

United Moonshae Isles

In 1371 DR, the Northlander jarls throughout the Sea of Moonshae swore fealty to High Queen Alicia Kendrick. For the first time in their stormy history, both Northlanders and Ffolk were united under a single banner. With a grand ceremony the High Queen proclaimed the birth of the United Moonshae Isles. The Northlander kings adopted the title of jarl and continued to rule the traditional lands of their people.

About the same time, many of the druids began to disappear from their moonwells. Robyn and Tristan Kendrick harnessed the power of the Great Moonwell of Myrloch Vale and entered the Feywild in search of the missing druids. Their quest must have been successful for the disappearances stopped, but Robyn has only returned once, and Tristan hasn't return at all.

STEPPING OUT OF TIME AND INTO LEGEND

The ultimate fate of Robyn Moonsinger and Tristan Kendrick is unknown. Both vanished into the Feywild more than a century ago. While both should have passed away a century ago from age, time is tricky in the Faerie. Many of the Ffolk believe that both are alive and well, waiting for a moment of great need to return to the Moonshaes, much like Robyn did when she returned to save Caer Callidyr from the red dragon Hoondarrh. Some of the druids believe that Robyn is now the voice of the Earthmother and speaks to them through omens. It's possible that High Lady Ordalf of Sarifal knows the truth, but she has made no mention of either of them.

the fey Return

In the years after the unification of the Moonshaes, many types of fey, largely benevolent though occasionally mischievous, begin emerging from the Feywild. The faeries confined themselves primarily to the lands of Myrloch Vale and Winterglen Forest.

The peaceful fey migration ended when the fomorians emerged from the Feydark and overwhelmed the Northlanders on Oman. In less than a year, the island fell to the fey giants, and the Northlanders were forced to flee to their other holdings.

The next year, the ancient leShay capital of Karador rose from the crystal-clear waters of Myrloch. The fey queen Ordalf announced the rebirth of Sarifal and declared herself High Lady over all the lands of Gwynneth.

War immediately erupted between the Ffolk and the leShay. The conflict ended with the complete rout of the Ffolk and the expulsion of most humans from Gwynneth.

WHAT ARE THE LE SHAY?

The leShay are noble eladrins. Descended from the primal elves who sprung from Corellon's blood, the leShay are the leaders of many of the primal elves who remained in the Feywild after the Elven Diaspora. The leShay are enormously powerful, commanding magic far beyond that of mortal elves. While they can be slain, they do not age and are effectively immortal while in the Feywild. What happens now that they have returned to Faerûn is yet to be seen. The leShay feel little affinity for Arvandor and don't long to end their cycle of rebirth and rejoin Corellon. The leShay are closest among the eladrin to being reincarnated as an archfey.

Splintering Moonshae Isles

While the Moonshaes avoided the worst of the Spell-plague, recent years have not been kind to the isles. The dreams of the golden years under Robyn and Tristan have faded. With the rise of Sarifal, High King Derid, descendant of Robyn and Tristan, rules a much smaller realm. Even his ancestral home of Corwell is in fey hands.

Sensing weakness, Amn invaded Snowdown and captured Caer Westphal. They still seek to expand further, making forays into Kork on Moray and are even eyeing Gwynneth.

The Northlanders have remained loyal to the union with the Ffolk for now, but the Storm Maiden, a Northlander reaver, sought to return them to their raiding ways. She led raids against the petty kings of the northern islands, the holdings of King Derid, and the Amnians. After winning countless battles, the Storm Maiden's ship was lost at sea. None know what happened, but many hope (or fear) for her return.

Rise of Shadows

In recent years, another dread threat has spread across the Moonshaes. The Shadowfell has drawn near to the isles and fell things are slipping through the veil between the worlds. Dark things now lurk in the shadows, preying upon the weak and vulnerable. The light of the moon keeps them from owning the night, but each time the moon wanes, the darkness spreads.

The original source of the shadows is unknown. Rumors tell of a howling disease spreading across Moray. Meanwhile, the bright fey of Sarifal brace for a confrontation with the dark fey of Citadel Umbra who draw strength from the Plane of Shadow. The darkness even extends to the Deepshaes, where a dragon born of shadows haunts the caverns and hollow places below the islands.

