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THE SLAYER'S GUIDE TO AMAZONS



This Product Requires the use
of the Dungeons & Dragons®
Player's Handbook, Third Edition,
Published by Wizards of the Coast®

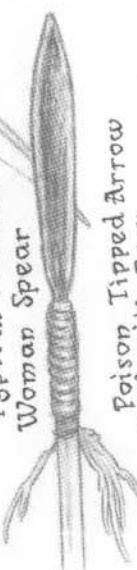
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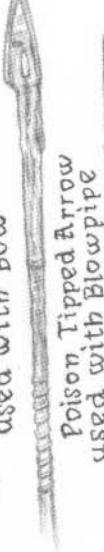
Bamboo Quiver

Fish Spear

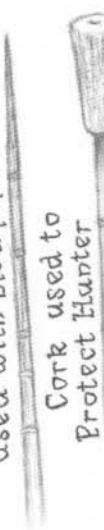
Typical Amazon Woman Spear used with Bow



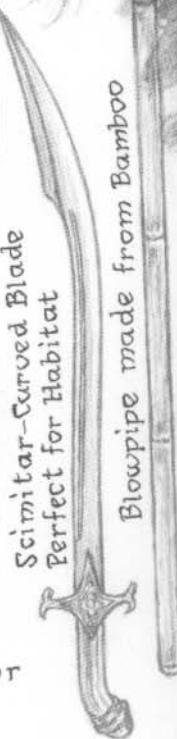
Poison Tipped Arrow used with Bow



Poison Tipped Arrow used with Blowpipe

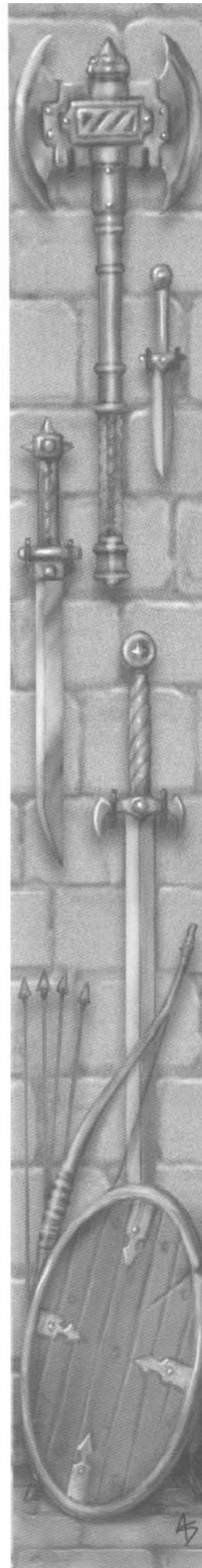


Cork used to Protect Hunter



Scimitar-Curved Blade Perfect for Habitat Blowpipe made from Bamboo

Weapons used for both Survival and Fighting -



The Slayer's Guide To Amazons

Teresa Capsey and Matthew Sprange

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history and legend, amazons have always stood firm as the ultimate warrior women, the ideal of female triumph in a male-dominated world. But who are the amazons, a race who counts the deepest jungles as their domain and ruthlessly slays any intruder? The Slayer's Guide to Amazons peels back the fog of myth and legend to reveal, for the very first time, the true story of these incredible women.

With lithe, supple bodies and stunningly attractive features, the amazons are deceptive to any outsider encountering them for the very first time. Few make any mistake the second time around if they survive this encounter, for amazons are truly cruel and capricious, dedicated to destroying any influence the outside world may have upon their civilisation. Far from being primitive tribeswomen, amazons have a highly sophisticated culture, devoted to the preservation of their warrior ideals at all costs. They are superb combatants, for skill with the sword, spear and bow is impressed upon each girl at an early age, and they ruthlessly protect their domain against invaders.

Their hatred for all things male-dominated is well known, and any one of their number can easily engage a man in single combat with a good chance of overcoming him. They have excellent wilderness skills and a preternatural awareness of their surroundings. All this, combined with their innate sense of sisterhood makes any encounter with an amazon tribe a truly dangerous experience. In any region where amazons are known to dwell, explorers and adventurers alike are warned to use the utmost caution and to avoid contact with the warrior women whenever possible. There can be no peace,

no truce and no negotiation with an amazon tribe. All they desire is for the outside world to stay far away from their civilisation and to avoid its inevitable taint.

THE SLAYER'S GUIDES

This series of supplements, designed for use in all fantasy-based d20 games systems, takes an exhaustive look at specific monster races, detailing their beliefs, society and methods of warfare. The Slayer's Guide to Amazons breaks from the mould set by the other books of this series by providing an effectively new race for players to interact with. Whilst common in myth and legend, amazons have rarely been well detailed within role-playing games.

AMAZONS — HELL HATH NO FURY

Each Slayer's Guide features a single race, in this case the amazons. You will find a colossal amount of information on amazon physiology, habitat and society, giving you a fundamental level of understanding on how this race of warrior women exists and interacts with the rest of the world. Games Masters are given guidelines on how to introduce amazons into their existing campaigns, portraying them as a lethal combination of fighting prowess and terrible magic. Players may use this Slayer's Guide as either a survival manual, or as a gateway to playing amazon characters themselves. Finally, a complete amazon lair is presented to be used as either an extended encounter, the basis for a complete set of scenarios or even just as an example of what the amazons are capable of.

After reading The Slayer's Guide to Amazons, you will never view warrior women in quite the same way again.

'Hush woman! I've had it up to my eye patch with your whining about us being lost. We are not lost. I know exactly where we are. I'm sure this is the path that leads back to the village so be patient.' Fezzig stabbed a finger in the woman's direction, 'If you don't have the stones for adventuring, don't insist on coming along. Just because you wear armour and swing a sword doesn't make you a fighter, so just stop trying.' The warrior turned from the woman and continued along the twisting path followed by his men.

'He doesn't mean it, Ade.' Rabine, Adriana's sister, laid her hand gently on her sibling's arm. 'He's been under a lot of stress since he lost his title. He's just very concerned with the two of us to protect.'

Adriana's scowl deepened, 'I need no protecting from the likes of him.' She raised her voice so the warrior could hear her though he was several paces ahead. 'We should be passing a fallen log with three mushrooms growing on it in a few minutes. If we do, I'm heading out on my own and you're coming with me.'

Rabine cringed and whispered, 'Don't make him angry, Ade. It's not good when he's angry.'

'I don't know what you see in him, 'Bine. You should have run when father told you who you were going to marry.'

The younger sister arched a brow, 'Like you did? I'm sorry Ade, but I couldn't put father through that again. Besides, I'm not like you... I couldn't make my way in the world without a husband. Fezzig is a good man when he's not angry.'

Adriana held up a hand to silence her sister. She thought she had heard it again, the voice in the trees. She was preparing to say something when she heard a cough of suppressed laughter from the trail ahead. Fezzig and his men stood before a fallen log with three mushrooms sprouting from its rotting bark. Adriana felt her sister shrink away from her side. Blood rushed to the fallen lord's face turning it a deep crimson as his fists clenched and unclenched at his sides. Adriana gritted her teeth to keep from laughing.

Fezzig whirled around, face contorted with anger, 'Say it, wench and I'll bury my steel in your guts, woman or not.'

'Come on, 'Bine. We shouldn't have too much backtracking to do.' Adriana turned so her swords were free should she need to draw them.

Spittle flew from the lord's lips and flecked his beard, 'She stays with me! Leave if you think you can do better. We'll burn an offering for your soul when we get back to the village but you are not taking my wife with you. She's mine.'

'Come on, Rabine. Let's go.'

Adriana felt her heart sink as she watched her sister walk to Fezzig's side. She had never before noticed how small her sister seemed, how frail. Rabine would not meet her gaze. 'You've made your choice. I'm leaving.' Adriana backed away from the group, unwilling to turn her back on the lord or his men.

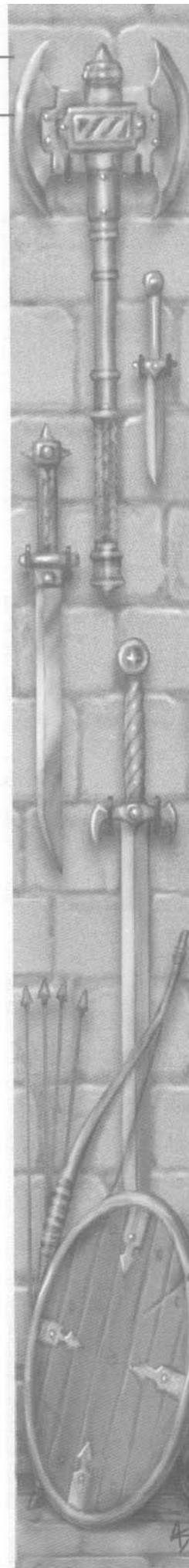
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Adriana stood up and brushed her hands on her trousers. This was definitely the remains of the camp from their first night in the jungle. She was a little more than a day's journey from the village - she would send some of her fellow woodsmen to find Rabine and the others as soon as she returned. She puffed a dark lock of hair from her face and began on her way again. Something made her stop and listen. She held her breath and listened again.

'Thou shouldst not have abandoned thy sister.'

Adriana blinked. This was the first time she had understood one of the voices she had been hearing. She turned her head toward the sound. Crouched on a limb to her left was the most beautiful woman she had ever seen. She shook her head slightly, not trusting her own senses.

'Thou shouldst not have abandoned thy sister.' The dark beauty leaped from the tree and landed lightly, before blending into the trees, practically disappearing before Adriana's eyes.



AMAZON PHYSIOLOGY

A large volume of material exists in folklore and bardic fare regarding the race of cruel beauties known collectively as amazons. However, very little actual fact is known about this separatist sect of fanatical warrior women. The sagas and scant research available agree that amazons are stunningly beautiful women of heroic proportions who possess a speed and agility not typical of females from the more civilised humanoid races. Amazons stand just a little short of six feet in height, though their bearing makes them seem much more imposing. Their skin tones range from the palest of ivory to the darkest ebony, with these extremes being far more common than the middle shades. No matter what their coloration, all amazons have jet-black hair and dark eyes, a racial trait unaffected by their mating with males from the outside world. Their trim, well-muscled frames, haughty demeanour and habit of wearing only the lightest of armours enhance their exotic beauty.

'I swear it! A full score of virgin temple dancers would look like scrub crones if they stood side by side with even the ugliest of those warrior women. Just looking at an amazon is enough to stick a man's tongue to the roof of his mouth and make his throat so dry he can't swallow. By the gods though, don't get too close to them. That beauty is deceptive right up until they draw a weapon and bathe it in your blood. You can look at them all you want, just don't let them see you!'

Bartolo Everande, bardic 'expert' on amazons

MATTERS BIOLOGICAL

What little is known about amazonian physiology comes from scattered survivors' accounts, speculation and limited study. Amazons differ from the females of other humanoid races on several levels. Due to their isolationistic hunter-gatherer nature, the amazon diet is lacking in the refined elements that lead to the more 'rounded' figures of civilised women. As a general rule, amazons do not cultivate crops, though they are known to have

extensive herb gardens tended by the priestesses of their moon Goddess. Whether by quirk of their racial stock or a direct result of their diet, amazons tend to be taller than human women by a few inches, though not as high as half orcs. The rigours of their warrior training and daily life also keep the amazons svelte and trim, something any human woman would readily agree is a gift of the divine. These minor differences are virtually insignificant when compared to other aspects of amazon biology.

Perhaps the most significant difference between amazons and their civilised counterparts is their reproductive cycle. Unlike other humanoid races, amazons are only fertile twice a year, in spring and autumn, similar to many of the wild animals that share their jungle habitat. This bi-annual oestrus is referred to by the amazons as *The Growling*.

The time of *The Growling* is marked by heightened aggressiveness and increased libido, leading to decreased isolationism and more frequent contact with the outside world, particularly with males. It is not unheard of for settlements located near amazon lairs to be the subject of raids and attacks in which prime males are captured and carried back to the amazon village to participate in, not necessarily voluntarily, the amazonian fertility rites. It is an interesting side note that these males are never seen again.

It is a matter of some debate in scholarly circles whether the limited fertility of amazons is biological in nature or if it is a side-effect of the ritual consumption of herbs that suppresses a more frequent cycle. The extreme severity with which amazons separate themselves from the rest of the outside world makes this an issue very difficult to resolve. What is known is that amazons tend to have a higher occurrence of female births than is observed in the other humanoid races. Eight out of ten children born in an amazon village are likely to be female. The herbal concoction known as *Mother's Milk* is believed to be accountable for this biological anomaly. The daily consumption of *Mother's Milk* has both religious and societal importance within amazon culture, though no sample has ever been successfully procured for study by scholars or alchemists as it appears to be a closely guarded sacrament in the amazons' worship of their Goddess.



THE VIGILANT HUNTRESS

Trained from an early age in the skills of the huntress, amazons possess an almost preternatural awareness and stealth when in their home environment. This training, combined with their natural perceptiveness, speed and ability to move unseen through the tangled vegetation of the jungle, allows amazons to detect intruders in their claimed lands long before they themselves are spotted. On the infrequent occasion an amazon is encountered outside of her natural environment, her abilities seem markedly less otherworldly. Due to this, amazons seldom roam into the outside world unless driven by *The Growling*, in which case the warrior women seem to care little whether or not they are

seen or heard so long as they successfully capture their quarry. An amazon in an urban, wasteland or desert setting is truly a fish out of water.

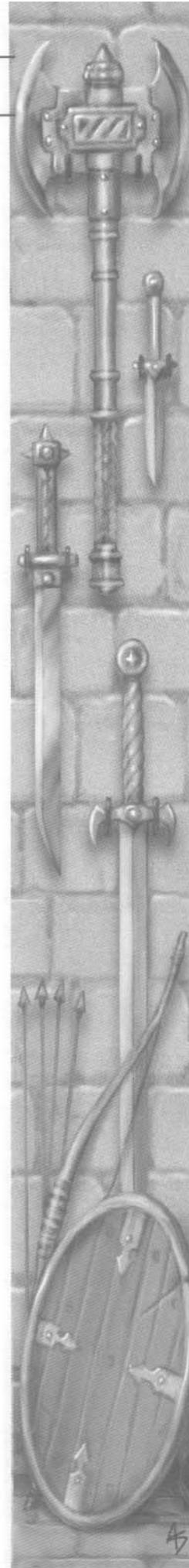
THE MIND OF A WOMAN

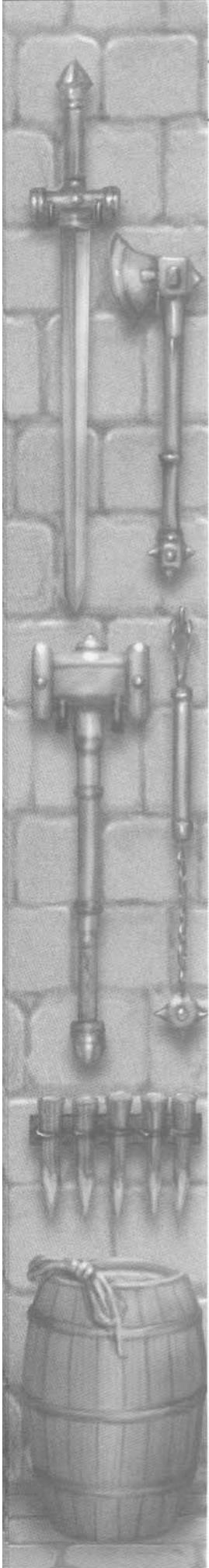
Though no scholar will claim to even remotely understand the inner workings of the mind of any female of the humanoid races, amazons present a particularly difficult problem. Their hatred of men runs so deeply within their psyche and society that even helpless male babes are slain in sacrifice to their Goddess. Every amazon is taught from her earliest days that men are inherently evil and must not be spared for any reason once they have performed their sole task - procreation. An

Origins of the Amazons

It is believed long ago the amazons existed as one half of a mixed-gender society. Within this society, females had few, if any, freedoms. They were expected to do all of the menial labour, rear children, maintain homes, till fields and provide an acceptable lifestyle for the male head of their household. Should a woman not bear sons to her husband within a certain amount of time after marriage she was cruelly put to death. Legend tells that on one night of particular celestial power, the patron Goddess of the amazons appeared to every woman simultaneously and told them to rise up, shake off the shackles of male oppression and pledge their lives to her. In one night every male, child or adult, was slaughtered where he slept. The women met in the temple of their Goddess after the massacre, bloody weapons still in hand.

