

# CODEX

HEROSCAPEHQ.COM



Cupid's Art

# Letter From the Editor

**B**uilding a new magazine can be a daunting task, especially when everyone involved is a volunteer. It is hard enough to find quality art and skilled writers when those contributors are paid; when every artist, writer, designer, and editor is working for the love of the thing, it can be an uphill battle. That is why the staff of the HeroScape Codex is so especially proud to bring you the inaugural issue of this magazine.

Inside the pages of the Codex you will find new scenarios for HeroScape, discussions of custom units and special rules, humor and fiction. We have all worked hard to make sure that this first issue presents the reader with a variety of things you can use in your HeroScape games, even if it's just a smile or a half-hour of entertainment.

Volunteer magazines are only as good as their contributors, and we have been lucky enough to have many excellent submissions. In fact, we have been able to set aside a small stock of things for next issue, but it won't be enough without the continued support of the HeroScape community. We all do this because we love the game. If you love the game, we would love to have your help.

If you can write an article, edit a document, draw a picture or create a custom unit, we want to hear from you. Just drop us an email and tell us what you can do. With the support of the fans, and the great community at HeroScapeHQ ([www.heroscapehq.com](http://www.heroscapehq.com)), this magazine can only get better.

InfinityMax  
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## Credits

The HeroScape Codex was made possible by the contributions of the members of HeroScapeHQ, which should explain why the credits list us all by our screen names.

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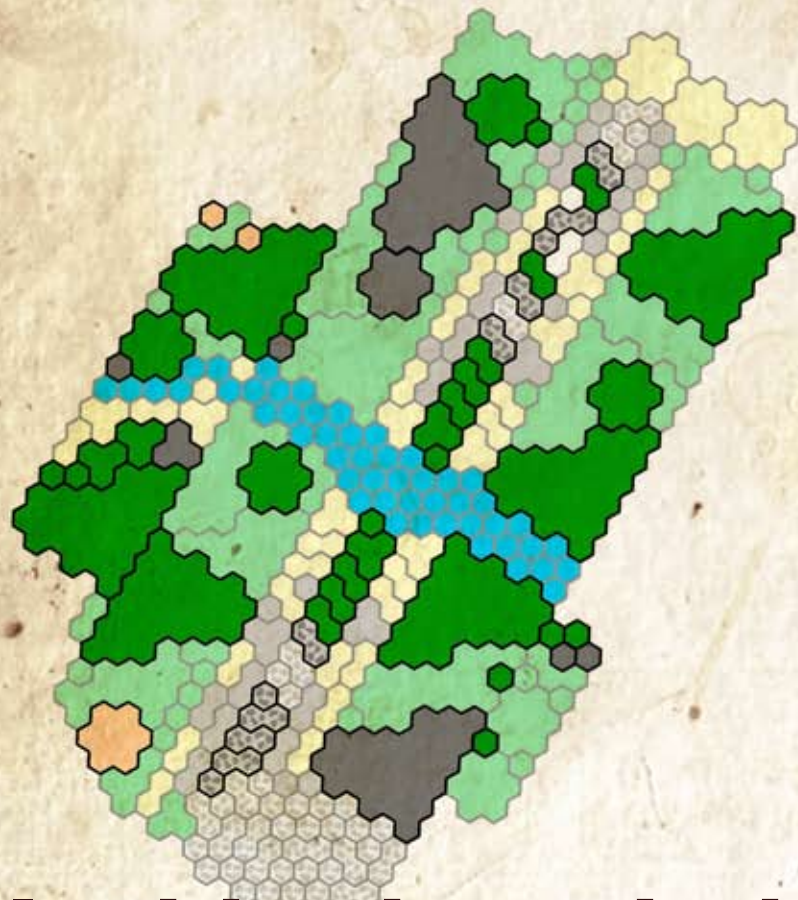
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## Inside the mind of the landscape god!

an interview with Logrey,  
creator of LandSCAPE... pg.24



Check out our exclusive  
HeroScape Campaign - HeroSkirmish!  
Starting on pg.40

# Hero Scape Buying Guide

January



**Master Set - Rise of the Valkyrie** \$39.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Basic Terrain, Rules, Dice  
Mimring Zettian Guards (2)  
Grimnak Marro Warriors (4)  
Deathwalker 9000 Airborne Elite (4)  
Ne-Gok-Sa Tarn Viking Warriors (4)  
Finn Krav Maga Agents (3)  
Thorgrim Izumi Samurai (3)  
Sgt. Drake Alexander Raelin  
Agent Carr Syvarris