Cultures of the Moonshaes

I've arrived in Caer Callidyr, the capital of the Moonshaes. It's a vibrant port town with travelers from all over the isles. Above the docks and cobbled streets rise the alabaster towers of the caer, the Moonshavian word for castle. It's a relic from another age, and its white walls gleamed in the sunlight that poured through a break in the clouds.

I found rooms at the Inn of the Dancing Dolphin, which is well named for I saw a group of dolphins playing outside the harbor. The specialty of the house is something called rarebit, which is melted cheese on toasted bread. We don't have cheese like this in Chult. It's made from cow's milk, and it's creamy, smooth, and smells delicious. We don't have a lot of cows back home, so we use goat's milk instead.

Five distinct cultures, only two of which are human, claim the surface of the lush and bountiful Moonshae Isles. The relatively peaceful Ffolk dwell mainly in the southern islands. The Northlanders sail the seas from their harbors on the northern islands. The Llewyrr elves maintain their secluded vigil in the mountains while the eladrin rebuild their reclaimed realm. Meanwhile, the firbolg maintain their ancient strongholds.

Ffolk

The Ffolk are the first humans to settle in the Moonshaes, coming from what is now Tethyr a thousand years ago. The distance, separating sea, and influence of the Earthmother caused the Ffolk to develop a culture quite distinct from their mainland cousins.

The Ffolk are organized into a number of small kingdoms, loosely collected under the leadership of a High King. They are primarily an agricultural society, though they fight savagely when called upon to defend their homes.

Most Ffolk worship the Earthmother and venerate the wisdom of the druids, who are her servants. The Ffolk have a strong rapport with the flora and fauna of the isles, as well as a healthy respect for the fey who dwell amongst them.

The Ffolk traditionally have olive skin, dark eyes, and dark brown to black hair. However, relations with the Northlanders and the ports of the Sword Coast have created diversity in the population. Ffolk with fey ancestry have brilliant green eyes.

Northlanders

The Northlanders originated in the lands north of the Moonshae Isles. They came to the Moonshaes first as



The Ffolk of the Moonshaes

raiders then as settlers. Over the centuries, they wrested much of the northern Moonshaes from the Ffolk.

The Northlanders are a resilient war-ready people who face constant adversity and overcome it. They scorn agriculture in favor of fishing, whaling, and raiding. In the past, the Ffolk kingdoms were their favorite targets, but they've found better targets along the Sword Coast, especially in Amn.

The Northlanders primarily worship Valkur and have a healthy respect for Tempus and Umberlee. Since forging a peace with the Ffolk a few generations ago, some Northlanders have come to venerate the Earthmother as the spirit of the islands.

The Northlanders are predominately Illuskan but accept anyone into their ranks who is strong and fearless. Historically, they are tall, fair of skin, and pale of hair, but that is by no means the rule after centuries of living alongside the Ffolk.

Eladrin

Because of the recent influx of fey, the Moonshaes contain a higher population of eladrin than any other region in Faerûn. The fey kingdom of Sarifal is primarily composed of eladrin and ruled by the noble eladrin, the leShay. Not all eladrin in the Moonshaes come from Sarifal, but the overwhelming majority do.



The Northlanders of the Moonshaes

When Sarifal first returned, House Kendrick led the mortal Moonshavians against the fey to maintain control of Gwynneth. The Moonshavians ultimately lost all of Gwynneth to eladrin and feared that the fey would overwhelm the entire archipelago. However, the leShay were satisfied with their home isle and stopped their conquest at the sea's edge.

In the intervening decades, relations between the mortals and the eladrin of Sarifal have warmed appreciably. House Kendrick is attempting to forge an alliance, or at least an understanding, with High Lady Ordalf. Meanwhile, Prince Araithe, Ordalf's son, wishes to expand his understanding of the mortal world outside of Sarifal's borders and has granted his subjects permission to venture into the wider world.

The Ffolk and Northlanders have slowly acclimated to the presence of the eladrin and learned their seasonal aspects. They vastly prefer the spring and autumn varieties. Summer eladrin are to be placated as quickly as possible, while winter eladrin are to be comforted and cheered. Fortunately, the eladrin seem incapable of counterfeiting their emotions and their aspects to take advantage of the mortals.