The Goddess appeared to them again and extracted a blood oath. The women pledged by the still-glistening blood of their slain husbands and sons that they would devote their lives to the Goddess, emulating her in every way. Each woman vowed neither she, nor any of her female offspring, would ever bow to any man again. The Goddess bade the women retreat to the wild places of the world where she had the most influence, and where she would teach them the ways of the warrior so they may never again be held under the heel of a man. Amazons embrace the warrior ideal as evidenced by the training of every young girl as soon as she is able to walk.





AMAZON PHYSIOLOGY

Illustration of this belief is the amazonian Rite of Passage, in which every amazon must kill a human male to be considered a full adult member of the tribe. Specific theories exist as to the origins of this hatred, supposedly supported by ancient amazonian texts, though they have never been adequately documented or authenticated.

The amazons exhibit a complete disgust with the subservient females of other humanoid races. These women, the amazons believe, are worse than men. A man can not help but be what he is, and it is not within his nature to change. A woman, on the other hand, is the living embodiment of the Goddess, able to bring new life into the world as well as dispatch it into the afterlife. They believe every female should embrace the will of the Goddess and strive to fulfil her true potential. Any woman who allows herself to be ruled by man has turned her back on the Goddess and her fellow women, and is thus beneath contempt. These beliefs may in part explain the manner in which amazons deal with outsiders.

Those intrepid adventurers who encounter amazons will quickly find these warrior women are far from friendly. Religion plays an integral part within an amazon's life, so much so as to be nearly inseparable from any discussion of their state of mind or way of life. Because of the pervasive worship of their Goddess, amazons consider all

males and the vast majority of non-amazon females to be impure and truly evil. They protect their way of life with an efficient viciousness that to outsiders seems to be wanton cruelty. Amazons think little of slaughtering entire parties of adventurers or groups of settlers that venture too close to their chosen lands. To them, this is a simple necessity - no different than slaying dangerous animals that wander into their territory or tending the holy places within their tribal village.

The amazons' close ties to nature and the all-encompassing aspect of their religion make them very wary of arcane magic. So-called 'book magic' is viewed as unnatural and artificial, an attempt by men and weak women to mimic the power of the Goddess. Because of its perceived artificiality, amazons have a strong aversion to arcane magic and are particularly susceptible to its effects. Rarely, a young amazon may manifest arcane powers as she passes through puberty. These sorceresses may be considered blessed with a rare gift from the Goddess, though tribes will remain deeply suspicious of her powers, and so she may face a very lonely life, excluded from the normal day-to-day activities of her sisters. Most tribes, however, will view her as divinely cursed for not being pure enough in thought and deed, and this may lead to exile or outright death.

Adriana raced through the trees, heart pounding. She calculated that Fezzig would not have given up on the path. She prayed to every god and goddess she had ever heard of that her sister was still alive. She had not been able to leave the jungle after the strange-speaking woman had appeared to her. Guilt spurred her steps as she ran as fast as she could through the dense undergrowth.

The ranger skidded to a stop, pulse pounding in her temples. Two of Fezzig's men lay dead on the blood-soaked pathway. She forced herself to move slowly, swords gripped tightly in her hands. Her heart nearly stopped when she saw the small form crumpled at the side of the trail. She dropped her swords and rushed to her sister's side.

'Rabine! Oh, 'Bine, wake up! I'm sorry, I shouldn't have left you with that incompetent ass.' She caught a slight movement of her sister's chest. Adriana fumbled in her pack for her healing kit. She pressed gently against the ugly gash in her sister's side. 'Come on, 'Bine. Fight just once in your life. You have to help me a little.'

Adriana lifted her sister's head and held the small vial of honey-coloured liquid to her lips. She cursed her shaking hands as the potion spilled, but most of it poured into her sister's mouth. Adriana lived three lifetimes of guilt as she waited for the potion to take effect.

Rabine's eyes fluttered open for a moment, 'Ade, he didn't even try to help me.'

HABITAT

Though outwardly human, amazons display a marked difference in outlook from their more 'civilised' cousins in the cities and, in general, are far more in tune with their surroundings, to the extent that their awareness seems remarkably uncanny. However, they have the same basic needs as any other race of human, in terms of food, shelter and fresh water to sustain their culture and continued good health. Their ideals also call for separation between their settlements and the rest of the outside world and so a measure of protection and isolation is also apparent in the placement of their villages.

JUNGLE WARRIORS

With very few exceptions, amazon tribes are only found in the deepest jungles, buried far from the kingdoms and empires of man, dwarf and elf, in an effort to keep the taint of the outside world as distant as possible. The rarity of amazon tribes is often remarked upon but, truly, it is not known whether this is due to their relatively small numbers or their remarkable ability to avoid contact with any not of their race. Villages are extremely well hidden and tribes work hard to ensure no tracks lead directly to their settlement, often creating a wide variety of false trails that will guide any potential invader in a long, circuitous route around their domain. From an early age, amazons are taught not only the arts of battle but also superior wilderness skills allowing them to pass almost unnoticed through their jungle habitat, denying enemies the opportunity to track them back to the village.

Amazons share the jungle with other humanoid tribes and gigantic, deadly reptiles, making every day a struggle for survival. Their wilderness skills, combined with an incredible tenacity all but unseen in other races of humans, allows them to thrive and prosper in this hostile environment and many amazon villages are decades, if not centuries, old.

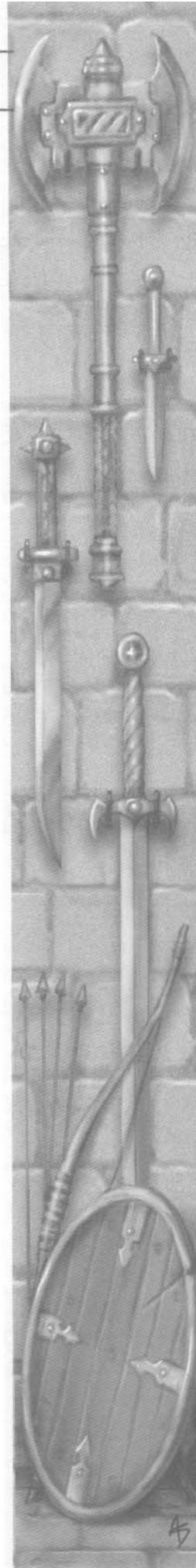
Though cruel and capricious, amazons do not wantonly destroy the environment on which they depend for survival. They have little concept of the balance of nature, as centaurs do, but their pragmatism forbids them tearing down large portions of the forest to build greater structures in their village or to plant larger amounts of crops to support a growing population. Neither will they

over-hunt the wild life of their domain so as to starve themselves later. Amazons govern their population growth strictly so that, once a village has established itself, it rarely expands to any great degree unless outside forces make it unavoidable. However, the perilous life all amazon warriors lead each and every day is often enough to manage their numbers without conscious action on the part of the tribe itself.

SEARCHING FOR AMAZONS

In searching for amazons, explorers and adventurers are advised to use great caution and be wary with each step into their domain. In places where amazons are dominant, the jungle is theirs alone and even strong tribes of humanoids learn to keep far away. Using their intimate knowledge of the surrounding jungle, amazons can track and watch invaders moving towards their village and will never hesitate to mount a ferocious defence against travellers who come too close. With every able-bodied amazon in the village capable of wielding a weapon with great expertise, adventurers may soon find themselves facing an overwhelming enemy who will lay ensnaring traps in their path before launching a devastating assault from the foliage, gaining almost complete surprise every time.

There are many reasons adventurers dare to brave the perils of both forest and amazon weapons in such of these elusive warrior women. Many quest for the legendary *Mother's Milk*, a concoction of great religious significance, all but unknown in the outside world and certain to command a great price. Others may journey to discover the wisdom of the amazon crones and priestesses who are the repository of great knowledge concerning the jungle and its history. The foolish may seek out a tribe simply to test their blades against a race most presume are simple myth, and live to tell the tale. Their relative rarity aside, any search for the amazons must always start by making contact with the other inhabitants of the jungle, those humanoid tribes who may suffer the predations of the warrior women on a continued basis. By gathering tales, stories, legends and witness accounts from such tribes (who may, incidentally, be just as hostile to outsiders as the amazons themselves), an adventurer may gradually close the net upon an amazon settlement, slowly narrowing the scope of his exploration to smaller and smaller areas of the



HABITAT

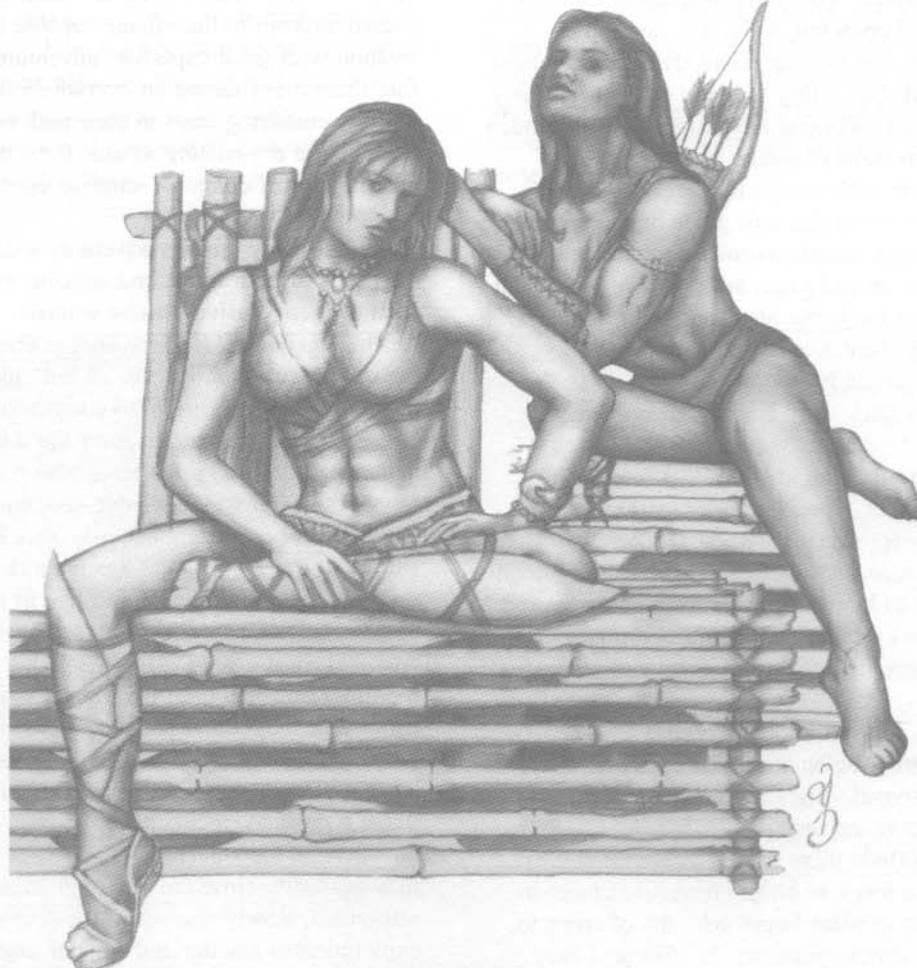
jungle. The domain of a typical amazon tribe may extend for a dozen miles in every direction and without suitable guides or magical assistance, a party may spend literally years combing the dense foliage without finding any sign of the elusive amazons. More commonly, the tribe will locate the adventurers long before any evidence of the amazons is uncovered by those unused to the jungle environment, with predictable and deadly consequences.

IN THE FORESTS

Rarer still are the amazon tribes who dwell within the great forests of the world. Their pugnacious attitude to any not of their own race often sets such tribes in immediate conflict with woodland races such as elves and centaurs who, in turn, will fight hard to eradicate the growing evil of these cruel women from their homeland. Whilst amazons cannot hope to compete with the affinity for the forest present in all sylvan races, their brutally

efficient methods of warfare permit them to dominate a wide area in a very short space of time and, once rooted in a permanent village, are almost impossible to eradicate.

Amazons are extremely well adapted to forest environments and are as much at home as in the steamiest jungle. However, they face greater competition from intelligent races and so often become semi-nomadic, moving their settlement every two or three years when particularly powerful enemies, such as dragons or an alliance amongst sylvan creatures, make their position untenable. Under such circumstances, amazon rangers, highly skilled warriors who have few equals in the forest, range far from the village across many miles of dense woodland, avoiding contact with enemies and locating new domains for the tribe to gain mastery over. In all other respects, their organisation and tribal structure in the forests is much the same as it is in the deepest jungles.



AMAZON SOCIETY

Amazon communities are actually large groupings of one extended family unit or tribe. All members of the village are related to each other in some way as mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts or cousins. It is usually a fairly short line to be drawn between any two given members of the village to find a common ancestor or relative. In any other society, this close bonding of familial ties within a village might lead to quick degradation of the line. However, the amazon practice of capturing males from the outside world and dispatching them soon after their purpose has been fulfilled, keeps the racial stock of the tribe keen and fresh. This tight intermingling of family ties serves to make amazon villages very close-knit and cohesive units.

Amazon tribes are classless, the only distinction drawn between members of the society being based on age. Infants through to girls not yet of childbearing age are referred to as maidens, whilst those capable are called mothers. Those females who have ceased to go into oestrus are termed crones. All three sects are collectively known as sisters to the amazons and none are deemed any more important than the others, for they all have duties to fulfil within the community. This division by age reflects the three-part nature of the amazons' patron Goddess.

Every amazon knows the other members of her village are her sisters, family that is to be nurtured and protected at all costs. This devotion to sisterhood makes amazon villages extremely dangerous to successfully attack. Any threat to the community is met with both staunch resistance and bared steel from every member of the tribe, from the youngest girl to the oldest crone. This strong sense of sisterhood also greatly reduces the incidence of disputes between amazons of the same tribe. If one were to observe an amazon village on any typical day, one would see that amazons are a friendly, outgoing race, little plagued by the petty infighting of most small cultural units.

The area immediately surrounding the village is left intentionally trackless for the excellent woodland skills demonstrated by all amazons make paths through the jungle or forest unneeded. It also adds a

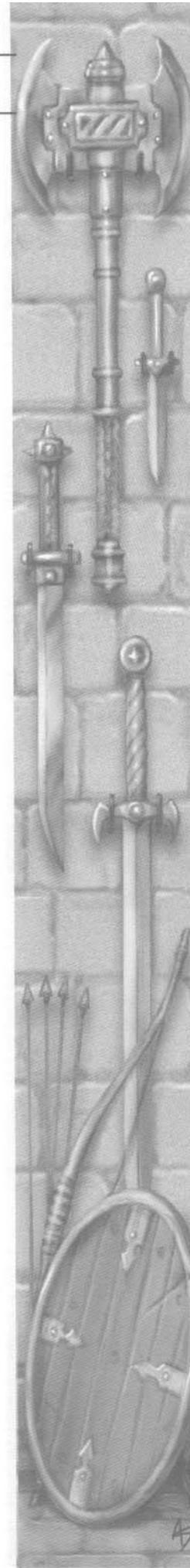
layer of protection for amazonian settlements, as few humanoids are willing to cut their way through the dense undergrowth of the jungle for no good reason. Further away from the village, amazons will create false paths to divert outsiders further away from their homes. During the time preceding *The Growling*, these labyrinthine paths are often rigged with hidden traps to snare unsuspecting males for the needs of the amazons.

Amazon tribes usually range in size from approximately thirty members to well over one hundred. The population is divided by age into rough thirds, with maidens slightly outnumbering crones. The only real limiting factor on the size of an amazon village is the available space and sustenance their territory can support. There are rumours of massive amazon villages of over five hundred members hidden within the furthest recesses of the deepest jungles, though no reliable account of such a settlement has ever been recorded. Given the organisation of amazon society, such rumours are most likely the fanciful dreaming of lonely bards for amazon villages have a very strict physical layout that lends itself to smaller numbers.