**Wave 1 (Mallidon's Prophecy) - Heroes of Bleakwoode** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Taelord Venoc Warlord  
Kelda Marcus Decimus Gallus  
Tornak



**Wave 1 (Mallidon's Prophecy) - Snipers & Vipers** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Omicron Snipers (3) Venoc Vipers (4)



**Wave 1 (Mallidon's Prophecy) - IX Roman Legion** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Roman Archers (3)  
Roman Legionnaires (4)



**Wave 1 (Mallidon's Prophecy) - Grut Orcs** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Arrow Gruts (4) Blade Gruts (4)



**Wave 2 (Utgars Rage) - Heroes of Barrenspur** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Sir Denrick Me-Burq-Sa  
Krug Khosumet the Darklord



**Wave 2 (Utgars Rage) - Knights and the Swog Rider** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Knights of Weston (4) Swog Rider



**Wave 2 (Utgars Rage) - Devourers and Minute Men** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

4th Massachusetts Line (4)  
Anubian Wolves (4)



**Wave 2 (Utgars Rage) - Minions and Drones** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Minions of Utgar (3) Marro Drones (3)



**Road to the Forgotten Forest** \$19.99  
Available at most major toy retailers

Roads and trees Dumutef Guard



**Orm's Return** \$19.99  
Available at most major toy retailers

Charos Su-Bak-Na  
Deathwalker 8000 Brunak  
Dund



**Volcarren Wasteland** \$15.99  
Toys R Us Exclusive

Lava terrain Obsidian Guards (3)



**Wave 3 (Jandar's Oath) - Heroes of Nostralund** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Alistair MacDirk Concan  
Deathwalker 7000 Saylind  
Johnny 'Shotgun' Sullivan



**Wave 3 (Jandar's Oath) - Monks and Guards** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Shaolin Monks (3) Jandar's Sentinels (3)



**Wave 3 (Jandar's Oath) - Kilts and Commandos** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

MacDirk Warriors (4)  
Microcorp Agents (3)



**Wave 3 (Jandar's Oath) - Gorillas and Hounds** \$12.95  
Available at most major toy retailers

Gorillinators (3) Marrden Hounds (3)



**Master Set - WalMart Exclusive (Vipers' Vengeance)** \$34.83  
WalMart Exclusive

All MS pieces Elite Onyx Vipers (3)



**Nerak**  
Promo only

04

Buying Guide

the gentle month of  
APRIL of 2005

Do not taunt the monkies.

the illustrious  
**Valhalla Times**

2 Pieces of Copper  
(No, we don't accept the  
currency of your homeland.)

Courage! "We are really quite neutral, so please, please do not hurt us." Harland Bistro, ed.

## Venoc Warlord Discloses Secret Muffin Recipe



Commander, Baker

TROLLSFORD SWAMPS - In a startling turn of events today the Venoc Warlord, known for masterminding the destruction of Windmere Castle, and the burning of the Nine Farmlands, revealed his secret muffin recipe at a last-minute press conference.

The recipe was related to excited members of the press in easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions, while the Warlord's own Viper scouts passed out full-color illustrations. In addition to his standard recipe

the Venoc Warlord included notes on his favorite ways to customize muffins by making them more "chocolatey" or "berrylicious."

While the Warlord claimed to give away the recipe, "out of the goodnesssss of my heart," insiders speculated it was an attempt to draw attention away from Agent Carr's recently released three-cheese pasta casserole.

The Venoc Warlord denied this claim, and Agent Carr was not available for comment.

## Terrorists Release Grainy Video

"What are We Watching Exactly?" Authorities Ask.



A sample of the grainy, incoherent video.

MIGOL'S TOMB - Authorities are puzzled by a strange video found today near the tomb of the late Archkyrie Migol II. The video, believed to be the work of terrorists, is currently under investigation, though investigators are unsure of what they are watching. "Clearly this is the work of amateurs," said one detective, "and not the work of, say, an organization with millions of coins at its disposal. Surely if that were the case the video would be of much higher quality."