Not all of the Moonshavians are willing to forgive the eladrin for the conquest of Gwynneth, especially those

from Caer Corwell. Others find their magic unsettling and frightening. The strength of the eladrin discourages outright attacks, but tension remains.

FIRBOLG

The history of firbolgs in the Moonshaes is long and convoluted and their interaction with other races depends on where that particular tribe has landed.

Moonshae firbolg follow the demigod Grond Peaks-masher, son of the giant-kin god, Hiatea. He encouraged them to withdraw from the other races of the Moonshaes and brought them to the island of Oman during the Era of Upheaval. When the fey descended upon the Moonshaes, the fomorians claimed Oman and enslaved many of the firbolg. These thralls eventually became disfigured like their masters.

This was not the fate of all firbolg, however. The Blackleaf tribe of Gwynneth live in the Cambro mountains and have recently been forced to abandon their seclusion to deal with the advancing threat of shadow emerging from Citadel Umbra. Some have even allied themselves with Prince Araithe in this struggle, resulting in powerful wizard firbolg.

Other than Snowdown, where any firbolg haven has been thoroughly invaded, tribes can be found on every island. The Norland tribes of the Jotunhammer are the most aggressive, having allied themselves with the duergar and other dark forces in order to maintain their hold against the ever-advancing Northlanders. In other parts of the isles they are, for the most part, content to stay out of sight and wish only that their territories be respected. Clearly marked by tree carvings, a firbolg territory should not be entered without a good explanation for the encroachment.

Once thought to be a scourge on the land, new songs recant tales of firbolg aiding noble causes against forces such as the Black Bloods and the rising shadows. Some firbolg have even, for whatever reason, abandoned their tribes and quietly joined forces with adventuring companies seeking to fight common foes.

LLEWYRR ELVES

Centuries ago, the Llewyrre were moon elves dwelling in the verdant woodland known today as Neverwinter Wood. They fled the destruction of the Crown Wars by sailing across the sea, seeking the fabled isle of Evermeet.

A fierce storm forced the refugees to make landfall on the Moonshaes, where they met the leShay. The leShay permitted the Llewyrre to settle among the mountains of Gwynneth.

Llewyrre possess the same physical attributes as their moon elf ancestors, except that the Llewyrre have snow-

white skin and golden hair. They are traditionally vegetarians, eschewing all meat. The gender imbalance that once plagued their people has nearly vanished since the return of the fey to the Moonshaes and their numbers have soared in recent years.

Unlike many elves, the Llewyrr don't worship Corelon Larethian or the Seldarine. Instead, the Llewyrr venerate the Earthmother, her children, and archfey who watch over the islands. Since the fey arrival in the Moonshaes, the llewyrr have sworn fealty to High Lady Ordalf of Sarifal.

Powers of the Moonshaes

I shouldn't have had that cheese. I'm in such pain! I spent most of the day bent over from cramps. I am being punished by the gods for my curiosity. Curse you, delicious, creamy cheese! You turned on me!

Gwenlyn, a kind Ffolk bard I met at the inn, took mercy on me and tried distracting me by exchanging news of our homelands. Between sprints to the privy, I told her much of my homelands and she told me much of these islands. The Moonshaes may be remote and barely civilized compared to Chult, but these isles have their princes of power, just as we do in Port Nyanzaru.

The geography of the Moonshaes Isles forces anyone hoping to gain mastery over its entirety to contend with many hurdles: the most significant nuisance confronting would-be rulers is the archipelago itself. The straits, channels and seas separating the islands of the Moonshaes make unification under a single ruler difficult. Conquering the entire area demands the ability to move forces rapidly across dangerous waters. Currently no individual or group has all the parts in place to do that, leaving many of these forces struggling to increase their dominance over the land and sea.

Amnian Occupiers

Of the many thorns in the side of the House Kendrick, the most irksome is the intrusion of Amnian interests into the Moonshaes. In fact, the island of Snowdown has been conquered by forces loyal to Amn.

Lady Erliza Daressin, Viceroy of Westphal, rules over the citizens of Snowdown on behalf of Amn. Noted for her uncanny resemblance to her great-grandmother, the first Viceroy of Snowdown, she also carries her name. Her coffers are filled by merchants who reap the rewards of the devastation wrought by workers ripping the bountiful natural resources from the very heart the Moonshaes. Ruthlessly snuffing out several Ffolk rebellions, she is often referred to as "Bloody Erliza."