AMAZON VILLAGES

The few recorded amazon settlements have all had the same physical layout. The village is located in a natural clearing within the jungle or forest, close to a source of fresh water. In the centre of the village is a large shrine, dedicated to the tripartite Goddess of the amazons and this forms the only truly permanent structure in the village, often being made of intricately carved wood and, more rarely, stone. The icon within the shrine shows the three faces of the Goddess; maiden, mother and crone. This image, usually a beautifully realistic sculpture, is always placed so the maiden faces east, the mother north and the crone west. A long altar is situated before the statue, dark bloody stains marking the channels in its surface.

Thatched huts are arranged in a semi-circle around the central shrine. The occupancy of the huts is stratified by age, with the youngest girls living in the easternmost shelters and the oldest grandmothers living in the westernmost. Unlike most other humanoid villages, there is no distinction between class or occupation where living quarters are concerned and warriors, priestesses and artisans will live side by side under the same roof. The southern quarter of the village is taken up by the elaborate herb gardens of the Goddess.



AMAZON SOCIETY

The arrangement of amazon villages strongly reflects their religious beliefs. The rising sun represents the maiden aspect of the Goddess for it is the beginning of each new day, as maidenhood is the beginning of each new life. The garden, most needful of the sun's warming rays, is located to the south and the tending of it also represents the cyclical beliefs of the amazons. The setting sun represents the crone aspect of the Goddess, the waning of life mirrored in the waning of the day. The primary aspect of the Goddess, that of the mother moon, lies between dusk and dawn and is physically represented as the north. The main trials of life in the jungle are the domain of the mothers, amazons in their prime, and are usually carried out at night under the watchful eye of the mother moon.

The placement of the herb garden to the south, to the rear of the image in the shrine, symbolises the Goddess' ownership of the grounds, though, in her giving nature, all her daughters are welcome to wander its paths. The maidens of the village perform the planting of the herbs whilst the tending of the garden and the nurturing of plants to fruition is the domain of the mothers. Harvesting the herbs is the task of the crones. The herbs are then given to the priestesses of the Goddess, drawn from all age groups, for preparation and distribution.



MOTHER'S MILK

The religion of the amazons pervades every aspect of their life, from the organisation of their villages to the routine of their day. One of the most notable daily rituals of the amazons is the consumption of a herbal concoction known as *Mother's Milk*. The exact formulation of this sacrament is perhaps the most closely guarded secret of the amazons.

After the herbs that comprise *Mother's Milk* are harvested from the village garden, they are given to the priestesses of the village. In a daylong ceremony, the herbs are cleaned, crushed and blessed by three priestesses, each representing one aspect of the Goddess, and mixed with purified water and other unknown ingredients to form a thick type of mead. The brew is poured into a consecrated vessel and placed upon the altar of the Goddess over night. At the first light of dawn, the priestesses return and strain the mead three times over, yielding a sweet, milky beverage that is given to the mothers with their morning meal. The hand-carved ritual cups from which the amazons drink are used

only for *Mother's Milk* and each amazon will carve her own cup as part of her Rite of Passage. Maidens and crones do not partake in this sacrament, though through the tending of the garden and their potential role as priestesses, they are integral to its concoction.

There is considerable speculation as to the physical effects of *Mother's Milk*. Some believe the daily consumption suppresses the natural fertility cycle of

the amazons so that it only occurs biannually, whilst others claim the sacrament induces oestrus in the amazon. A more plausible theory is that this brew is responsible for the increased percentage of female births to amazons as well as their remarkably painless deliveries and quick recovery after giving birth. *Mother's Milk* also has a slightly intoxicating effect and so it is always served with food and in relatively small doses. Those few who have survived large scale battles with amazons report the warriors drank some sort of libation before entering battle that made them even more ferocious and tenacious fighters than usual.



Mother's Milk in Battle

Games Masters may wish to employ *Mother's Milk* in large battles whenever player characters encounter amazons. An amazon warrior under the influence of *Mother's Milk* will continue to fight normally until she is at -6 hit points, after which point she cannot be healed by any means, whether mundane or magical. At -6 hit points or below, the amazon will follow the normal rules for negative hit points, dying when she reaches -10.

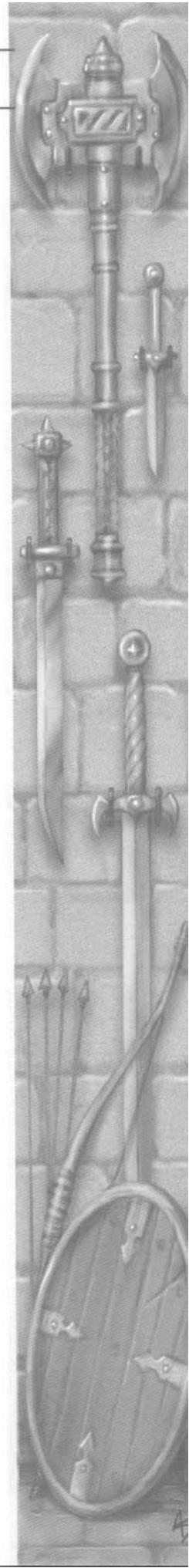
Amazon player characters are unlikely to possess this sacrament as they are cut off from their tribe and have no way to obtain the rare concoction. Captured amazons will instantly destroy any *Mother's Milk* in their possession rather than let it fall into non-amazonian hands, though a thief may be able to sell a dose for as much as 500 gp to sages, wizards, alchemists or other adventurers.

The consumption of *Mother's Milk* is one example of daily ritual in the lives of the amazons. There are several others that occur less frequently but are no less important to the warrior women. Two of these mark an amazon's progression through life. They are *The Becoming* and *The Waning*.

THE BECOMING

The first Rite of Passage in an amazon's life usually occurs in the spring of her fifteenth year or when she experiences her first oestrus. It is at this point that she is considered ready to enter the next stage of her life, motherhood, and take the blood oath all of her predecessors before have vowed. Each young maiden is granted a separate rite. An amazon's training in the ways of the warrior begin as soon as she can walk and so by her fifteenth year, she is more than ready for her first test.

The Becoming is an amazonian term referring to the set of rituals that comprise the Rite of Passage into adulthood. The most significant events in this process are an amazon's first kill and her solemn oath to the Goddess and her sisters. The first kill a maiden makes is required to be a male, preferably close to her own age though any male is viable, that she locates herself. Quite often the false pathways surrounding the village are utilised to track down and slay the male, as well as water sources near outlying settlements and prime hunting grounds. Amazons are very aware of the areas of their



'My lord, I think we can escape. Your wife might still-'

'My wife looks like a pig compared to these beauties. They seemed to respond when I said I was a lord. Just sit back and enjoy the hospitality.' Fezzig's one good eye leered at the young maiden before him as she filled his cup for the third time. Her thin garment accentuated her figure in a way that made her seem more naked than if she had been unclothed.

'Perhaps you shouldn't drink that, sir.'

Fezzig laughed and pinched the rump of a passing serving girl. 'Look at the weapons on them man. If they wanted us dead, they wouldn't bother to poison us. Drink. That is an order.'

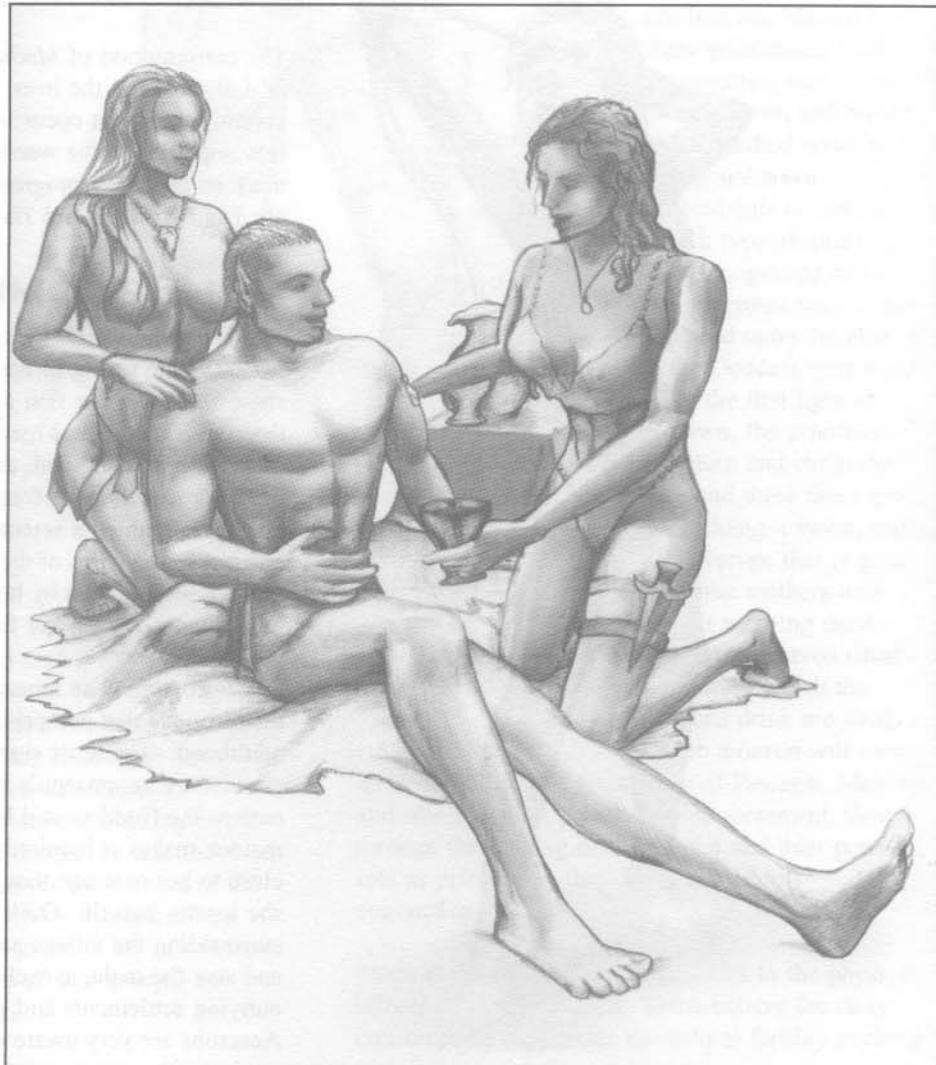
The lord's officer closed his mouth with a click of teeth and took a drink. He did have to admit the heavily spiced wine was excellent. Perhaps it would not be so terrible a thing to accept the women's hospitality.

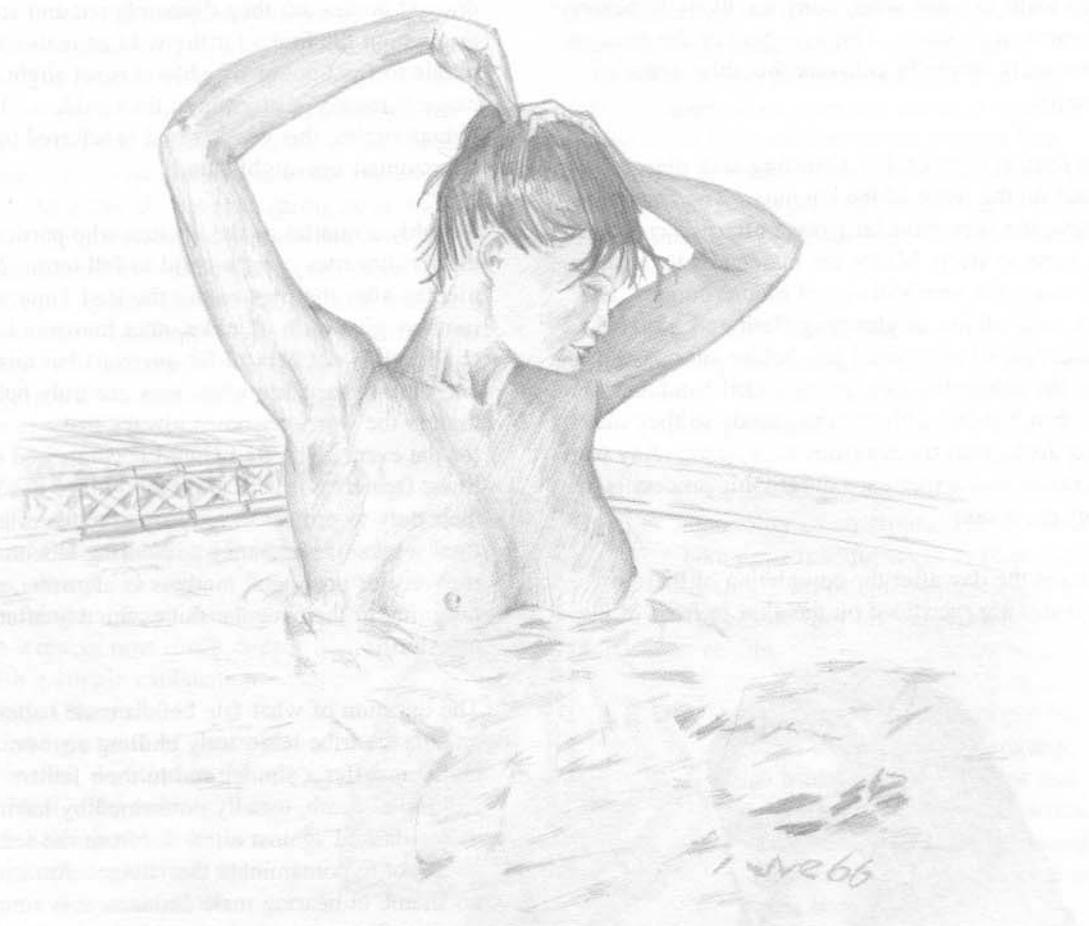
territory that come into contact with the outside world.

The maiden must find and stalk her prey under the careful observation of the Red Guard. The Red Guard also ensures the safety of the candidate in the unlikely event she should be outnumbered or ambushed whilst fulfilling her task. These guardians also serve to confirm the kill was carried out in a manner acceptable to the Goddess, specifically in hand-to-hand combat. After the maiden has slain the sacrificial male she returns to the village. It is imperative that she not clean the blood from her weapon.

When the maiden returns to the village, she travels directly to the central shrine, entering it from the east, faces the maiden side of the image and lifts her weapon

above her head. She then circles the image sunwise, reciting the vow of the amazons. After the maiden has recited her oath and completed a full circuit around the image she exits the shrine to the north,





symbolising her new station in life as an adult. A feast follows the taking of vows where the maiden is given her first drink of *Mother's Milk*. She will now be allowed to participate in the fertility rites of *The Growling* and will move to the mothers' quarters within the village.

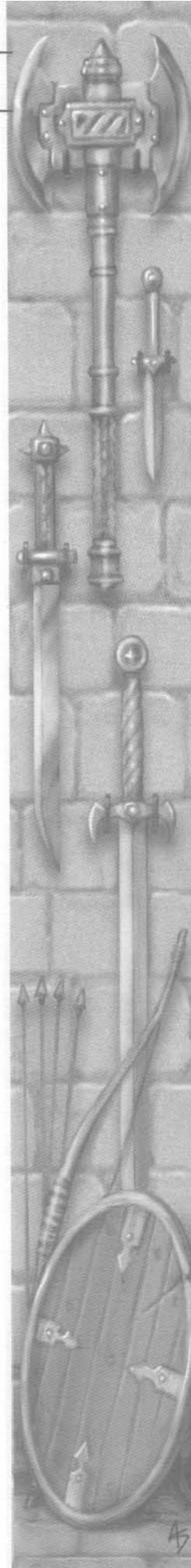
'By the blood of this man, I pledge none shall own my sisters or myself. By the blood of this man, I pledge I shall put none before my sisters or myself. By the blood of this man, I pledge to follow in the footsteps of the Goddess until I join her in the divine heavens of her garden.'

The Vow of the Amazons as reported by Bartolo Everande

THE GROWLING

The majority of amazons encountered by members of the outside world are those under the effects of *The Growling*, usually around the time of the spring and fall equinoxes. These are very tumultuous times of year for the amazons, for when a mother enters oestrus, she sheds what little veneer of civilisation she possesses. She becomes driven and aggressive in her nature to the point of becoming nearly feral - this is a very dangerous time for any male to be in close proximity of an amazon village.