Speculation on the purpose of the video

*Story Continued on Page C1.*

## Desperate Ullar Summons Boston Philharmonic Lead Viola "Thoroughly Upset."

In what has been seen as a desperate move, local power figure Ullar has summoned the might of the Boston Philharmonic to his side. Many critics, noting Ullar's lack of troops believe this to be a sad, final attempt to muster some form of credibility.

Ullar's spokesperson, Syvarris the Elf, denied all rumors, claiming the

*Story Continued on Page B3.*

## Your Three-Day Weather Forecast

Sunday \* Tempest  
Monday \* Killer Fog  
Tuesday \* Winds that Prevent Flying



'Grut' a racist term say Orcs. See Page A2.

## Classifieds

**Troll for Hire** - Bridge troll, large build, able to hurt things, cheap. No goats please.

**Want to Buy** - Large electric fan suitable for keeping so-called 'toxic mists' away.

*More on Page A6.*

the gentle month of  
MAY of 2005

Usable as a sanitary wipe.

the illustrious

# Valhalla Times

2 Pieces of Copper  
(or 1 chicken)

Courage! "We are really quite neutral, so please, please do not hurt us." Harland Bistro, ed.

## Playing God? Kelda Center of Controversy in Right-to-Die Case



Kelda

SERENITY LAKE - Kelda, popular Kyrie, warrior and healer, the backbone of Jandar's medical team, has found herself at the center of a right-to-die controversy. On Tuesday Kelda found an ailing man by the name of Dwayne Simmons. Simmons, formerly of a realm known as Ohio, was in great pain, and immediately found himself under Kelda's care.

As past studies have shown, Kelda is capable of healing 19 out of 20 patients, and Simmons soon found himself "feeling fine." Unfortunately for both parties this is not what Simmons had been wanting.



Simmons

"When my doctor diagnosed me with irritable bowel syndrome [IBS] I felt like my life was over," said Simmons at a Thursday press conference. "I had just taken a fatal dose of Tylenol when Little Miss Heals-a-Lot showed up. Now I'm still alive and my ass is killing me! I'm on fire down there man!"

Story Continued on Page A2.

## Should Water Cloning be Taught in Schools?



BLACK ROCK - The angry shouts of protesting parents rose above the shrill chattering of indignant Marro yesterday, during yet another chaotic town hall debate. The issue of water cloning, and whether or not it has a place in Valhallan school curriculum has become a very heated issue.

"I don't want my child being taught this kind of filth in a public school," said an angry Bjorn Bjornson. "Hey them Marro can do whatever they want in the privacy of their own homes, splitting up every which way, but not in my son's fourth-grade classroom!"

"Water cloning is a beautiful thing," said Ne-

Story Continued on Page A2.

Op Ed - Finn is a Pompous Ass. Page A2

Utgar on Vacation Until June.

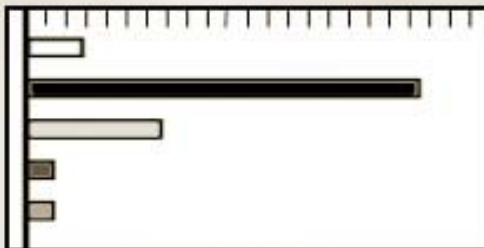
General's Mood Ring Suggests Anger.

Spring Fashions - Who Likes Short Shorts?

Taelord Like Short Shorts! Page D3



Page A3



### We Asked What Do You Fear?

- 60% - Violence
- 20% - Mad Oxen's Malady
- 10% - High Cholesterol
- 5% - Howler Monkeys
- 5% - People Named Jojo

Venocs start Health Campaign, Pass Out Bananas to Children.



Page C3

Ullar Summons Hamburglar.

Page B2

Environmental Disaster? The Facts on Opaque Water Page B1

the gentle month of  
JUNE of 2005

Fortune favors the bald.

the illustrious  
**Valhalla Times**

2 Pieces of Copper  
(or best offer)

Courage! "We are really quite neutral, so please, please do not hurt us." Harland Bistro, ed.



# Utgar Furious!

Valkyrie Rages, Writes Bad Poetry.



FENS OF DEATH - Valhalla is reeling after yesterday's news that Valkyrie general Utgar is really, really mad. "We're talking really mad in a big way," says Martin Carleson, a professor of psychology at VU. "Imagine someone who's mad, and then picture them getting even more mad. That's about how mad Utgar is."