What her friends and enemies do not know is that



The Llewyrr of the Moonshaes

Lady Erliza has ambitions beyond her role on Snowdown. Under the bright moonlight, Lady Erliza secretly turns her gaze longingly toward Sarifal on the island of Gwynneth. She has recurring visions of being reborn as a fey queen in the Feywild. Through careful research and questioning some of the greatest scholars she could locate, Lady Erliza learned that the point of entry to her destination in the Feywild had to be the city of Karador.

Lady Erliza treated the reemergence of Karador as a great boon, but the power of the fey that dwell there makes it impossible for her to simply enter the city unchallenged. She hopes that she can steer Amn's focus toward Gwynneth in order to give herself easier access to the city. She may also seek to coordinate attacks with the forces of fomorian Queen Connormae on Oman or the mist hag Urphania from Citadel Umbra.

Druids of the Earthmother

The druids of the Earthmother seek to maintain the Balance of nature and preserve the power of the Earthmother on the Moonshaes Isles. With the exception of the leShey, they are the oldest organization in the Moonshaes, developing 1,500 years ago when the Ffolk first arrived on the shores of Gwynneth.

The druids of the Earthmother are common among the Ffolk but rare among the Northlanders. Expanding

north to cleanse and repurpose the lost moonwells of Norland, Norheim, and Gnarhelm is a high priority of the druids.

Their centers of worship are druidic groves away from the urban centers of the Moonshaes. The most senior druids tend the moonwells, which are sacred to the Earthmother. The druids are loosely organized, operating almost entirely by consensus. They meet several times a year to reach decisions on a myriad of issues, resolve any disputes, and welcome new druids to the fold.

The council recognizes three Great Druids, one from the isles of Gwynneth, Alaron, and Moray, as the most senior among them. The Great Druid of Gwynneth is the traditional leader of all the druids, but with the loss of the island to the fey, leadership has fallen to the Great Druid of Alaron, Antola Pilark. She is assisted by Llyneth Kincaid, who has recently ascended to become the great druid of Moray.

DRUIDIC GROVES

Druidic Groves are wooded places sacred to the Earthmother where druids regularly gather to worship the Goddess. They are found all over the isles. Groves are always beautiful, although its beauty may be wild and rugged. The most sacred groves contain the moonwells which are the eyes of the Earthmother upon the land.

The trees of the grove grow faster and larger than normal as the power of the Goddess is strong here. Boundaries of a grove are identified by a ring of moss or mushrooms. Some groves contain large,olithic stones to mark their edges, denote paths, or even act as portals to fey backroads.

As a grove ages, they accumulate a number of powers granted by the Earthmother. These powers vary widely from grove to grove and reflect the nature of the locale, the personality of the druidic stewards, and the style of worships held in these sacred places.

Groves are attended by a druid who acts as a steward. Nearby animals, plants, and even the stones themselves rise to defend the grove against assault. Stewardship of a grove is an honor among the druids with the most senior druids caring for the groves containing a moonwell.

Giants of Oman

A contingent of giants, including fomorian followers of Queen Connoma of the Faerie realm of Vor Thomil, have crossed from the Feywild and made a home on the formerly Northlander-controlled island of Oman. These

giants plot to spread their Queen's power to other places, but so far, the waters surrounding their home have served as an impenetrable barrier against a large and coordinated attack. Their presence keeps Oman from being controlled by anyone else, but if they find the means to leave the island in a safe manner, whether via sea vessel, underground tunnel, or magical portal, they could wreak devastation on a terrible and grand scale.

In the Feywild, Queen Connoma has formed a loose alliance with the lycanthropes of Brokenstone Vale. That alliance is likely to carry over into their Moonshae presence among the Tribe of the Black Blood as well, making them an even more dangerous threat than either would be singly.

House Kendrick

The human population of the Moonshaes was finally brought together under a single banner a century ago when High Queen Alicia Kendrick unified them. The combined forces of the Northlanders and Ffolk, who began to intermarry and mesh culturally as well as politically, still could not exert mastery over all the islands, and recent events have further stripped House Kendrick of its power and holdings.