Amazons enter their rut at roughly the same time and because of their ingrained hatred of males, reproduction takes on religious significance. In the weeks preceding the equinox, males are harvested with ruthless efficiency. These men are kept very closely guarded by the most beautiful and able of warriors, fed the finest foods, given the finest wines and entertained by the most nubile dancers the



village has to offer. Herbal additives to the food and drink the males receive dulls their senses and makes them loath to leave what many are likely to perceive as a heaven on earth. The members of the amazon community carefully cultivate this false sense of security.

The fertility rites of *The Growling* take place after sunset on the night of the equinox. The amazons believe the rites must take place after the crone sun has gone to sleep, before the maiden dawn awakes and under the watchful eye of mother moon. The rites, wild affairs of gleaming flesh and frenzied music, last all night until just before sunrise. At this time the exhausted men are shackled hand and foot, and then blinded with searing brands so they may never look upon the amazons ever again. Any pain the males may experience during this process is of short duration.

At noon the day after the completion of these rites, the males are sacrificed on the altar in front of the

image of the Goddess where their throats are slit and their blood collected in large brass bowls. Their drained bodies are then dismembered and scattered throughout the forest for the wild animals of the jungle to feast upon. The blood is set alight by magical means in offering to the Goddess. In some vulgar circles, this whole ritual is referred to as the 'amazonian one-night-stand.'

Roughly a quarter of the women who participate in the fertility rites carry a child to full term. Nine months after the rites comes the Red Time, when all mothers give birth. Unlike other humanoid races, childbirth is not painful for amazons but this is the one time in their life when they are truly helpless though the warrior women always make provision for the event. The Red Guard is comprised of the finest fighters not with child the village has for it is their duty to protect the expectant mothers in their final weeks of pregnancy and during labour. The recovery of post-natal mothers is alarming, most returning to their regular duties the day after they give birth.

The question of what fate befalls male babes born to an amazon tribe has a truly chilling answer. Male children suffer a similar end to their fathers, a quick and brutal death, usually performed by having their brains dashed against a tree far from the settlement so as not to contaminate the village. Amazons feel no shame in bearing male children, it is simply seen as an unfortunate accident, with the mother being given increased doses of *Mother's Milk* in the weeks before the next *Growling*.

THE WANING

The second life-change ritual in an amazon's existence occurs in the fall after her last oestrus, usually between her forty-fifth and fiftieth years. After she has reached an age where she can no longer bear children, an amazon moves into her final role in life as a crone. Little is known about this ritual as it takes place completely within the village, unlike *The Becoming* and *The Growling*. The transition from mother to crone is referred to as *The Waning*. After this ceremony is completed, the amazon assumes her new role as teacher and mentor. Many of the daily routines within the village are carried out under the wise guidance of the crones.

The ritual begins with the mother entering the shrine from the north. She places her ritual cup upon the altar as a gift to the Goddess, as she will no longer



have a use for it. These cups are later placed upon shelves within the shrine and it is not uncommon for hundreds of cups to completely cover the interior walls within particularly old and well-established villages. The mother makes a full sunwise circle around the image of the Goddess, reaffirming her original oath. After her circuit is complete she exits the shrine to the west and moves to the crones' quarters. Amazons do not fear ageing as do the women of the other humanoid races for the bond of sisterhood within their tribe gives each member a sense of equality and importance, no matter what their age. One finds that crones, like maidens, tend to be very calm and reserved in comparison to the more aggressive mothers of the village.

THE WARRIOR IDEAL

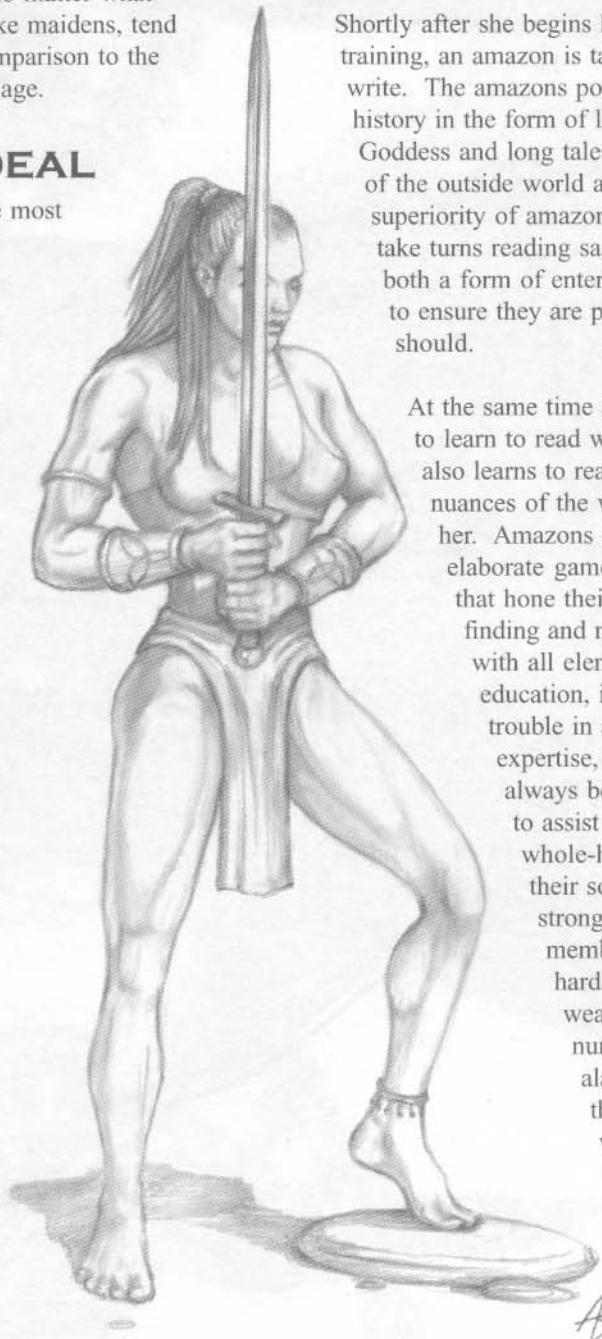
These rites and rituals represent the most prevalent of those practised by the amazons, though the all-encompassing nature of their goddess-worship runs much deeper than such a simple explanation may imply. The second distinguishing aspect of amazonian society is their devotion to the warrior ideal. The amazons have elevated their martial skills to a level approaching true art, to be envied by any warrior of the outside world.

As a general rule, crones see to the teaching of maidens, though there are some instances where the mothers assist in the education of the young, particularly when the village has been engaged in war and casualties have placed a burden on the entire village. For the most part, however, the mothers of amazon society are busy enough with the hunting, gathering of fruits, protection of the village and child-bearing and are thus denied having a more active role in the education processes of the young. Mothers comprise the frontline troops of all amazon tribes, with crones and maidens forming the final line of defence should the village itself be attacked.

Every girl is trained in the use of bow, spear and sword as soon as she is able to walk unaided and the craftswomen of the tribe will create special weapons sized for small hands and developing arms. When the child outgrows her weapons, she is given the next size appropriate after she passes a rigorous test administered by a member of the current Red Guard. These weapons are often handed down from generation to generation, mother to daughter, one of the few instances of familial specificity found in amazon society.

Shortly after she begins her weapons training, an amazon is taught to read and write. The amazons possess a rich literary history in the form of lessons from the Goddess and long tales detailing the evils of the outside world and the inevitable superiority of amazons. The maidens take turns reading sagas to their elders as both a form of entertainment and testing to ensure they are progressing as they should.

At the same time a young girl begins to learn to read written language, she also learns to read the signs and nuances of the wilderness around her. Amazons of all ages engage in elaborate games of hide-and-seek that hone their skills in both finding and not being found. As with all elements of an amazon's education, if a girl is having trouble in any given area of expertise, her sisters will always be more than willing to assist her. Amazons whole-heartedly believe their society is only as strong as its weakest member, so they strive hard to eradicate any weakness amongst their number. It can be alarming to those in the outside world how well they succeed in this.



AMAZON RACIAL TRAITS

Amazons are known for their superior abilities in battle, fierce independence and a bitter hatred of any outside their tribe. Coming from within the deepest jungles and forests, amazons can often have a hard time adjusting to more civilised lands but they always do so on their own terms, fighting hard to maintain their sense of identity. Despite all the rumours and speculations circulating this remote race of humans, amazons are by no means primitive and should never be underestimated by an enemy.

Personality: Amazons are friendly, sociable and gregarious – when they are within their own tribe and amongst their own kind. To the outside world, they seem cruel, capricious and often truly evil. The ways of the amazons are not those of civilisation and many have trouble understanding what actually motivates them. An amazon's first obligation is to protect her tribe and sisters from all the wickedness that exists in the outside world. To her, the ends really do justify the means, making this race appear especially vindictive, bloodthirsty and even barbaric.

Physical Description: Amazons appear as stunningly attractive human females – all males born in an amazon tribe are sacrificed soon after birth. Their beauty, like their jet-black hair, seems a dominant racial trait, completely unblemished by their mating with those from the outside world. Most amazons are less than six feet tall and have either ebony black or pale white skin, often mixing the two within the same tribe. Every amazon has very dark eyes and is considered an adult at around fourteen to sixteen years old. Most live to around sixty, though a few have been known to live much, much longer.

Relations: Famous for their cruelty to other races, amazons bear a great hatred for any intelligent life outside of their own tribe. They have a particular enmity for the males of most species, whom they believe have always treated females with disrespect. It is the goal of all amazons to reverse this injustice,

though it has been noted that they absolutely detest any subservient female.

Alignment: Born with a fierce independence, amazons enjoy their freedom and will fight hard to preserve their way of life. They lean towards the darker side of neutrality, where the end always justifies the means, no matter what the final goal may be. They are also known to be cruel to any race other than their own.

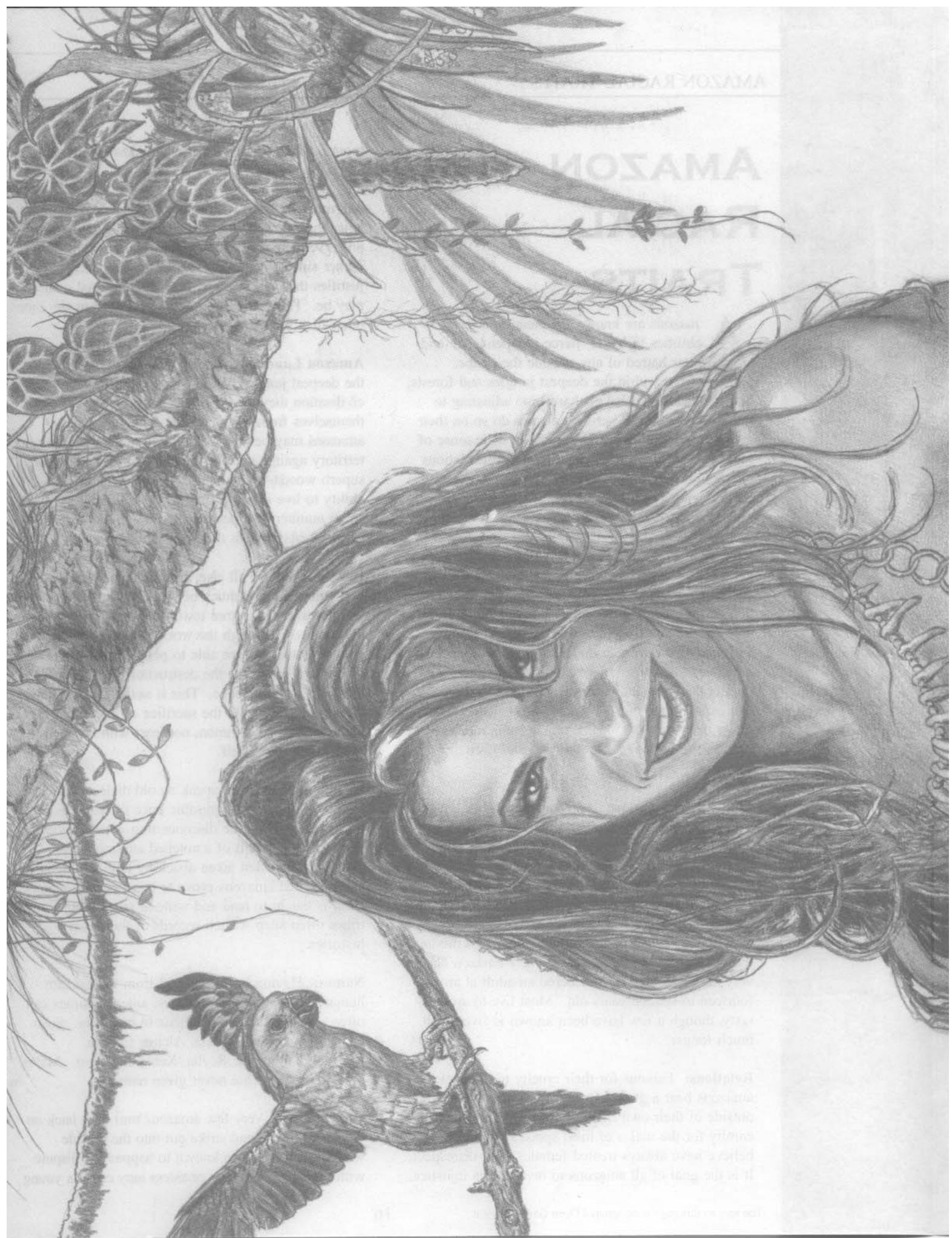
Amazon Lands: Amazons are usually found within the deepest jungles of the world, cut off from the civilisation they have worked hard to separate themselves from. Within their domains, tribes of amazons may be found, ruthlessly defending their territory against invaders and other tribes. They are superb woods-women and often demonstrate the ability to live in perfect harmony with nature. A small number of tribes may also be found in the great forests, though these are much rarer.

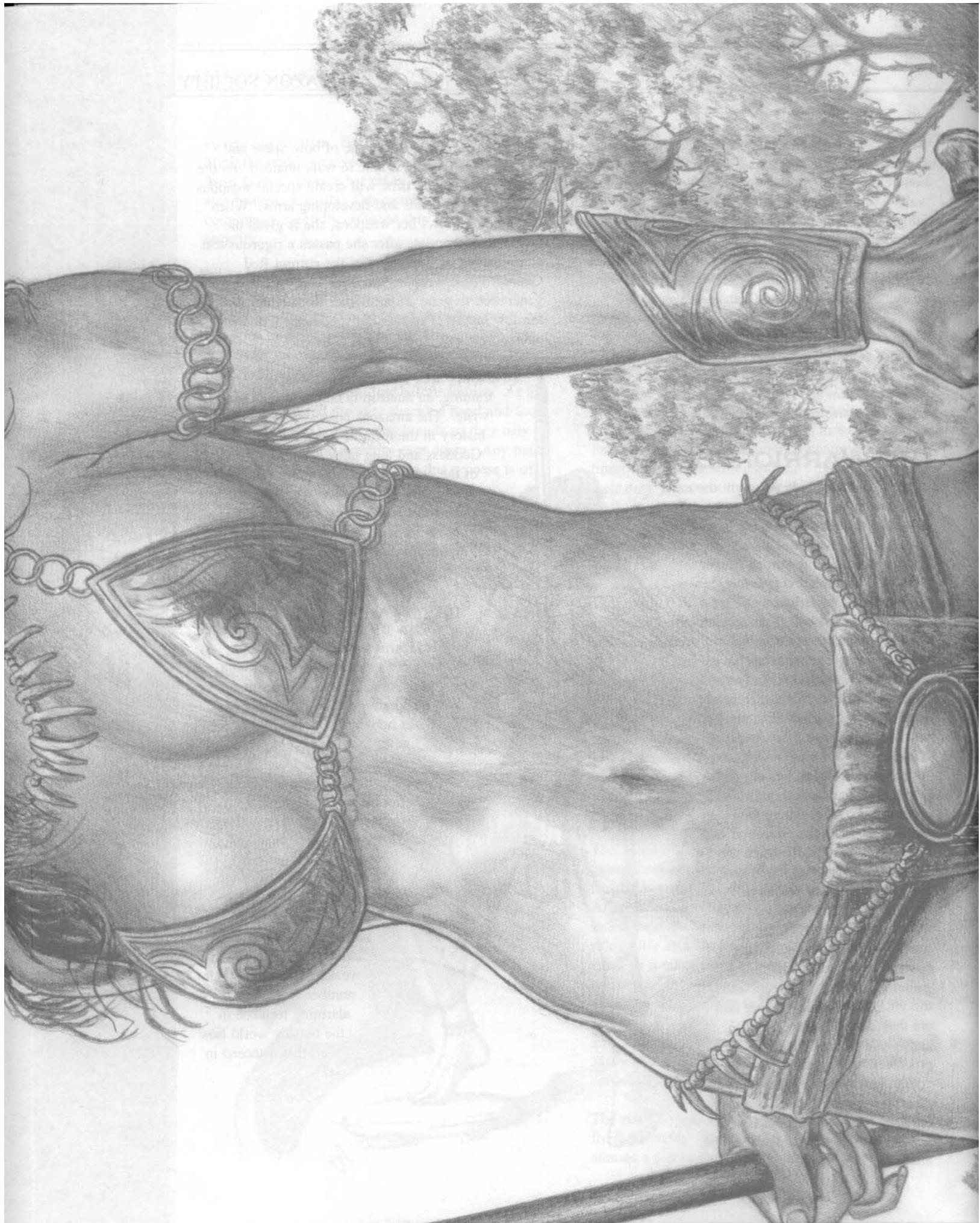
Religion: Above all else, amazons worship their moon goddess and much of the stricture of their whole society is geared towards religious observances. Through the worship of the moon goddess, amazons are able to practice their methods of war and prosecute the destruction of other races with a clear conscience. This is noted for being a bloody religion, with the sacrifice of intelligent life being extremely common, not least with any male born to the tribe itself.

