

# FACTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE FLANAESSION



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## INTRODUCTION

The Flanaess is riven by factions, secret cults, occult organizations, and the like. While some are more powerful or discriminating than others, the following represent factions available to player characters, should the Dungeon Master allow them in his game.

Some are centered around a particular geographic region, and their influence beyond that boundary will be lessened or non-existent, while others are plane-spanning conspiracies that can be traced to a thousand strands of a sinister web.

The following is only a (very) partial list of all the factions that exist in the Flanaess, but should serve as a starting point for Dungeon Masters looking to include such in their own campaigns.

## FACTIONS



### CIRCLE OF EIGHT

The Circle of Eight is an informal alliance of mighty wizards, dedicated to maintaining balance in the world, and not allowing any particular nation, power, or faction to gain dominance. When evil is ascendant, they will side with the good, when good threatens to overwhelm all, they will indirectly support evil. The members consist of Bigby,

Mordenkainen, Drawmij, Nystul, Otiluke (just this year<sup>1</sup> added, to replace Leomund, who retired to pursue his own whims and studies), Otto, Rary, and Tenser. They have influence beyond their seeming numbers, as each member has spies, informants, and agents in various parts of the Flanaess, high and low, near and far. There is little that escapes their notice, or is above their subtle (or not-so-subtle) influence.

#### MOTTO

"Let the wheel keep turning."

#### BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Circle of Eight can be summarized as follows:

- No alignment, deity, nation, or other power should dominate the Flanaess.
- We can best achieve our goals by subtle means if at all possible.
- Trust no one except members of the Circle. And keep an eye on them, too.

#### GOALS

Maintain a balance between good and evil, law and chaos, and the various powers and nations of the Flanaess. Keep widespread knowledge of the Circle's actions secret. Assist other members when possible.

#### MEMBER TRAITS

Members of this faction will not normally be members of the Circle of Eight itself, which is reserved to the mightiest wizards of the Flanaess. All other members will be their spies, agents, and informants. They will maintain a completely ordinary façade, and most will go their entire lives without anyone suspecting they were passing along information to their masters in the Circle. Although most agents of the Circle of Eight are tied to a specific member, they will sometimes share their agents among themselves, depending on the specific

<sup>1</sup> CY 576

talents necessary for a particular task. Missions can range from conveying a message to infiltrating an evil cult to procuring a rare element for a magical experiment; the possibilities are quite endless.

## RANKS

The Circle doesn't have a structure of ranks per se. However, in a game mechanic sense, agents of the Circle would have the standard 5-rank structure, with each wizard forming the apex of their own mini-faction within the Circle. When dealing with Circle members under another wizard than your own, your own Renown points are effectively reduced by 25%. The actual wizards of the Circle would be above the rank system, each having a renown of 100 or more.

- Circle Agent 1 (rank 1)
- Circle Agent 2 (rank 2)
- Circle Agent 3 (rank 3)
- Circle Agent 4 (rank 4)
- Circle Agent 5 (rank 5)

## SYMBOLS

There is no single identifying symbol used by the Circle of Eight. Agents of individual members may use their masters' sigils as appropriate.



## CULT OF ASMODEUS

The cult of Asmodeus is vast, and the Lord of the Nine Hells seemingly is behind every conspiracy in the multiverse. Its members are disciplined as the hosts of devils, established in a strict hierarchy. No one in the cult knows of all its activities, even within

a given area; all simply know that if they do their part of their infernal master's Grand Design, his fell power will rule over all, eventually.

## MOTTO

"Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Oerth as it is in Hell."

## BELIEFS

The Cult of Asmodeus' beliefs can be summarized as follows:

- Asmodeus has a master plan that will inevitably bring the Nine Hells to dominion over the whole multiverse, but no mortal is capable of grasping its majesty and subtlety
- No tool should be overlooked in furthering the goals of the cult and its master
- Lawful good is the worst sort of non-diabolic alignment, as it perverts the natural order of law with the propagation and support of weakness

## GOALS

Bring the entirety of the multiverse under the dominion of the Nine Hells. Unite the forces of evil, no matter whether they are lawful, chaotic, or neutral, under the rightful rule of Lawful Evil. Spread the worship of Asmodeus and the arch-devils among mortals. Resist and undermine the forces of Good, especially Lawful Good

## MEMBER TRAITS

Except in the rarest of circumstances, members of the cult of Asmodeus hide their allegiance carefully. While all are ambitious, none would allow that ambition to compromise their assigned missions and goals.