As news of the Valkyrie's anger spread, so did the rampant finger-pointing. While many experts blame stress brought on by the demands of leadership, insiders have hinted that Utgar blames his own parents.

"Utgar's mom and dad just don't get it," said an insider close to the Valkyrie who asked to remain anonymous. "They keep trying to box him into their TV dinner prison, and he's sick and tired of it."

NOW THAT'S FUNNY! by smith



The insider went on to say, "Utgar is a true individual and refuses to conform to what society says he should do. He's not a machine damn it!" The insider then went on to take a drag from a stale cigarette he had stolen from a friend's older brother.

Whatever the reason for Utgar's rage, reaction from opposition camps has been mixed at best. Jandar's spokesperson released a statement saying Jandar was "stunned and confused by his rival's behavior," saying that "anyone who just received major reinforcements has no reason to cry. Utgar should seriously chill. Seriously."

The other Valkyrie generals were less forthcoming, but a source close to Ullar said that when he heard about how many new troops Utgar received, he began to cry uncontrollably. Ullar's administration will probably release a statement later this week, once the general has been coaxed out from under the dining room table where he lies, curled in the fetal position.

And so Valhalla is still left wondering why Utgar is mad, and what, once he has gotten over it, he will do with himself. "He'll probably eat a lot of ice cream and watch reruns of 'Laverne and

Story Continued on Page A2.

Vydar Takes Second Job. Page B1.

Khosumet Upset Over "Dorklord" Comment. Page A2.

## Sample of Utgar's Poetry

I am alone.  
Truly.  
Alone in the darkness that  
My parents created,  
Trying so hard to fit  
Me into their plastic-wrapped world  
I tumble, a lost child in the cosmos.  
And why the hell  
Doesn't Jennifer Schultz like me?  
A returned phone call would be nice.  
I am alone.

## Utgar has Troubles Finding Own Troops, Cites

"Availability." Page A3.

## Wolves Spark Controversy with 'Jesus was Anubian' Shirts.

Page B1.

## Op Ed - Is Krug on PCP or What?

Page D7.

## About Town



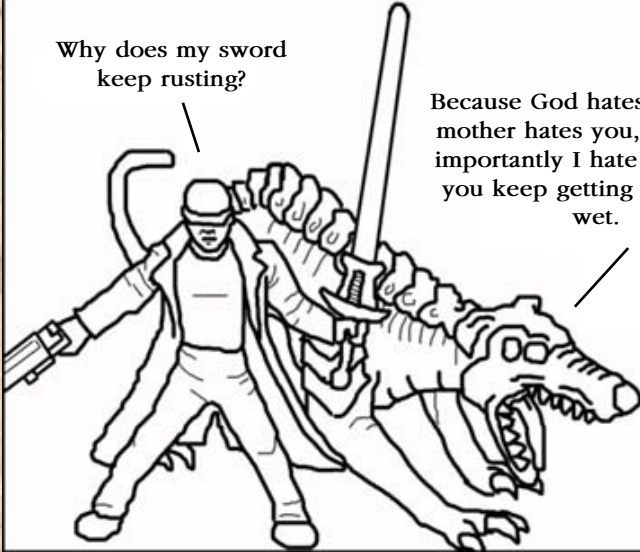
Mao Tse-Tung mingles with Ne-Gok-Sa at the Turner Gallery grand opening.

carr loves dünd

by mrbistro

Why does my sword  
keep rusting?

Because God hates you, your  
mother hates you, and more  
importantly I hate you. Plus,  
you keep getting that thing  
wet.

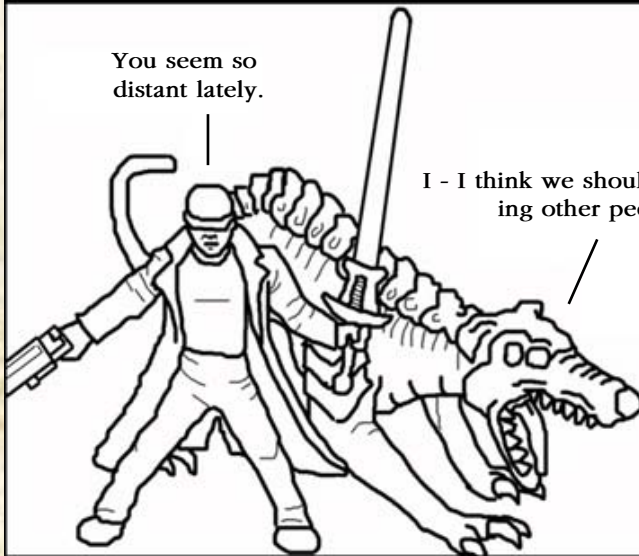


carr loves dünd

by mrbistro

You seem so  
distant lately.