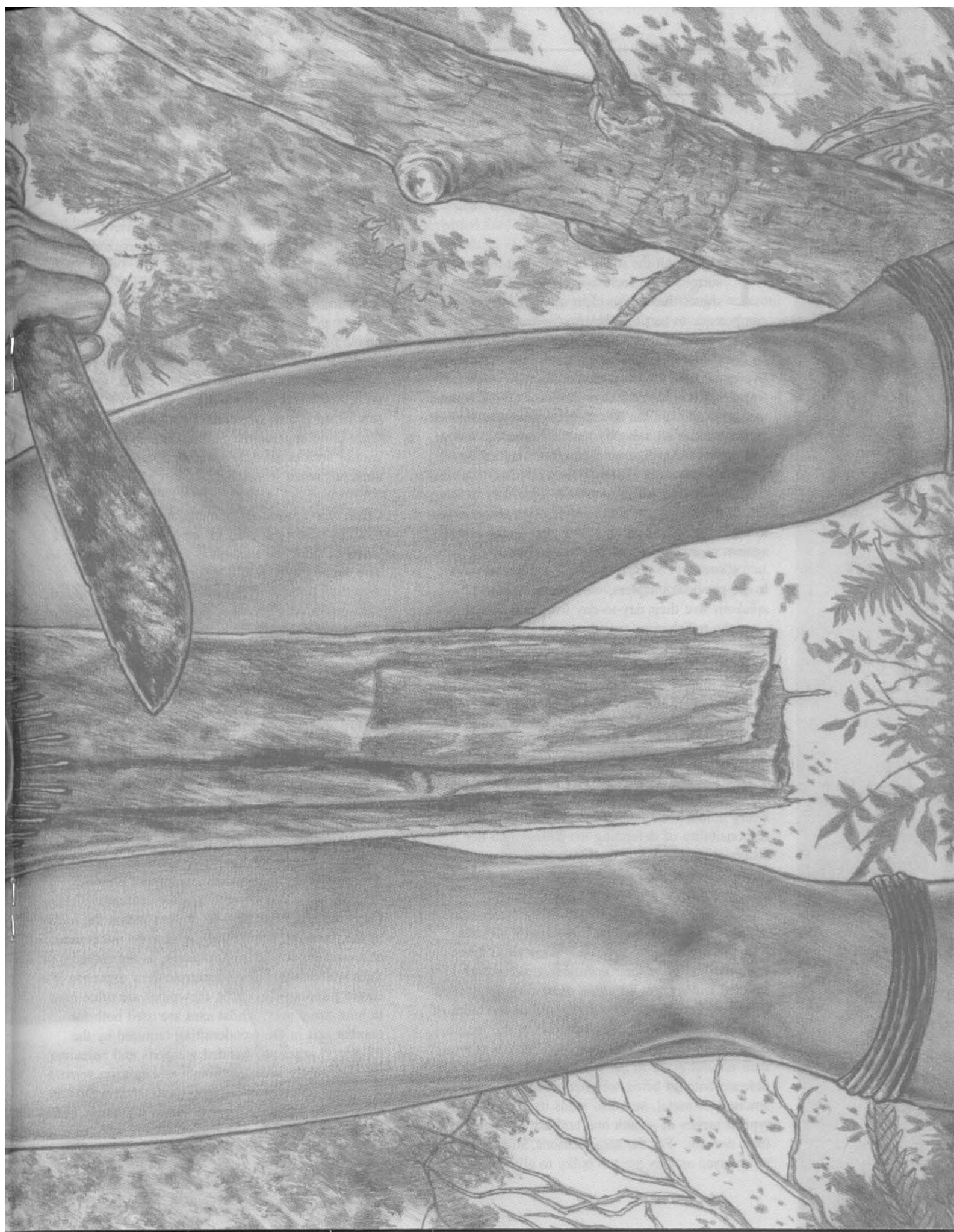
Language: Amazons speak an old dialect of the common tongue, recognisable once the ear has been trained though a little disconcerting when looking down the long shaft of a notched amazon arrow. Outsiders are often taken aback by how intelligent and educated amazons prove to be, for every woman child is taught to read and write at an early age, and tribes often keep written records of their own histories.

Names: Having been removed from mainstream human civilisation for centuries, amazon names can often sound strange and archaic to outsiders. Such names may include Adara, Alcina, Corella, Laodamia, Nympha, Scylla, Xenia and Zeva. Males born to amazons are never given names.

Adventurers: Very few amazons turn their back on their way of life and strike out into the outside world, but it has been known to happen. A dispute with the tribal leader or priestess may cause a young







Nympha

Amazon Ranger

and fierce amazon to leave her tribe behind, and more than one amazon has been found attempting to smuggle her male child away from certain death at the hands of her sisters. Amazons may also enter the outside world as a result of the destruction of their tribe – with nothing else to fall back on, they begin the exploration of the world, bringing their hard and uncompromising beliefs to all they meet. Every amazon is a powerful warrior and, once they have adjusted to life outside of the tribe, they can readily find work for bow and blade.

AMAZON RACIAL TRAITS

† Medium-size: As medium-size creatures, amazons have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

† Amazon base speed is 40 feet, so long as she is in no, light or medium armour. If she is otherwise encumbered, her base speed drops to 30 feet. This bonus does not stack with a Barbarian's Fast Movement, should the amazon ever multiclass.

† +2 racial bonus to Climb, Hide, Jump, Move Silently and Wilderness Lore checks when in jungle or forest terrain. The skills and capabilities of an amazon seem almost superhuman when in her own environment, but quickly disappear when removed from the comfort of bark and leaf.

† +2 racial bonus on saving throws against poison, -2 racial penalty on saving throws against arcane magic. Amazons are a hardy race, and have much experience with both using and being inflicted with poison. However, they view arcane magic as unnatural and have few practitioners within their tribes and thus have few defences against it.

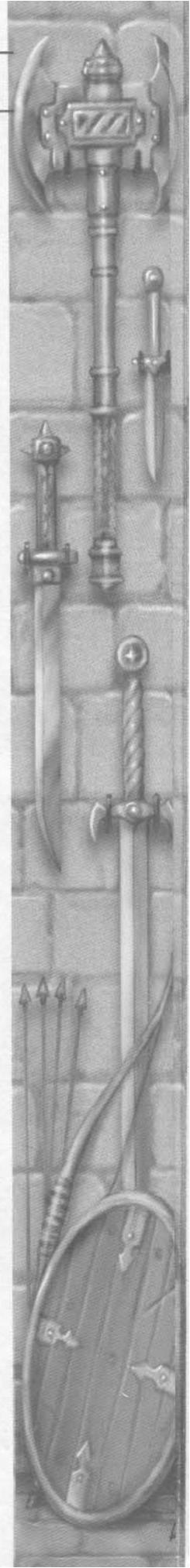
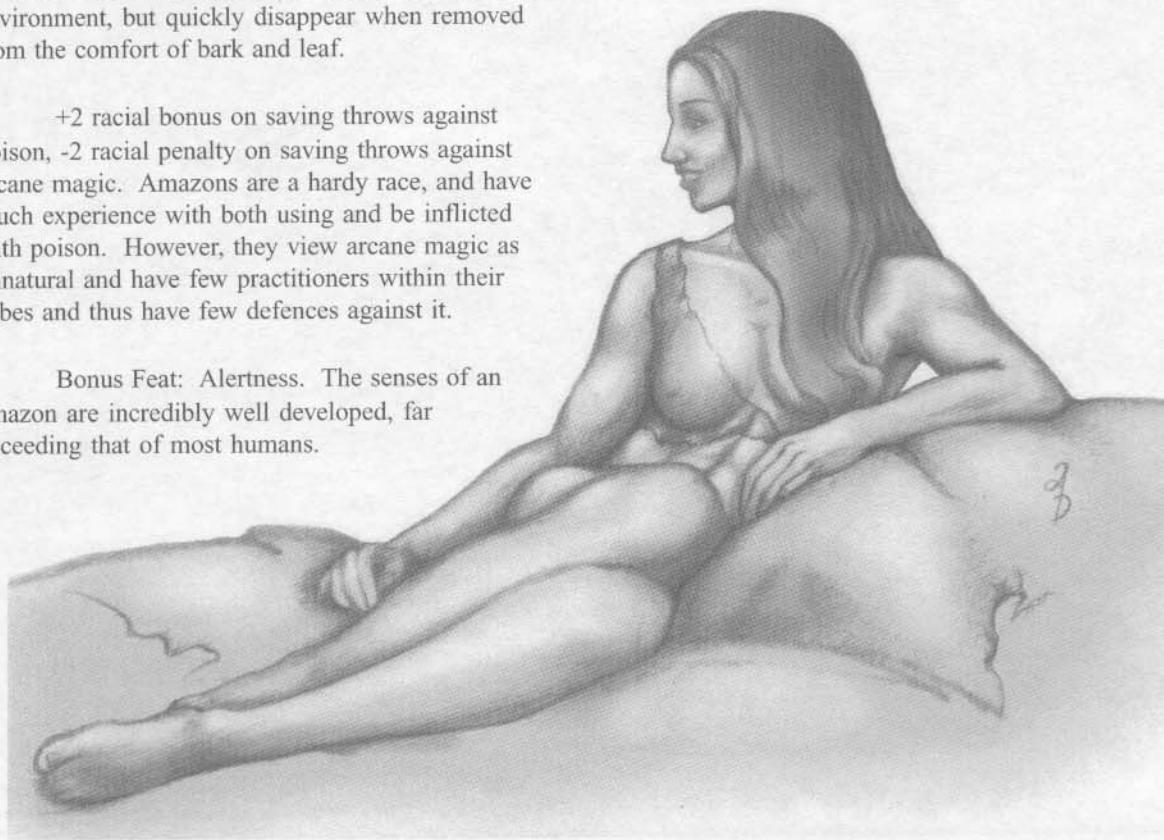
† Bonus Feat: Alertness. The senses of an amazon are incredibly well developed, far exceeding that of most humans.

† Proficient with light armour, shortbow, composite shortbow, shortspear and longsword. Amazons depend on their warrior skills for their very survival and so every woman child is taught how to use these weapons at an early age.

† Automatic Languages: Common (an archaic, but recognisable, dialect). Bonus Languages: Elven, Goblin and Sylvan.

† Prohibited Classes: Barbarian, Bard, Monk, Paladin and Wizard. An amazon character may not choose any of these classes at 1st level. However, any amazon character leaving her tribe and entering the outside world may freely multiclass into these classes on achieving a higher character level.

† Favoured Class: Ranger. A multiclass amazon's ranger class does not count when determining whether she suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing (see Core Rulebook I for further details). The skills of a ranger come easily to the amazons, and many are trained in such from a very early age.



METHODS OF WARFARE

Through all the mists of myth and legend that surround the reclusive amazons, nothing shines through so clear as their utter competence in battle. They are renowned as a race of warrior women, able to engage any brute male on an equal footing and emerge victorious. Their tribes live in some of the most dangerous regions of the world and it is by their skill in bow and blade alone that have allowed the amazons to thrive even whilst confronted on all sides by hostile humanoid tribes and gigantic reptilian monsters that may easily quash a lesser race. Every young maiden, from the time she first walks, is schooled vigorously in the arts of combat, from simple but skilled weapon use to the co-ordinated actions of a tribe going to war against a great enemy.

In the previous chapters, we have examined how amazons live their day-to-day lives and how they view the treacherous outside world as a source of all evils. Here will we look at how amazons have survived the attentions of enemies and explorers alike to maintain their strong culture and sense of identity, purely through their own tenacious resolve, dedicated belief in their Goddess and the skilled use of weaponry and tactics.

ARMS AND EQUIPMENT

Every able-bodied amazon is charged with the responsibility of defending her village and her sisters against any potential invader. Every one of them is well-tutored in the use of arms and armour and they use them with ruthless efficiency.

Amazons are fully capable of forging their own weapons and armour and rarely trust those taken from the bodies of their enemies. Leather and studded leather armour is the most commonly used by tribes, though many will also utilise the hides of great beasts they slay whilst patrolling the jungle. This lighter protection allows the amazons to use their natural grace to aid in their own personal defence without being weighed down by great amounts of metal, and also lends itself to their typical tactics of stealth and ambush throughout their domain. For the same reasons, shields are rarely used as they are too bulky to allow a warrior

to slip silently through the foliage and so a great many amazons learn to use two weapons in combat instead. Their armour tends to be highly decorative, with coloured strands and beads woven into the material, which is often dyed in a variety of dark green and red shades which aids the amazons to blend into the surrounding jungle.

Such armour tends to cover far less of an amazon's body than might be expected amongst other human races, for they strive to maintain their mobility and stealth at all costs. However, all are taught how to utilise such armour to the greatest effect, rolling with blows and intentionally taking strikes on reinforced leather or studded armbands. In this way, there is no appreciable difference between the leather armour used by other races and that of the amazons when in combat.

Chain shirts and heavier metal armours are never worn by amazons, even for ceremonial purposes or when found to be enchanted with powerful magicks. The penalty they would pay in stealth for such increased protection is unacceptable to the amazon warrior who relies on her skill, speed and stealth to defeat her enemies.

Shortbow, spears, and longswords are the typical weapons of the amazon and every maiden is instructed in their use. Amazons can prove to be highly competent in forging and crafting such weaponry and it is not unusual to see a high proportion of masterworked items in a tribe of any great size, even amongst the less skilled warriors. With no concept of money or barter between the maidens, mothers and crones of a tribe, all work hard for the good of their sisters and so those forging weapons tend to strive to ensure every warrior has the best quality equipment possible.

Other weapons will also be present within the ranks of the amazons, though they tend to be much rarer and used for specialised purposes, as the majority of their warriors tend to concentrate their expertise in a single weapon. However, blowpipes are often used to hunt timid prey, whilst axes are used both for combat and in the woodcrafting required by the village. Large, two-handed weapons and polearms are very rarely seen for though any amazon warrior is more than capable of using them, such weaponry tends to be highly restrictive within the jungle and is anathema to their style of warfare.