## RANKS

- Infernal Servant (rank 1)
- Infernal Initiate (rank 2)
- Infernal Adept (rank 3)
- Infernal Master (rank 4)
- Ipsissimus (rank 5)

## SYMBOLS

The cult of Asmodeus uses a ruby as its symbol, hearkening to the Ruby Rod of its dark master. Some but not all wear a ruby tattoo.



## KNIGHTS OF THE HART

The Knights of the Hart collectively seek to maintain the independence and fidelity of Veluna, Furyondy, and Highfolk. As they are so closely tied with specific political entities, the order is distrusted not only by the Knights of the Watch, but Verbobonc, Perrenland, Nyrond, and Dyvers as well. They have a long-standing rivalry with the Knights of Holy Shielding.

Despite this friction with other wealsome organizations and realms, the Knights of the Hart are themselves champions of good and right, and provide the standing military vanguard that their patron states lack, with its members maintaining castles and other strongholds, and all members being pledged to be at peak military efficiency at all times, to give time for the feudal lords to muster their own forces in time of crisis. They maintain large standing forces that participate not only in scouting and border patrol, but which are loaned out often to their patron states as a military cadre. The Knights of the Hart are divided into three sub-orders, as follows:

- Knights of Furyondy. Some 200 strong, dedicated to the Kingdom of Furyondy.
- Knights of Veluna. Some 80 strong, but each is quite formidable, and dedicated to the Archclericly of Veluna.

- Knights of the High Forest. Said to only be 25 or so in number, they are limited to the olvenfolk, and protect Highfolk and the reaches of the Vesve Forest that fall within its dominions.

## MOTTO

"We stand at the vanguard, to give others time to defend themselves."

## BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Knights of the Hart can be summarized as follows:

- Veluna, Furyondy, and Highfolk are good nations whose independence and wealsome purposes need to be maintained and defended.
- Dangers from the Baklunish lands, Iuz, the Horned Society, the Bandit Kingdoms, and even the border marches must be dealt with.
- The lack of a standing central army means the Order of the Hart must meet great threats first, to give time for the lords behind us to gather their forces.

## GOALS

Maintain the independence of Veluna, Furyondy, and Highfolk. Make sure that each state retains its dedication to freedom and the cause of good. Stand watch against outside threats to those realms, no matter whence they come. Always be prepared to fight.

## MEMBER TRAITS

Knights of the Hart tend not to be as militaristic as other orders, but are no less puissant or vigilant in their task once danger appears. They often serve in other capacities in the courts of their patron states, and their dedication to particular political entities makes them suspect to groups that might have reason to dislike those states. Members of the Knights of the Hart are eligible to take the appropriate Knight of the Hart feat after joining.

## RANKS

- Knight of the Hart (rank 1)
- Knight Bachelor of the Hart (rank 2)
- Knight Companion of the Hart (rank 3)
- Knight Banneret of the Hart (rank 4)
- Knight Commander of the Hart (rank 5)

## SYMBOLS

The Knights of the Hart have the following coats of arms: azure, a stag's antlers or (Furyondy), sable, a stag's antlers or (Veluna); and vert, a stag's antlers or (Highfolk).



## KNIGHTS OF HOLY SHIELDING

The military order known as the Knights of Holy Shielding is charged with maintaining the defense of those lands between Furyondy and the Bandit Kingdoms, but the rise of the Horned Society to the north has presented them with a strategic puzzle, as they are now threatened on two sides. The hereditary Earl of Walworth is Knight Commander of the order, which forms the core of the region's army. Their daring, valor, and faith serve to inspire the rest of the forces under their command, which receive contributions from Furyondy and Urnst, as well as the levies and lay-knights of the Shield Lands themselves. They are not dedicated to any single deity, but Heironeous is quite popular with its members. Members must be paladins of at least 7th level, and can follow any sacred oath except that of

the Ancients. They have a long-standing rivalry with the Knights of the Hart.

## MOTTO

"We are the holy shield that protects the weak and innocent against the depredations of evil."

## BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Knights of Holy Shielding can be summarized as follows:

- The Bandit Kingdoms, Horned Society, and Iuz pose a threat to the central Flanaess that must be checked.
- Our valor, faith, and bravery will inspire the troops under our command to greater things.
- Protect the weak, aid the poor, combat the wicked.

## GOALS

Defend Furyondy, Urnst, and other good lands against the Bandit Kingdoms, the Horned Society, Iuz, and other evil threats. Lead and inspire others who are not members of the order along the path of righteousness. Root out corruption, wickedness, and evil wherever it tries to infiltrate good and worthy lands.