The current High King is Derid Kendrick, and while he rules over what is arguably the most extensive domain in the Moonshaes, his family's holdings have been reduced to only the island of Alaron (and only a part of that island can be rightfully said to be controlled by the High King's forces). High King Derid still commands the might of the Ffolk and many loyal Northlanders throughout the Isles. Derid has plans to regain his family's glory and prestige – however, such plans would mean a great sacrifice and possibly armed conflict against the other power groups currently holding sway in the Moonshaes.

LeShay of Sarifal

Perhaps the most powerful force of all in the Moonshaes is the court of High Lady Ordalf, a fey queen who has reestablished the realm of Sarifal on the island of Gwynneth. As a nearly immortal member of the leShay, Lady Ordalf and her court command magic powerful enough to rival any mortal faction.

In a time before time, Lady Ordalf learned of a prophecy. A satyr seer predicted that Lady Ordalf could only die in the mortal realm but die she must in order to save two worlds from a howling disease spread by a beast lord. When she heard this prophecy, she removed her realm, called Sarifal, into the Feywild from Gwynneth. Then, just a century ago, she led her Feywild realm back across the planar divide, returning it to the island of Gwynneth, where her capital city of Karador rose from the depths of

the Myrloch. Lady Ordalf felt a tugging deep inside her that foretold her death was both immanent and necessary.

Lady Ordalf and her followers were strong enough to defeat the forces of the High King, and she expanded her realm to encompass all of Gwynneth, leaving the ancestral home of the Kendrick family – Caer Corwell – abandoned. Many Moonshae residents feared she would continue her expansion unchecked to the surrounding islands, but the borders of Sarifal stopped at the coast of Gwynneth.

While her subjects in the realms of Sarifal are allowed to leave the island and explore, Lady Ordalf keeps most of her servants and all of her troops at the ready, as they fight against the Unseelie fey forces located near Citadel Umbra. Representatives from High King Derid, Lady Erliza, and even Rault the Wise have asked for council with the High Lady. With the single exception of Tarilyn Kendrick, all have been politely but curtly turned away and escorted back to their ships.

Northlander Jarls

Civil war in the northern islands erupted when a powerful, gods-touched Northlander calling herself the Storm Maiden gained a following of barbarians, pirates, and other Northlanders who longed for the days of pillaging and domination. The war ended when the Storm Maiden disappeared, her ship supposedly lost at sea.

Rault the Wise, one of the many Northlander jarls who fought the Storm Maiden, survived the war but lost many family members. Many of the remaining Northlander jarls, unwilling to bow to the Ffolk king, Derid Kendrick, look to the elderly Northlander for guidance and direction.

Rault does not have much time left on this mortal realm, and his closest relation is a granddaughter named Astrid, a powerful and charismatic warrior. Some would follow her, but the patriarchal society of the Northlanders, and the recent uprising behind the Storm Maiden, has people scared.

In the meantime, Rault has upheld the uneasy peace between the Northlanders and King Derid's realm. Occasional light raiding and meaningful stares in seaside towns, are the extent of hostilities.

Risen Cult of Bane

More than a century ago, the Risen Cult of Bane was well established in the Moonshaes. They were a feared force in the region and even successfully summoned an aspect of Bane's son, Xvim. Secretly groomed by Manshoon himself, founder of the Zhentarim, they often battled the Llewyrr, who seemed to be wise to their activities. Since Manshoon and their effective leader, the Dread Scourge Gauntather

THE STORM MAIDEN

Raised on the island of Norland, a young human woman was found as a baby by fishermen, abandoned upon the shores of that island and later given the name Hergatha. She was raised by a childless couple, and by the age of 16 she was an unparalleled swordswoman and tactical leader. From an early age she showed the marks of being touched by the gods, and upon reaching maturity she claimed to possess the reincarnated spirit of Viledel, an ancient Northlander warrior and leader who bore the title "the Sea King." While her story is not true, she believes it to be so, and she has performed feats so wonderful that no one dares deny her claims.