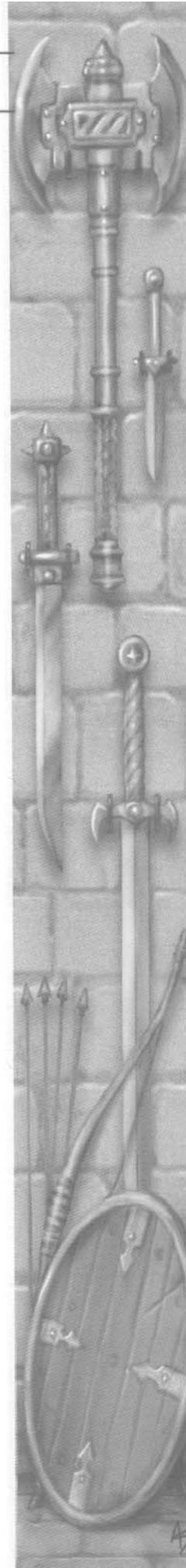
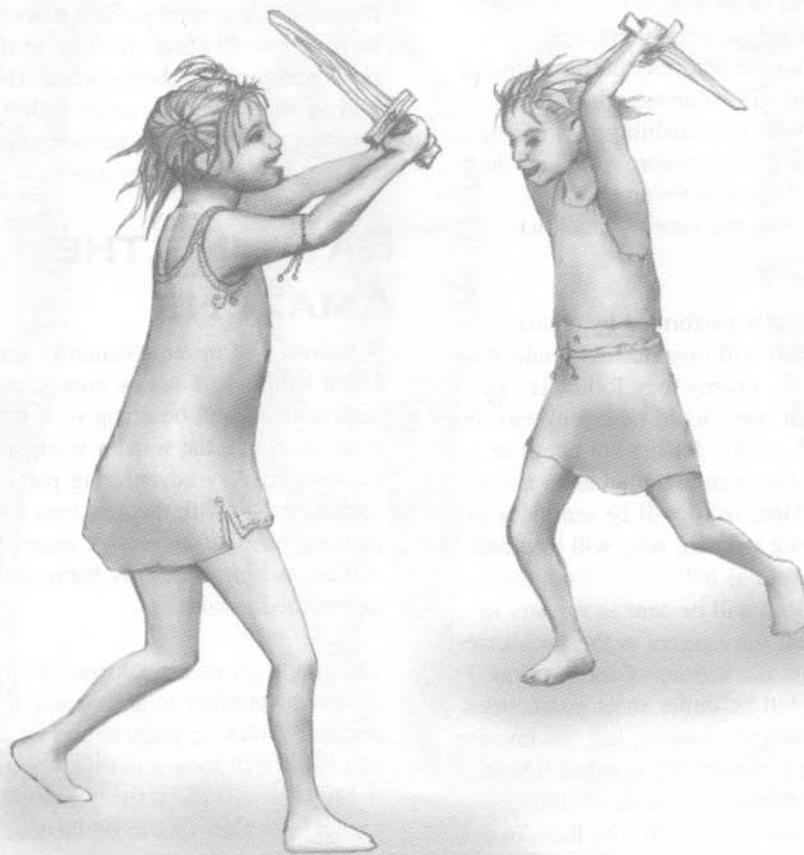
WARRIOR WOMEN

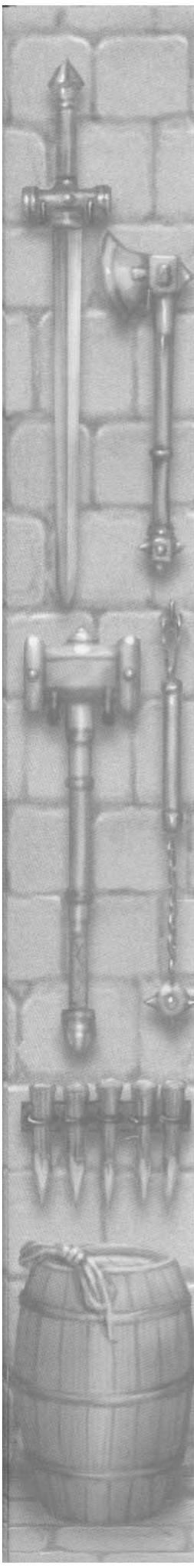
Every amazon within a village will be considered a warrior first and foremost by her sisters, regardless of her actual speciality and it is true, every amazon possesses great skill in combat. However, there are a number of amazons in each tribe who forego the path of the true warrior or fighter and instead hone their skills in other areas. They do so with no disgrace from their sisters who understand the necessity of their talents in keeping the village safe from the outside world.

A great many adopt the path of the ranger, a role well-suited to the amazons' way of life. Their superior wilderness skills and close affinity with the Goddess make them excellent scouts and many range throughout the tribe's domain for days on end, patrolling for enemies and often capable of turning them back single handed. During *The Growling*, it will be the primary responsibility of each amazon scout to locate and secure the present whereabouts of known humanoid tribes and to be aware of any newcomers to the area. They will often be found leading groups of amazon warriors whenever the

tribe is required to fight at the furthest reaches of their domain and beyond. Rogues are extremely rare amongst amazon tribes but when they do appear, they often adopt the same role as rangers for whilst they may not have the full blessing of the Goddess, their skill in stealth is often unmatched by any of their sisters.

Whilst still considered equals in all things, amazon priestesses gain a great deal of respect from their sisters and may even be held somewhat in awe by young maidens for their relationship with the Goddess. In battle, the priestesses are often well protected by their sisters but are fully capable of combat themselves and rarely shy away from confrontation with their enemies. They are rarely found in the patrols of the domain, but nearly always lead larger attacks against great monsters or enemy tribes, where their divinely granted magicks both protect sisters and smite opponents. It is interesting to note that, despite their differing powers, amazons make little distinction between priestesses of the Goddess and the few druids that occasionally rise from the sisterhood.





METHODS OF WARFARE

Though many amazon tribes will automatically revile and even cast out any sister seen to be cursed with the affliction of arcane sorcery, a few may be a little more compassionate and whilst she will never be truly part of the sisterhood, such a sorceress may be a potent ally for a tribe. Though extremely uncommon, the flow of magic through an amazon's veins is an awesome force and sorceresses tend to develop far faster in their skill than their more civilised counterparts. This in turn can provide a great shock to any attacker who expects to face nothing more severe than divine magic, only to be blasted where he stands by a finely crafted fireball or lightning bolt. Amazon sorceresses are still considered warriors by the tribe, though the ravages of their art often places them at a distinct disadvantage. However, as she rises in strength and skill, the sorceress will quickly find she has the sheer raw power to defeat many of the tribe's enemies single-handed, an ability she will harness at every opportunity in a desperate attempt to be seen as a full member of the sisterhood.

STEALTH AND SILENCE

Though they possess a skill in arms that far exceeds that of most humans, amazons do not rely solely on the speed and strength of their blows to defeat their enemies, for they are all too aware that many dangers exist in the jungle that may not be defeated by simple force alone. Thus, amazon tribes have developed the extraordinary capability of tracking their enemies for many miles before revealing their presence, waiting in readiness for any sign of weakness that will signal the time to attack has arrived.

Such tracking is normally performed by a small number of rangers who will operate independently, no matter how great the enemy they follow is. In the unlikely event that one should be discovered, the others will draw back a little further but continue to track the invader. If the enemy continues to travel ever closer to the village, word will be sent back to every available fighting woman, who will assemble as a group perhaps as far as half a mile from the invader. Young maidens will be sent as runners to relay information from the rangers to the priestesses in order to co-ordinate the actions of the amazon warriors, though all will be under strict instructions not to approach the rangers directly, lest the invaders become aware of the presence of the tribe. These maidens will secrete themselves in dense foliage and lay low, waiting for a ranger to find them in order to send forth a message.

Many tribes will have pre-designated ambush sites strung throughout their domain and rangers will often try to draw an enemy towards one, either through the use of traps, false trails, or simply revealing herself and enticing a pursuit – there are few races who can keep up with a lithe and agile amazon as she races through the jungle. Against particularly large numbers of invaders, the rangers will often try to draw small groups of enemies away from the main force in this manner, pulling them apart and into the waiting weapons of the main body of gathered amazon warriors where they will be slain by overwhelming numbers.

Occasionally, an amazon sorceress may also work alone, where she will use both her stealth and her arcane skills to locate and destroy large numbers of enemies outright. Her talents often make it difficult to fight alongside her sisters, but a powerful sorceress can prove to be a great ally for a tribe battling invaders, particularly if they are employing arcane magic themselves.

Blow for blow, the typical amazon warrior is a far superior fighter to that of any other race but by utilising the tribe as a whole, with all its differing talents, the sisterhood becomes exponentially more powerful. Amazons possess a great discipline when battling invaders and are fully confident of their skills and those of their sisters. Those few who survive their first encounter with the incredible prowess of the warrior women often swear to never set foot in their territory again.

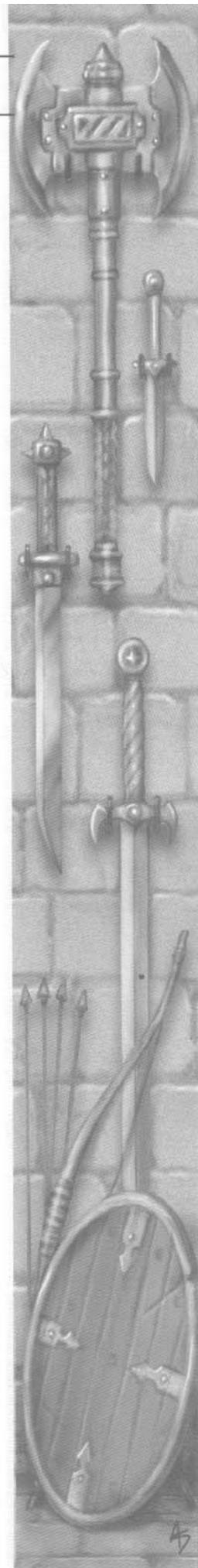
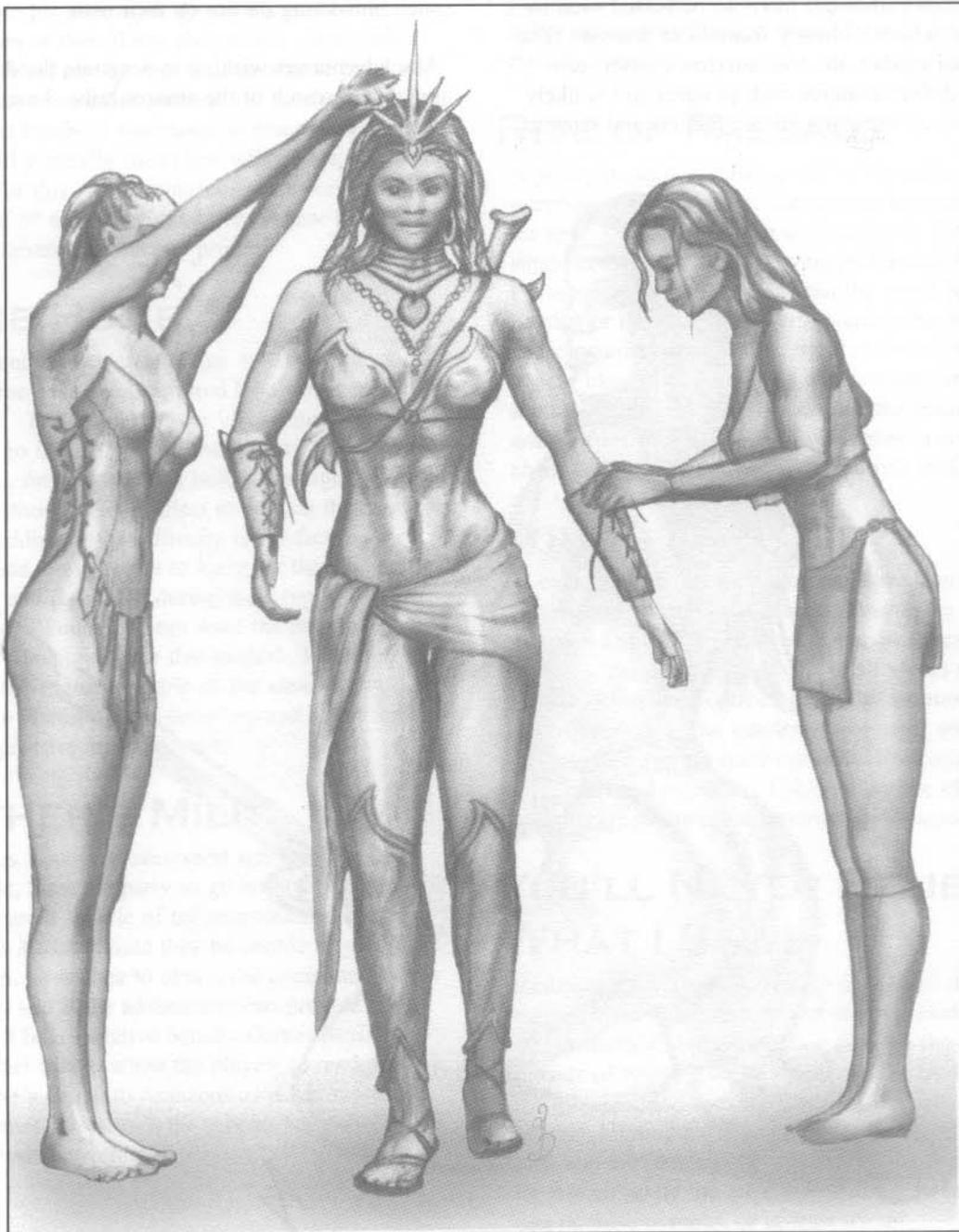
BATTLING THE AMAZONS

Amazons will never voluntarily leave their jungle or forest habitat and so any enemy engaging in combat against them will be doing so within the tribe's own domain, where the warrior women will hold every advantage. Any adventuring party intentionally seeking battle with the amazons must be well prepared to fight an elusive enemy that may well be skilled enough to destroy them outright in one determined assault.

The single greatest weakness of any amazon tribe is their susceptibility to arcane magic of all types, and so an adventuring party strong in wizards, sorcerers and bards will have a definite advantage when fighting against the warrior women. However, such spellcasters also tend to be far less resilient than

their sword-wielding comrades and amazons are very adept at picking off such targets from amongst an invading force before launching their main assaults. Mages of all breeds are advised to study protective spells such as *mage armour* in order to give themselves a fighting chance against well-aimed bows and spears launched from dense foliage. In addition, any warriors in the party should co-ordinate all their actions with such spellcasters in order to grant the maximum cover and protection possible.

Such tactics tend to work very well against amazons and once a spellcaster is in position to unleash his powers, he will find amazons tend to react very badly to arcane assault, sometimes even fleeing from a well-placed *fireball* or *lightning bolt*. However, adventurers should also be wary that there are some amazon tribes who harbour sorceresses in their midst and such enemies tend to be very well versed in their art. Even a competent mage may soon find his own magicks dispelled as spell after spell is hurled into the densely packed formation of defending comrades.



METHODS OF WARFARE

Many fighters, rangers and paladins often grant the amazon race little credit for their combat skills, considering them as only weak women who are poorly armed and armoured. A belief persists that, despite all their wilderness skills, if an amazon can only be brought to open battle, it is natural that she will be defeated. We have already looked at the various tactics employed by amazons who seek to utilise their environment as one more weapon to be used against invaders but fighters in particular have to be aware that the individual amazonian warrior may very well be their equal, even in the open. Less experienced parties are likely to be bested even by maidens, who are already formidable warriors. The individual mother, the true amazon warrior, can usually defeat creatures such as ogres and is likely to display all the skills of true fighters and rangers.

This, combined with the divine support of the priestesses, themselves capable warriors and present in any major battle, makes caution advisable when battle is expected with an amazon tribe. Even the strongest and most experienced adventuring parties have cause to be wary of a nearby tribe, for whilst they may be capable of dispatching the majority of warriors in short order, there are likely to be very powerful priestesses, fighters, rangers and even sorceresses present. These individuals, amongst the most respected of the sisterhood, may well be skilled enough in their vocation to be able to defeat such blundering parties on their own.

Any adventurers wishing to penetrate the deep jungles in search of the amazon tribes have been warned. . .