## MEMBER TRAITS

Knights of Holy Shielding are all quite pious as well as being militarily astute. They are well aware of their roles as shining examples of their cause, and will constantly try to put forth a brave front in the face of any diversity or calamity. Members are typically sent on military expeditions to stop some incursion along the border, or make a raid of their own into the lands of evil to check their growth and disrupt their plans. The order of Holy Shielding distrusts the order of the Hart.

## RANKS

- Knight of the Shield (rank 1)
- Knight Bachelor of the Shield (rank 2)
- Knight Companion of the Shield (rank 3)

- Knight Banneret of the Shield (rank 4)
- Knight Commander of the Shield (rank 5)

## SYMBOLS

The Knights of Holy Shielding have the following coat of arms: gules, a tower sable, with a bordure argent.



## KNIGHTS OF THE WATCH

The Knights of the Watch are sworn to defend the Flanaess from the threat from the Baklunish lands to the west. They are strongest in Bissel, Geoff, Gran March, and Keoland, and maintain a series of castles and other strongholds on the Kettite border and in the Barrier Peaks and southern Yatil Mountains. They are highly disciplined, and hold an almost monastic devotion to their cause, although they are not particularly religious in their organization. They are some 5,000 strong, and the current Grand Commander is Hugo of Geoff. Only fighters, paladins, and clerics of 3rd level or higher may join the order.

## MOTTO

"We stand against the Baklunish hordes, and protect the East from the devils of the West."

## BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Knights of the Watch can be summarized as follows:

- The Baklunish lands constitute a threat to the Flanaess.
- We must be ever-vigilant against incursions from the Paynims and other Baklunish forces.
- Strength comes from order, order comes from duty, duty comes from discipline.

## GOALS

Defend the mountains and approaches along the Baklunish border. Never break the discipline of the order. Thwart the ambitions of Ket, the Paynims, and other western nations to encroach on the lands of the Flanaess. Alert others to the danger that the Bakluni pose.

## MEMBER TRAITS

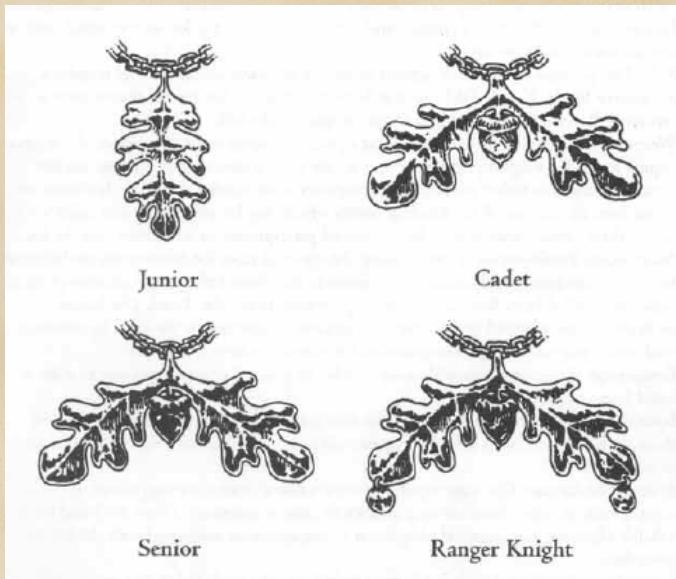
Members of the order are either paladins, fighters, or clerics of lawful good or lawful neutral alignment. They are very disciplined and militant in their outlook, and have a negative reaction to all Baklunish folk on sight. Often they will come across as hidebound and overly rigid, relying on centuries-old doctrines of tactics and strategy. Members are expected to report for weekly drills, unless on some mission assigned to them by their superiors. Members may take the Knight of the Watch feat.

## RANKS

- Knight of the Watch (rank 1)
- Knight Bachelor of the Watch (rank 2)
- Knight Companion of the Watch (rank 3)
- Knight Banneret of the Watch (rank 4)
- Grand Commander of the Watch (rank 5)

## SYMBOL

Knights of the watch have the following coat of arms; sable, an owl argent, wings displayed and elevated.



## RANGERS OF THE GNARLEY FOREST

The Rangers of the Gnarley Forest are a group of approximately 200 or so rangers who patrol and shepherd that old stretch of woodland, guarding it and its inhabitants against the threats and politics of the outside world. They are but loosely organized, but the Ranger Knights meet in council once every three months to discuss the current state of affairs in and around the wood, and plan their strategies accordingly. The Ranger Knights also see to the training of the less experienced members of the order, and younger rangers swear a personal allegiance to their patron ranger knight. To join, one must be a ranger, track down a ranger knight, and go through an intense interview process to determine one's worthiness. Humans of any race except Rhennee can join, as can half-elves. There are even a few werebears amongst their ranks. Having at least one level as a ranger is, of course, a requirement as well.