A large following of Northlander communities swore allegiance to her, showing the willingness to follow her as the Northlanders reclaimed their ancient heritage as the masters of the seas and coastlines. She led Northlanders against both the petty kings of the northern islands, as well as the holdings of King Derid. After winning countless battles, the Storm Maiden's ship was lost at sea. She always claimed to be blessed by the gods and incapable of drowning. None know what happened, but many hope (or fear) for her return.

have died, the cult has slowly waned in power.

Today the Risen exists only as isolated villages or farmers who only casually worship the Black Lord. They remain enemies with the Llewyrr, but many do not even remember why, other than a hatred instilled in them from childhood. They prefer to keep to themselves but will host travelers for a night or two.

The Llewyrr claim that the cult is quite active again and has, under the leadership of a new young fanatic, clandestinely fostered the old ways. However, few listen to the wild claims about those who most now consider, a quiet people who don't bother anyone.

TRIBE OF THE BLACK BLOOD

While not as powerful or organized as the aforementioned political factions, another force exerts a great deal of destructive influence in the Moonshaes. A group of Malar-revering lycanthropes hold sway over the island of Moray. This group, calling itself the Black Blood Tribe, is comprised of Faerûn-born lycanthropes and those who have traveled from the Feywild region of Brokenstone Vale, a lycanthrope-infested nightmare realm.

The Black Bloods attack with a frenzied bloodlust all civilized communities or groups that attempt to inhabit Moray. The Black Bloods slaughter anything they can, while at the same time performing gruesome rituals

aimed at bringing an avatar or divine servant of Malar to the Moonshaes to lead them.

The raising of this beast-servant of Malar (or an avatar of Malar himself) is likely to occur as it has several times in the past. If and when that happens, the beast will likely turn its savage gaze to the civilized islands. It wants to spread the gift of lycanthropy to all, but most delicious would be the combining of Malar's curse with the fey magic of Sarifal.

Deities of the Moonshaes

As the hour grew late, Gwenlyn spoke of the Earthmother and her moonwells. Gwenlyn believes that the Earthmother is the very essence of the land and is responsible for all that grows and lives in the Moonshaes. This Earthmother seems more attentive than absent Ubtao, but she is locked in a perpetual struggle with Kazgoroth, who seeks to bring ruin and destruction to the islands.

I want to see one of these moonwells for myself before I return home. They sound incredible and worthy of study. Perhaps the druids would let me study one for a time?

Earthmother

The Goddess, the Spirit of the Moonshae Isles

The Earthmother is the spirit of nature in the Moonshaes. The goddess is a neutral deity, recognizing that both good and evil have a place in the world. Her strength derives from the Balance of these extremes. Her enemies are not only those who would extinguish life casually or mindlessly, but also those who would tame the land and bring it under the control of human caretakers.

The Earthmother has no traditional form. She is not a mortal-imitating being, but the very hills, moors, marshes, and seas of the isles. Her symbols are myriad. The swallow is her favored messenger, the broad oak her ageless strength, and the towering pine represents the Balance. Her deepest symbols are the moon and the sun, incorporating the juxtaposition necessary to achieve that Balance.

The temples of the Earthmother are the druid groves where her worshippers gather. Her sacred moonwells are her windows onto the world. Those periods when the moon is full are nights of high power. The druids rejoice at the solstices and the equinoxes, as the land itself shares in the celebration of the Earthmother's power.

The Children of the Earthmother

The Earthmother is served by three children who act as her hands upon the land. They are mortal and can die, but their spirit and the favor of the goddess lives on and another creature of the same type assumes the mantle.

The Leviathan

The Leviathan is a great whale. Unless it is called upon by the Earthmother to fulfill a purpose, meeting some dire danger with its enormous might, the Leviathan is a peaceful creature and spends long years in hibernation at the bottom of the sea.

The Unicorn

Kamerynn the Unicorn is the mightiest of his kind. He reigns as king of the forest and symbolizes all that is wild and free. Kamerynn is swift and elusive, and his knowledge of the woodlands is unparalleled.

The Pack

When the Earthmother awakens the Pack, many packs of dire wolves merge together to form the most effective killing force on the Moonshaes. The largest wolf assumes leadership of the Pack. If slain, another wolf immediately steps into that role.

PRIMAL SPIRIT OR DIVINE ASPECT?

