjects are there in the answer? Is the casual way in which the current “wielder” received the relic relevant. Is it being deliberately used? or are its effects incidental?

7.

“The blood was everywhere / as bands of Orcs” and “Sadly O— / ordered his “soldiers”” are probably both of significance -- but one should not assume that other words are necessarily less significant.

Foreigners = humans? Allusions? whatever? How high are the heights (presumably not excessive, if the orcs can go there)? hence it is improbable or inconsistent if these heights are anything to do with the Wintermere or 3 holy-tops.

What, or whose, is the fortress?

8. Presumably the question asked an unanswerable question.

9. Suggests that the language is spoken by those who can speak it. Such a facile statement that there is probably an inner truth. The tongue is La Langue.

10: Answer as per 3

Round 3 - Even More Astrology Questions

(Barranc, Atlantis)

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Question 11: What might we see when we get to the winter mere?

Answer 11A -- a backfire?? omitted because of its *excessive* length and confusion, including some excerpts from "The Princess", a poem not to be read.

Our summary: Orcs doing what Orcs do best
In fact: Kobolds doing what Orcs do best.

Answer 11B (after H.D.R.)
Let prejudice condemn thee, but I know
That they who live beside the Winter mere
Must greet thy frequent passage, flee the fear
Of that swift eddying cloud of level snow,
Which ever melts but still doth shift and grow
Athwart the dreary headlands; yea, must hear
And dread thy sovran challenge ever clear
Their shrill farewells amongst thy steamy blow.
But when I see thee issuing out of storm,
Those fiery pantings by the following wind
Built to a most majestic pillared form,
And moving straightly on, I call to mind
How still across the mere, 'twixt friends and foes,
God moves, to these a cloud, a fiery light to those.

Our summary: some enemy? - weather analogy
In fact: the Steam Dragon

Q12: What other protections are need for the voyage?

[The astrologer apologises for the excessive, cloying "Purpleness" of the following reading which is in imitation of the formerly banned "poetry" of the Pacificistic Party several centuries ago]

... being Part, an excerpt plain, of an hypothetical Paean of Praise, Freely translated from the native language of the Nature-worshipping Noble savages that dwell in the Southern Land, across the great Northern Sea, into our own modern, degenerate Tongue.

To the happy Memory of the late Usurper Oliver Orwell, Chapter XIII,

Till thou command'st, that Azure Chain of Waves,
Which Nature round about us sent,
Made us to every Pirate Slaves,
Was rather Burthen than an Ornament;
Those Fields of Sea that wash'd our Shores,
Were plow'd, and reap'd by other Hand than ours:
To us, the liquid Mass,
Which doth about us run,
As it is to the Sun,
Only a Bed to sleep on was:
But thy Commands the Floods obey'd,

Thou all the Wilderness of Water sway'd;
Thou did'st but only wed the Sea,
Not make her equal, but a Slave to thee.

Our summary: We need a water mage or other sea lord
In fact: We had a Water mage captain who out-ran the pirates. Interesting reference to King Oliver Orwell!

Q.13 : How do we get the party there?

13A, believed to be a backfire, was:

GO UP

No seed of life blown down a dark abysm
Of earth or sea but feels the magnetism
That draws us godward! Flowers Sunk In Mines,
Or plants in ocean, where no sunbeam shines,
Will blindly climb up toward their deity,
Far off in heaven, whom they can never see.
A spiritual life there is within the wood
Who know of piety, but not of good,
Who do not draw their all from sun and rain,
or leaves; but leave with life in every vein.

Our summary: Flowers? Go up via the mines?
In fact: Flowers to find the mines.

So the Astrologer tried again and got Answer 13B:

Into the silent land, you pass the gate,
Which time had made a beautiful grave of flowers,
and breach the door where Parados uprears.
O shaken splendours, palpitated bliss,
When, the Royal Gates of Glory closed,
Those wretches came; their meek and tearful eyes
Grew luminous, as lit with sudden sun.
O in that hour how shook the rich man's soul!
He stood there beggar'd, poorest of the poor!
Gold would not purchase peace; or if it might,
Eternity ran 'twixt him and his riches;
For he had barter'd an immortal birthright;
An holy heritage for a Graven Face
And there the gates of glory on him closed.

Our summary: Underground, closed, riches taken.
In fact: The dwarven city had been looted, but we found artifacts in the mines that protect against the music of the spheres.