### MOTTO

"May the Gnarley remain ever free."

### BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Rangers of the Gnarley Forest can be summarized as follows:

- The independence of the Gnarley Forest is something to be protected
- Too much organization can stifle the ability of the order to respond to threats
- The Gnarley Forest doesn't need outside help, but will take it as long as there are no strings attached

### GOALS

Protect the Gnarley Forest from domination by outside powers. Stop overly-zealous logging and hunting within the forest. Prevent humanoids and bandits from gaining a foothold within the wood. Protect the inhabitants of the forest from threats.

### MEMBER TRAITS

Members must stay within a few days' travel of the forest, and will be very out of place in large urban centers such as Narwell, The Free City of Greyhawk, and Dyvers. They may also take the Ranger of the Gnarley Forest feat, which provides certain benefits; see the Feats section for details. They can count on their fellows to come to their aid in time of danger.

### RANKS

- Junior (rank 1)
- Cadet (rank 2)
- Senior (rank 3)
- Ranger Knight (rank 4)
- Ranger Lord (rank 5)

### SYMBOLS

Juniors will wear a silvered oak leaf on a chain about the neck. Cadets will wear a pair of silvered oak leaves above an acorn as a badge. Seniors will wear a golden acorn with two silvered oak leaves, while ranger knights and lords add a pair of holly berries. Cadets and above who honor Ehlonna will often add a unicorn horn as a sign of their devotion.



## SCARLET BROTHERHOOD

As of CY 576, the Scarlet Brotherhood is a cautious and highly secretive organization. Red-robed advisors have started appearing in many of the royal courts of the Flanaess only a few years ago, offering advice and seemingly eager to advance the interests of their patrons. They are, of course, completely loyal to no one except the Brotherhood itself, whose real intentions are kept tightly secret.

### MOTTO

"The Suel race is inherently superior to all other races, and it is their destiny to rule the world."

### ALTERNATE MOTTO

"A soft word and a knife in the back will get you more than a soft word."

### BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Scarlet Brotherhood can be summarized as follows:

- The Suel people are inherently superior to all others, and it is the destiny of the Suel to conquer the world. Resistance to this fact by other races is due to their inability to come to terms with inherent Suel superiority, both physical and spiritual.
- Deception, stealth, and intrigue are the chosen tactics of the Brotherhood, but only because it must do so. If the other races would simply submit willingly to the self-

obvious superiority of the Suel, such tactics would not be necessary.

- True evil stems from the unwillingness for other races to accept Suel mastery. Such behavior has led to enormous suffering and death over the centuries in wars and other carnage. All that could have been avoided if the lesser races had simply accepted their role in life; they are the true cause of evil, through their resistance to the natural order.

### GOALS

The conquest of first the Flanaess, and then the whole of Oerth, by the Suel people, under the leadership of the Scarlet Brotherhood. Promotion of the interests of the Suel people, wherever they may be. Protection of the secrecy and security of the Brotherhood.

### MEMBER TRAITS

Members of the Scarlet Brotherhood, whether they be highly trained monks, deadly assassins, or simply merchants dealing in iptwood logs, are fanatically loyal to the Brotherhood and no one and nothing will be able to shake that loyalty. They fully believe in the mission of the Brotherhood and the inherent superiority of the Suel people, but are often capable of hiding their disdain for other races behind a calm and polite veneer. Many are not what they appear, and are well-versed in disguise and espionage.

### RANKS

Ranks within the Scarlet Brotherhood are dependent on class, rather than being standard across all members. For game purposes, players and NPCs should track their numeric rank (1-5, 5 being the most important), but titles are as follows:

- Thieves: cousin/elder cousin
- Assassins: nephew/foster uncle
- Monks: brother/father

All others are simply referred to by their ordinary rank, and can collectively be called Servants of the Scarlet Sign.

## SYMBOLS

The Scarlet Brotherhood uses many secret signs and symbols of recognition, but its formal banner is a red field with a wavy four-armed cross in black.