SCENARIO HOOKS & IDEAS

Presented here are a few scenario hooks and ideas that A Games Masters may employ to introduce the warrior women of the deep jungle into his campaign, giving his players an impression of their fierce and unique nature and culture. Most parties may well be able to handle a single amazon warrior without too much trouble, but the strong bonds of sisterhood in place within their tribes will generally mean few will be encountered alone. For this reason, amazons work well against parties of 3rd to 8th level, and even higher if there are suitable amazon characters present.

COME HOME!

The adventurers enter a village where all males in their prime have been captured by a tribe of amazons. The women of the village implore the party to go into the jungle and retrieve their husbands, fathers and sons before the night of the equinox, though they neglect to explain the need for haste. Adding to the difficulty is the fact the men, once found, do not want to leave for they have been drugged and pampered during their capture. The amazons, of course, do not want the men to leave either, or the players for that matter! This should be a very challenging scenario as the amazons are under the effects of *The Growling* and are at their most aggressive and dangerous.

MOTHER'S MILK

C. Lucius Rodemay, renowned scholar and alchemist, hires the party to go into the deep jungle and procure a sample of the amazonian drug *Mother's Milk*. Should they be unable to gain a specimen, he wishes to obtain the component herbs for study and if the adventurers can provide both, there will be a lucrative bonus. Games Masters should feel free to allow the players to read through the Slayer's Guide to Amazons as it can represent the volumes of research the scholar has done on the elusive warrior women.

BABE IN THE WOODS

Whilst camping at the base of a tall cliff on evening, the players hear a crashing in the bushes beyond the firelight. When they investigate the sound, they find a recently born male child resting in one of the bushes. Spot checks reveal piles of small bones and skulls at the bottom of the cliff, leaving little question that the child has been thrown off of the cliff to perish, but has somehow survived. As the players pick up the baby, they see a dark-haired beauty watching them from the top of the cliff. The party must somehow get the infant to safety whilst being pursued by the Red Guard through the trackless jungle.

RITE OF PASSAGE

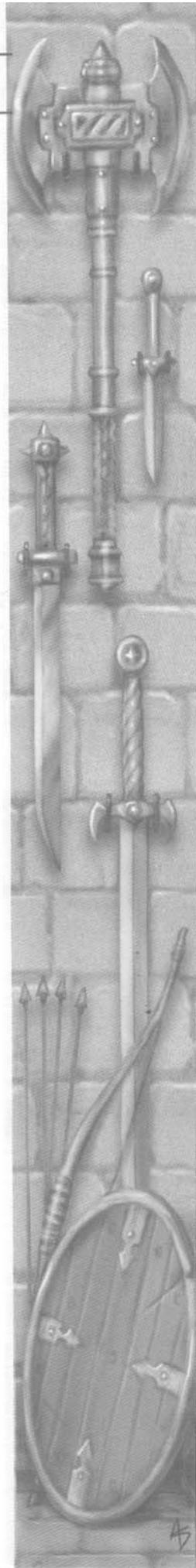
A young maiden is stalking one of the male members of the party. If she can get him away from the rest of the players, she will challenge him to single combat, intent on slaying him as her Rite of Passage. Should the player gain the upper hand in combat or the rest of the party come to his rescue and outnumber the maiden, the Red Guard will appear like ghosts out of the surrounding jungle to even the odds. This is a good scenario to employ with parties who use rangers or thieves to scout ahead or hang back to cover the party's trail.

YOUNG AND OLD

A crone and three young maidens have been surrounded by orcs. The crone is managing to hold her own against two or three of the creatures while the three maidens, armed with small spears and swords, keep her from being flanked by another orc circling behind. The maidens have never seen a male before and are quite curious. The crone has a quite different reaction! This may be one of the less lethal ways to introduce amazons to your players.

YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE WHAT I SAW!

Rumours are spreading through the tavern district - sightings are being reported of scantily clad women of unbelievable beauty running through the forest outside of town. Several woodsmen swear they are nymphs or Goddesses. The visions are actually amazon hunting parties that have moved into the area and are scouting for a new village. A group of townsmen invite the adventurers along to capture one of these nymphs, or at least try to!



WHERE DID THEY GO?

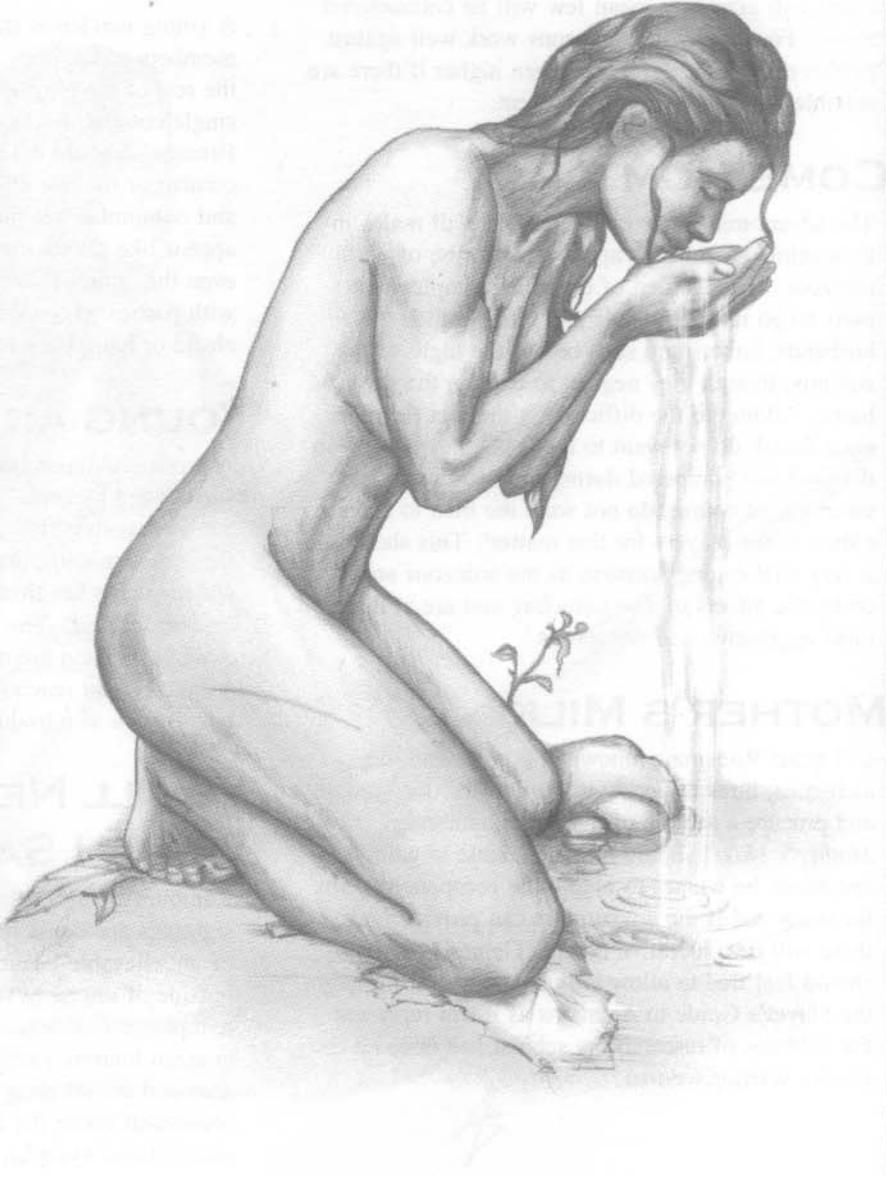
A local baron's eldest son disappeared on a hunting trip nearly a year ago and the first search party has failed to return. The baron's second son, and only remain heir, lead a second search party and has also been lost. The noble wishes to hire the players to search for his lost sons and subjects. He has resigned himself to the fact that he will never see his sons alive again, but he wants to know what end befell them. The players are given only general directions by the baron as to what region of the forest his sons may have disappeared in. This is a good scenario to demonstrate the elusive wilderness skills of the amazons and should the players succeed in discovering the fate of the sons, they will have a grateful ally within the local nobility.

RUNAWAY

The players encounter a very young woman carrying a male child hidden in a sack. She says she is running away from her sisters who want to kill her child. The players must help get the woman and child out of the jungle whilst being harried by the entire population of an amazon village. Should the players succeed, their troubles are by no means over. When they reach the closest human settlement, they will find the inhabitants wish to kill the woman and child they have just saved, because she is one of the amazons that have plagued them for years, costing many lives and the loss of prime hunting grounds. This is a good scenario to use when the players have recently lost a member of their party and an amazon player character is desired.

FOR ADULTS ONLY

It is the autumnal equinox. The moon is full and shining brightly on the players' campsite. In the distance they can hear wild music and faint shouts. Do they investigate? Should their curiosity get the better of them, the players will stumble into the midst of the amazonian fertility rites. If they do not investigate they may only find scattered body parts in the jungle as they resume their journey. What could have caused this?



AMAZON CHARACTERS

Far from being just another human race, amazons are quite literally a breed apart.

They enjoy access to a whole new range of racial traits (found on the centrefold gates) that mark them as a separate race to other humans and this chapter focuses on further rules that emphasise the amazons unique outlook and culture. Here you will find rules for new classes, spells and domains dedicated to the worship of the amazon goddess.

THE PRIESTESSES

Amazon priestesses use the cleric character class to represent their calling to the deity known to them only as the Goddess. They gain all the usual clerical powers, as described in Core Rulebook I, but they may only choose the following domains;

Moon
Sisterhood
Sun
War

These domains represent the facets of amazonian life – Sun for maidens, War for mothers and Sisterhood for crones. These domains are not tied in any way to the age of the priestess or her standing within amazon society, as they merely reflect the way amazons as a whole structure their lives, and any priestess may choose to follow any of these principles through her faith. The fourth domain, Moon, represents the Goddess herself and the majority of priestesses within any tribe will have this as one of their domains.

MOON DOMAIN

Mystically assigned to the direct power of the Goddess, the Moon domain harnesses the power of the cold night to both aid the amazons and strike down their enemies in battle.

Granted Power: Once per day, the priestess may call upon the direct inspiration of the Goddess to aid her in outwitting enemies of the tribe. This extraordinary ability allows the priestess to add her cleric class level to her Intelligence, Wisdom or Charisma for one round per level.

Moon Domain Spells

1. Cause Fear
2. Darkness
3. Deeper Darkness
4. Quench
5. Mother's Milk
6. Cone of Cold
7. Circle of Death
8. Cold of Night
9. Ethereallness

SISTERHOOD DOMAIN

Representative of the steady influence of the crones, the Sisterhood domain grants the priestess the ability to guard her sisters in times of hardship, binding all together to harness the strength of the entire tribe.

Granted Power: Once per day, the priestess may call upon the strength of her sisters to aid her in defeating enemies of the tribe. This extraordinary ability allows the priestess to add her cleric class level to her Strength, Dexterity or Constitution for one round per level.

Sisterhood Domain Spells

1. Shield
2. Shield Other
3. Prayer
4. Invisibility Sphere
5. Minor Globe of Invulnerability
6. Veil
7. Globe of Invulnerability
8. Unholy Aura
9. Protection from Spells

AMAZON SPELLS

Amazon priestesses have sometimes been seen demonstrating divine powers that defy traditional explanation. Such spells are few in number but are relatively common amongst the devoted followers of the Goddess and greatly enhance the capabilities of any amazon tribe.

The spells listed below may only be used by amazon priestesses who have the appropriate domain and spellcasters of other races and faiths may not use them under any circumstances.



Cold of Night

Evocation

Level: Moon 8**Components:** V,S, DF**Casting time:** 1 full round**Range:** Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)**Target:** One 15 ft. cube/level**Saving Throw:** Reflex half**Spell Resistance:** Yes

When *cold of night* is cast, an entire area is flooded with the piercing cold of the deepest night, as the vengeance of the Goddess throws down her power to slay the enemies of her amazons. Any creature within the area who is not an amazon will take 1d6 points of cold damage per caster level, to a maximum of 20d6.

MOTHER'S MILK

Transmutation

Level: Moon 5**Components:** V,S, M, DF**Casting time:** 1 full round**Range:** Vessel of water touched**Effect:** One dose per level**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

By casting *mother's milk*, the priestess is able to draw upon the divine power of the Goddess to transform ordinary rain water into the legendary concoction of the amazons without the usual lengthy preparation of herbs and other ingredients. The priestess may produce one dose of *mother's milk* for every caster level. The effects of *mother's milk* are described on p11.

Material Component: Half a litre of water for each recipient.

THE RED GUARD

Comprised of the very best warriors the amazon tribe has to offer, the red guard are charged with the great responsibility of keeping their sisters safe from harm during the debilitating time of pregnancy. Though amazons are free from much of the pain and discomfort that plagues other human females in birth, they are still extremely vulnerable and all but incapable of fighting during the later stages of pregnancy and the birth process itself.

The red guard are superior warriors, chosen from those who demonstrate great skill in arms and a willingness to sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the sisterhood. They are not permitted to bear young themselves but contribute to the survival of the rest of the tribe in the most fundamental way. Through this self-sacrifice, they are able to command a great deal of respect from their sisters.

When not protecting the tribe during the dangerous time of birthing, the red guard prove themselves to



The Red Guard

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Protector
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Great Runner
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Agile Defender +2
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Able Protector
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Bonus Feat
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Agile Defender +4
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Great Protector
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Bonus Feat
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Agile Defender +6
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Death Rage

be consummate warriors, leading the tribe under the advisement of the priestesses – they will be present in any major conflict the tribe engages in and are central to the gathering of males during *The Growling*. Though no amazon tribe has any type of standard uniform, the red guard often decorate themselves with scarlet feathers, dyes and jewellery, greatly enhancing their terrifying appearance and yet accentuating their lithe frames. Greatly skilled in the amazon way of fighting, few who intrude on their domain will escape the red guard.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become a red guard, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Race: Amazon

Base Attack Bonus: +4 or higher

Feats: Weapon Focus (any weapon), Weapon Specialisation (any weapon)

Class Skills

The red guard's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), and Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Core Rulebook I for skill descriptions.

Skill points at each level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the red guard prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: The red guard is proficient in all simple and martial weapons, and

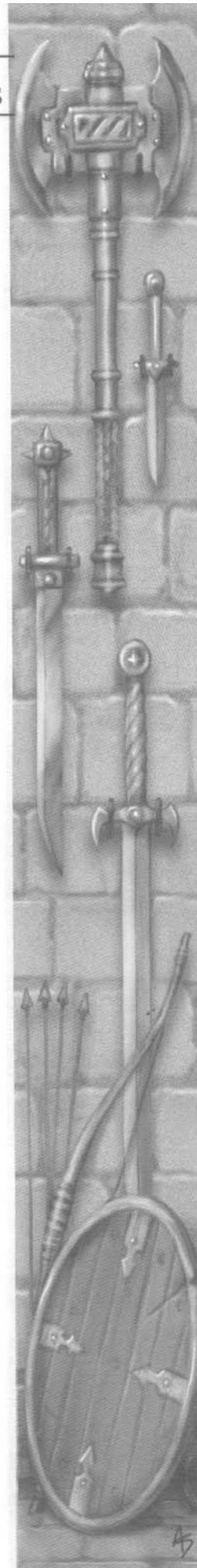
light and medium armour. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble.

Protector: Starting at 1st level, the red guard learns how to protect her sisters who may not be able to defend themselves properly. Whenever an ally is in close combat and is within 5 feet, the red guard may choose to perform the aid another action with no roll to hit required. The ally is automatically granted the +2 circumstance bonus to AC.

Great Runner: The red guard is all too aware that her successful defence of her sisters often relies on her being in the right place at the right time. At 2nd level, the red guard may add another 10 feet to her base movement, so long as she is wearing light or no armour.

Agile Defender: At 3rd, 6th and 9th levels, the red guard receives a competence bonus on her AC whenever she chooses the full attack combat option. In addition, this bonus will also apply whenever she fights defensively. However, this bonus does not stack with the normal benefits of fighting defensively – it is used in place of them.

Able Protector: From 4th level onwards, the red guard becomes greatly skilled in defending her sisters, whilst still launching lethal attacks upon the tribe's enemies. When performing the aid another action, the red guard may still attack normally. This class feature may be combined with Protector, thus allowing the red guard to automatically grant a bonus to her ally's AC and yet still attack. In effect, aid another becomes a free action for her.