The exact nature of the Earthmother is a matter of some debate in religious circles. The clerics of Chalitea contend that the Earthmother is an aspect of their goddess.

The druids of the Ffolk contend that she is a primal spirit, the generative power of the land itself and not an aspect of a goddess of agriculture.

Kazgoroth

The Beast, the Ravager of the Moonshaes

Central to the worship of the Earthmother is the belief in the purity of the land. The antithesis of the goddess is corruption, destruction, and pollution of the land. The greatest menace to the Balance is Kazgoroth the Beast.

The Beast seeks to destroy the Moonshae Isles and in so doing kill the Earthmother. It takes particular pleasure in profaning places of sacred beauty. It delights in nothing more than the corruption of a druid to its terrible purposes.

Like a horrible parasite, Kazgoroth draws power from the Earthmother and chooses a moonwell that has been polluted and desecrated as its resting place. The Beast is a shapeshifter, able to shrink its body down to a halfling or grow into a huge tyrannosaurus rex-like creature.

Kazgoroth commands many terrible creatures with its might, including the Tribe of the Black Blood, undead warriors, or foul giants. The Beast has been struck down many times and has always returned. The bards claim that the *Sword of Cymrych Hugh* can slay it, but that may be wishful thinking, as the primal desire to destroy the Balance may exist as long as the Balance does.

MOONWELLS

Moonwells are spring-fed pools of fresh, clear water that exist in various locations around the Moonshae Isles. A moonwell usually appears in the middle of a deep and wild forest, providing the natural flora and fauna with a source of unspoiled water.

In preceding centuries, the moonwells were thought to be gifts from the Earthmother. Those who worshiped her, especially druids, kept a sacred vigil over these places. The waters of the moonwells were said to have magical powers, although what those powers were is not common knowledge.

Various evil forces, including some dark deities, found ways to corrupt the moonwells, turning them into portals from which the vilest of beasts could emerge to threaten the safety and sanctity of the surrounding land. Over a century has passed since the moonwells' corruption. Since that time, it is thought that the Earthmother dampened the primal nature of the moonwells, ensuring that no force could usurp their powers again.

Practitioners of primal magic and worshipers of nature deities prophesy that, in the time of greatest need, dedicated heroes of the Moonshae Isles will find a way to return the moonwells to their full power, in defense of the homeland against an invasion from another world.

Other Gods in the Moonshae

Many people in the Moonshae worship gods other than the Earthmother. Called the "New Gods" by the druids and the Earthmother's faithful, these deities have enormous influence in the archipelago. The largest three among the Ffolk are Chauntea, Helm, and Milil.

Chauntea is often seen as both synonymous with the Earthmother and separate from the primal spirit of the Moonshae. When she is worshipped separately, Chauntea is the patron of agriculture and coaxing the bounty from the land. Helm is popular among the warriors and nobility of the Moonshae for his steadfast opposition to Talos and Malar. Milil, the goddess of poetry and song, is well regarded throughout the islands by both Ffolk and Notherlanders. Legends claim that he brought the harp to the Moonshae and taught the first bards.

Among the Northlanders, Valkur, the Captain of the Waves, gains the most worship, surpassing that of Tempus in recent years. As the patron of sailors, Valkur is loved in a way that Umberlee never could. Offerings are still made to the Queen of the Depths, but out of fear and obligation.

The dark gods of Talos, Bhaal, and Malar have left their mark on the Moonshae in the past. All three of

these dark gods are known to hold grudges, especially Talos the destroyer. With the fracturing of the United Moonshae Isles, many sages wonder if the hand of Talos is again at work, subtly bringing destruction to the kingdom and the family that have thwarted him so many times in the past.

The Black Bloods venerate Malar and worship of the Beastlord is indelibly tangled with lycanthropy in the minds of the Moonshavians. While Bane has a small, but dedicated, following as discussed in the Risen Cult of Bane section above.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

Kazgoroth has served many masters over the centuries, including Malar and Bhaal. The druids of the Ffolk contend that Kazgoroth is another primal spirit like the Earthmother. This spirit is bent on destruction and ruin. The Beast uses power given to it by gods such as Malar and Bhaal in return for pursuing their ends for a time. However, Kazgoroth only has one true purpose: the disruption of the Balance.



Kazgoroth the Beast