## TEMPLE OF ELEMENTAL EVIL

Centered on the southwestern end of the Nyr Dyr, in the heart of the Flanaess, this fallen power of evil is once again on the ascendancy, but is taking a much more cautious approach in its new incarnation. A project sponsored by both the evil demigod Iuz and the demoness Zuggtmoy, queen of fungi, the Temple of Elemental Evil is not only riven with division and rivalry between the four elemental cults, but Iuz and Zuggtmoy both have agents within who are aware of its true nature as their front, and there are those loyal to the demoness Lolth, ever-suspicious of anything that might be tied to her arch-rival, the Elder Elemental God. But to the outside the Temple presents a solid front, as it slowly recruits agents, monsters, and brigands from the central Flanaess to its cause. There is a network of agents and safe houses throughout the Gnarley Forest, Kron Hills, Verbobonc, Wild Coast, Dyvers, and beyond.

## MOTTO

"That which was fractured will be whole, that which was cast down shall rise again."

## BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Temple of Elemental Evil can be summarized as follows:

- The four sacred elements represent the purest form of Evil, and thus are best poised to bring unity.
- In-fighting stops at the Temple gates. To the outside world, we are a united front against the forces of Good and Balance that seek to thwart us.
- Secrecy and discretion in all things; the world must not be alerted to our presence until we are strong enough to ensure victory.

## GOALS

Restore the Temple to its former power and glory. Unite all Evil forces in the region into a single organization. Remain hidden from and undermine the forces of Good which threw down the Temple before. Free Zuggtmoy from her imprisonment beneath the Temple itself

## MEMBER TRAITS

Agents of the Temple are secretive and have great cunning, and there is always another layer to the onion. They are utterly ruthless in the pursuit of the Temple's goals, but conflicting loyalties and infighting within the Temple itself make it difficult to make real progress. All members are masters of deceit and infiltration, well able to hide their true natures to all but magical investigation, and even then, in some cases.

## RANKS

- Seeker of the Elements (rank 1)
- Acolyte of the Elements (rank 2)
- Adept of the Elements (rank 3)
- Curate of the Elements (rank 4)
- Master of the Elements (rank 5)

## SYMBOLS

The symbol of the Cult of Elemental Evil is the Elder Elemental Eye, a point-down triangle divided into three equal parts.

## MISSIONS

Belonging to a faction bears with it not only benefits but obligations. These missions can be tests of a new-fledged member's effectiveness and loyalty, or vital pieces of a grand strategy designed to catapult the faction to power. The DM is encouraged to add to or modify the list below to suit the needs of his or her particular campaign.

Roll 1d12 each month; on a roll of 1, the character is given a mission to fulfill on behalf of the organization. Refusal is generally not permitted; at best it will result in a loss of renown equal to half the amount that would be gained if the mission is successful. If the mission is attempted and fails, the character will only lose 25% of the amount.

If applicable, the DM should roll again to determine the mission of the higher-ranked member of the faction who is being assisted, rejecting inappropriate missions as applicable.

Member Rank						Renown Reward
1	2	3	4	5	Mission	
01-30	01-10	-	-	-	Servant. You are to act as a guard, servant, or other flunky for a higher-ranked member of the faction for a period of 2d10 days.	1
31-50	11-20	01-10	-	-	Bodyguard. You are tasked with guarding the person of a higher-ranked member of the faction for 2d10 days.	1
-	21-28	11-34	01-11	-	Bodyguard. You are tasked with guarding the person of a visiting dignitary important to your faction for 2d10 days. Difficulty: they have a penchant for getting into trouble.	1
-	29-35	35-45	12-31	01-15	Escort You are tasked with going to a foreign land and escorting a dignitary back. The journey will take 1d20+10 days, if all goes well.	2
51-60	36-55	46-67	32-52	16-34	Slayer. You must kill a monster or NPC who is an enemy of your faction. 50% chance that there is a time limit of 1d20+10 days.	2
61-80	56-70	68-75	-	-	Tracker. You must find an enemy of the faction and report his/her/its location.	2
81-00	71-80	76-84	53-73	35-63	Tracker. You must find an enemy of the faction and bring him/her/it back.	3
-	81-90	85-90	74-81	64-75	Tracker. You must find and rescue a missing member of the faction.	3
-	91-00	91-97	82-88	76-85	Finder. You must find and recover a valuable item for the faction. The location is known but is 2d10+5 days distant.	3
-	-	98-00	89-98	86-96	Finder. You must discover the location of and then recover a valuable item for the faction. The location ends up being 3d10+5 days distant.	4
-	-	-	99	97-98	Organizer. You must set up a cell of the faction in a particular location. If successful, you will become leader of the cell. Any missions you are given are the responsibility of the cell as a whole (renown is split among the cell members).	5
-	-	-	00	99-00	Organizer. You must step in to take over leadership of a cell. Any missions you are given are the responsibility of the cell as a whole (renown is split among the cell members).	5

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