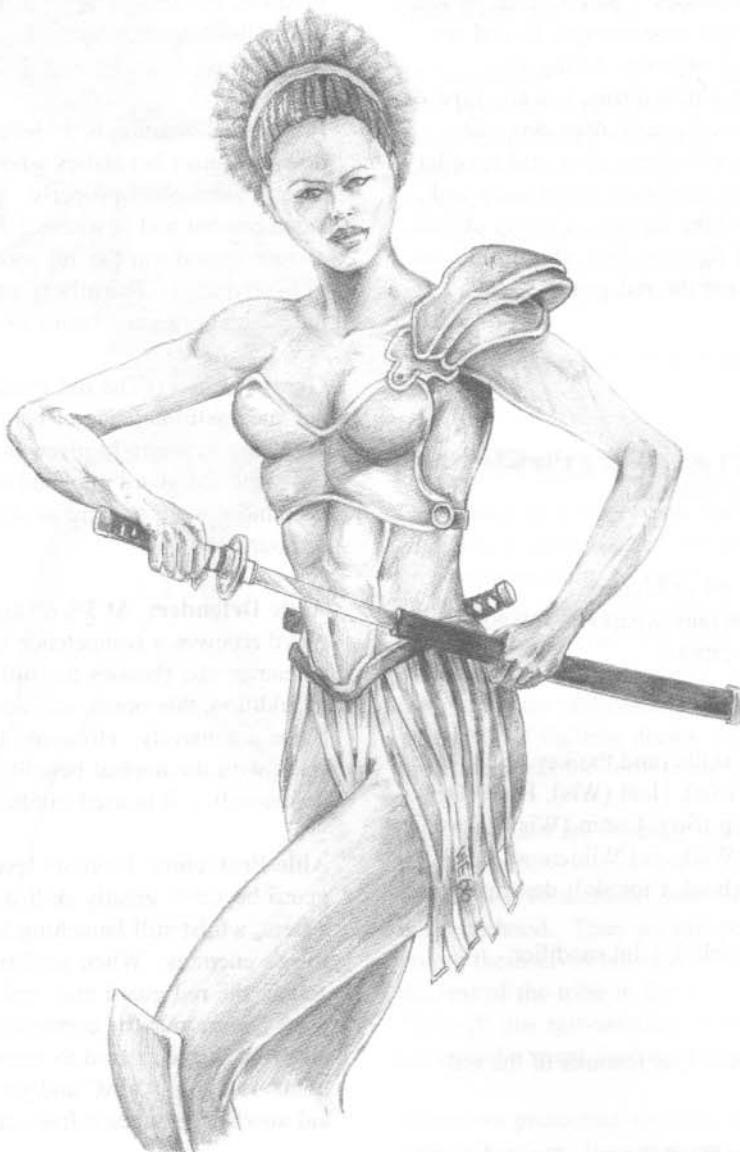


AMAZON CHARACTERS

Bonus: At 5th and 8th level, the red guard gains a bonus feat on top of her normal allowance. These bonus feats must be chosen from the following list; Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Weapon Finesse. Any listed prerequisites must be met before these feats may be taken.

Great Protector: Gained at 7th level, the red guard proves herself to be a superior warrior, slaying her enemies whilst still keeping her sisters safe from harm. She may now use the aid another action on a number of allies equal to half her class level, rounded down. This class feature may be combined with Protector and Able Protector.

Death Rage: At 10th level, the red guard is able to channel the divine power of the goddess through her lithe body, focussing it into acts of terrible brutality and rage if she should ever fail in her duty to protect her sisters. In this way, the Goddess grants vengeance upon the enemies of the amazons should they ever be under the most dire of threats. The red guard may go into the Barbarian Rage, as described in *Core Rulebook I*, whenever she witnesses one of her tribe slain by an enemy. All other normal rules for the Barbarian Rage apply.



AMAZON REFERENCE LIST

Amazons are not faceless monsters by any means. Though radically different in outlook and deed, these warrior women are still human and a Games Master should endeavour to portray each as an individual character, rather than just another horde-type monster for players to battle through in every gaming session. Several amazons, of all levels in their society, are detailed below for the Games Master's use. These may either be used when a Games Master is in a hurry to prepare his latest adventure or, alternatively, may be developed further as the basis of his own, unique, characters.

Amazon Crone Priestess

Medium-Size Humanoid

2nd Fighter / 10th Level Cleric

Moon and Sisterhood Domains

Hit Dice: 2d10 + 10d8 +3 (59 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 13 (+1 Dex, +2 leather)

Attacks: Longsword +10/+5 melee; or shortbow +10/+5 ranged

Damage: Longsword 1d8; or shortbow 1d6

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +9

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Climb +4*, Concentration +15, Heal +10, Hide +3*, Jump +4*, Knowledge (religion) +7, Move Silently +3*, Spellcraft +5, Wilderness Lore +8*

Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Challenge Rating: 11

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Spells: 0 level (6): *create water, detect magic, guidance, inflict minor wounds, mending, resistance*; 1st level (6): *bane, cause fear, command, doom, entropic shield, inflict light wounds*; 2nd level

(6): *augury, darkness, death knell, hold person, silence, zone of truth*; 3rd level (4): *animate dead, dispel magic, invisibility purge, prayer*; 4th level (4): *divination, greater magic weapon, quench, spell immunity*; 5th level (3): *flame strike, mother's milk, raise dead*

Amazon Sorceress

Medium-Size Humanoid

8th Level Sorcerer

Hit Dice: 8d4+3 (23 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 11 (+1 Dex)

Attacks: Longspear +4 melee; or shortbow +5 ranged

Damage: Longspear 1d8; or shortbow 1d6

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +7

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16

Skills: Alchemy +5, Concentration +11, Climb +2*, Hide +5*, Jump +2*, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Move Silently +3*, Scry +7, Spellcraft +5, Wilderness Lore +3*

Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armour, Toughness

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Spells: 0 level (8): *dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, mage hand, mending, read magic, resistance*; 1st level (6): *alarm, charm person, grease, mage armour, magic missile, sleep*; 2nd level (3): *fog cloud, invisibility, summon monster II*; 3rd level (2): *dispel magic, lightning bolt*; 4th level (1): *polymorph self*.

Red Guard

Medium-Size Humanoid

4th Level Fighter / 3rd level Red Guard

Hit Dice: 7d10 (38 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 50 ft.

AC: 14 (+1 Dex, +3 studded leather)

Attacks: Longsword +8/+3 melee; or shortbow +8/+3 ranged

Damage: Longsword 1d8+2; or shortbow 1d6

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Qualities: Agile Defender +2, Great Runner, Protector



AMAZON REFERENCE LIST

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills: Climb +5*, Hide +7*, Jump +4*, Listen +6, Move Silently +8*, Spot +7, Wilderness Lore +8*

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Dodge, Expertise, Power Attack, Weapon Specialisation (longsword), Weapon Focus (longsword)

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Amazon Scout

Medium-Size Humanoid

3rd Level Ranger

Hit Dice: 3d10 (16 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 14 (+1 Dex, +3 studded leather)

Attacks: longsword and shortsword +2, +1 melee; or shortbow +4 ranged

Damage: Longsword 1d8; or shortbow 1d6

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Qualities: Favoured enemy: humans, two-weapon fighting

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills: Animal Empathy +6, Climb +4*, Heal +3, Hide +9*, Jump +2*, Listen +4, Move Silently +9*, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +9*

Feats: Alertness, Point Blank Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Amazon Warrior

Medium-Size Humanoid

2nd Level Warrior

Hit Dice: 2d8 (9 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 14 (+1 Dex, +3 studded leather)

Attacks: Longsword +3 melee; or shortbow +3 ranged

Damage: Longsword 1d8; or shortbow 1d6

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +2

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills: Climb +2*, Hide +6*, Jump +2*, Listen +4, Move Silently +6*, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +6*

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Amazon Maiden

Medium-Size Humanoid

1st Level Warrior

Hit Dice: 1d8 (4 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 13 (+1 Dex, +2 leather)

Attacks: Longsword +2 melee; or shortbow +2 ranged

Damage: Longsword 1d8; or shortbow 1d6

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills: Climb +2*, Hide +6*, Jump +2*, Listen +3, Move Silently +6*, Spot +3, Wilderness Lore +5*

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Challenge Rating: 1/2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

* Include is the amazon's +2 racial bonus to Climb, Hide, Jump, Move Silently and Wilderness Lore skills whilst within jungle or forest terrain.



Cle66

Fezzig collapsed onto the silken cushions, exhausted. These women had been too long alone in the jungle. Their sexual appetite was unbelievable... and there were so many of them. He let his thoughts wander where they would, unable or unwilling to concentrate on any one particular subject. Fezzig chuckled to himself and wondered idly if the wench had found her way back to the village on her own. He had wondered what it would be like to bed his wife's sister; she had a spirit it would be satisfying to break. He dismissed the wench from his mind, he was surrounded by an entire village of women who made her look like a scrubwoman, her and her spineless sister. He didn't care if he ever got back to the village, not after the ten days he had spent here. He would live as a true lord here and there would be no damned taxes or tributes this time.

The displaced lord heard one of his men screaming to his right. 'Give it to her, Kard! Show her what you're made of!' Fezzig laughed and stretched his shoulders. He would take a short nap and then get one of the young ones. He liked the young ones.

Somewhere behind him another of his men screamed. He was just about to call out encouragement when he realised that this scream was of pain, not pleasure. The first scream had been as well, now that he thought about it. Fezzig moved to prop himself up on his elbows but quickly found himself pinned by five sleek, dark-eyed lovelies.

'Come on girls, a man has to have his rest.' He tried to pull his arm free but found that the woman holding it was much stronger than she looked. He forced his eyes to look from her sweat-slick breasts to her face. He had seen that same look of hatred on his stepsister's face. He stared at the faces of the rest of the women holding him down. Each one wore the same expression of complete hatred and disgust as her only garment.

'Thou shalt rest soon enough, swine.'

Fezzig craned his neck to find the source of the voice. Standing over him was the last woman he had been with. She held in her hands a white-hot brand. The lord swallowed thickly, some lazily satiated part of his mind wishing his hand was free so he could scratch his nose. As she stepped closer to him he could feel the heat of the brand as it passed near his face. Fezzig thrashed wildly as he heard another of his men begin to scream. The same satiated part of his brain that wanted to scratch his nose now told him that it was his own voice screaming in the night.

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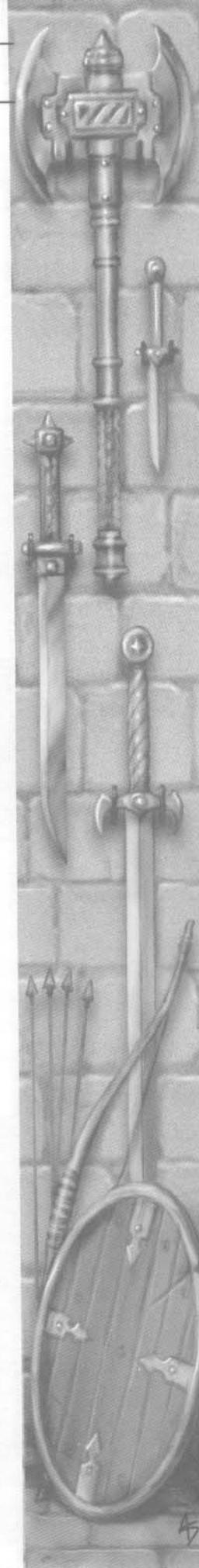
Adriana capped her water skin and sighed. She did not wish to continue looking for Fezzig, but she had made a promise to her sister. Rabine was still recovering at the temple even after nearly a fortnight. The elder sister had considered spending a few days away from the temple, hiding in the bottom of an ale mug, then telling her sister that she had not found Fezzig but her conscience would not permit her. It was funny how her conscience spoke in the same archaic dialect as the black-haired woman she had seen in the jungle. She shook her head and continued her half-hearted search.

She was nearly ready to give up when she heard something ahead of her. She stepped up onto a fallen log and walked along its length toward the sound. The chuckle at seeing three mushrooms growing out of its surface next to a trail died in her throat as she spotted the source of the sound.

Fezzig leaned against the rotting bole of the tree. She knew instantly who it was though he was hardly recognisable. His eyepatch had been burned into what remained of his eye. Over a score of inflamed scratch and bite marks crossed his chest and shoulders. A manacle with a length of chain and second cuff encircled one wrist. The other wrist and hand were an angry, skinned mess. Bugs crawled in the wounds and the stink of imminent death hung like a shroud in the moist jungle air.

Adriana nearly jumped out of her skin when the lordling's head turned toward her. 'I recognise that ugly face. Thank the gods it's you Ade, help me up, I'm about done for. Those women were nearly the death of me.'

Adriana turned and walked away. She called over her shoulder, 'I don't know you, but if I did, I would say you got what you deserved.'



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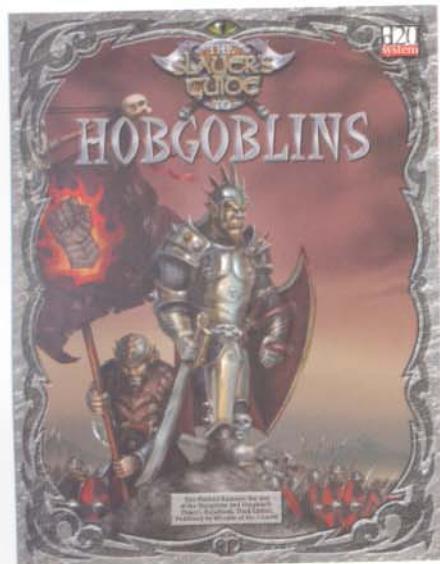
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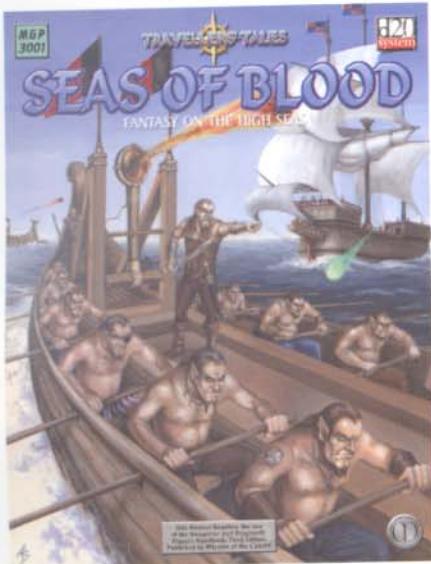
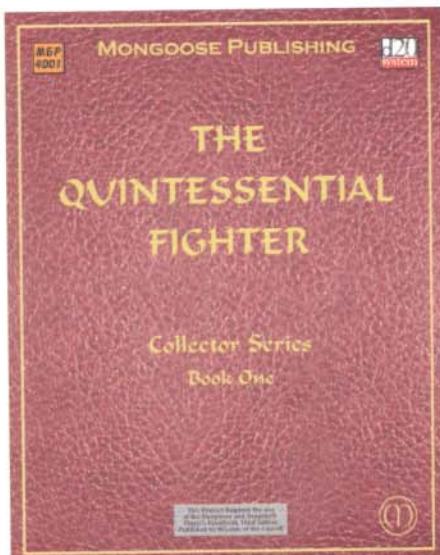
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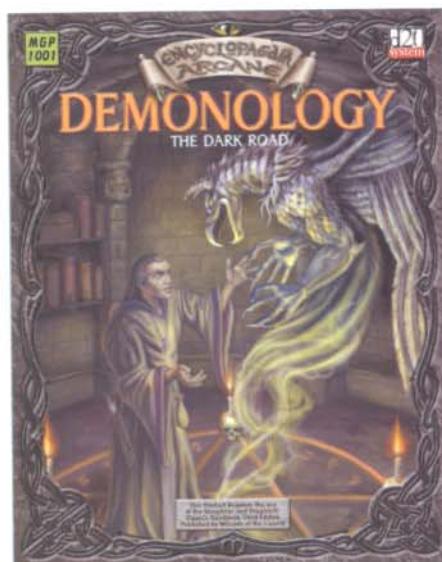
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