I - I think we should start see-  
ing other people.

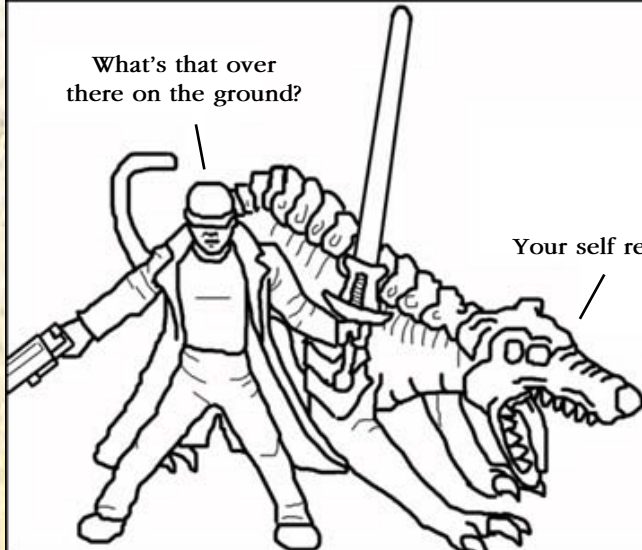


carr loves dünd

by mrbistro

What's that over  
there on the ground?

Your self respect?





# What are HeroScape Customs?

Customs for HeroScape (hereby abbreviated "HS") are fan-created units, rules additions/add-ons, house rules, figure modding, and other efforts intended to enhance the standard HS play environment. It is fair to assume that these efforts are undertaken because the creator feels the desire to add something that is not yet (or is not likely to be) added to the standard game we all enjoy.

It is important to note that while the standard game is probably one of the best of its kind ever made, it is (perhaps unfortunately) designed, targeted, and marketed towards young boys. Because of this demographic/marketing choice, there are many gaming elements that were not implemented. Some custom efforts are fans' way of adding these missing elements, as they see them, to the game. Other efforts attempt to stay strictly within the standard rules, and just add a favorite character they feel is lacking, or would just be fun to play. Regardless of the idea/motivation, one of the main principles behind custom efforts is to make the implementation as simple as possible. That can be a tough trick – the official HS designers follow this same principle, and wrestle with it constantly – they just have to ratchet their rules a bit farther back than custom designers do. But a good custom should follow the same HS principle – simplicity.

So what are people adding to this great game structure?

Ever since HS was released, fans have been adding customs to it. HS is uniquely suitable for this, by its design. It is a very solid (almost barebones) system that easily accommodates new rules/units/mods/etc. Many people may not even publish their customs on a HS fansite, just playing them on their own, or with their kids/family, or with their gaming group.

The customs featured in these Codex articles are by no means complete, and I apologize in advance for any efforts that may be overlooked. As an open offer, if you believe a custom effort should be spotlighted in a future Codex article, please PM me on HSHQ or email me at [reapersaurus@comcast.net](mailto:reapersaurus@comcast.net). As an open offer, if you believe a custom effort should be spotlighted in a future Codex article, please PM me on HSHQ or email me at [reapersaurus@comcast.net](mailto:reapersaurus@comcast.net).

These spotlights are not a judgment of what efforts are the "best" – they are simply trying to bring attention to the most significant and noteworthy efforts\*.

\*(note – there will be some efforts I contributed to, included because of their significance, (hopefully) not because of any favoritism I may have towards them)

In coming HS Codex issues, I will be focusing deeper on one area of the HS customs community, as well as running a spotlight (with commentary) on the significant releases of the time. Future articles will focus on:

- \* Evolution and current state of custom units
- \* Custom rules / House Rules
- \* Figure modding / kit-bashing
- \* Acquiring and converting figures for HS customs
- \* History & timeline of .Net and HSHQ customs



# Spotlight On... On...

This category is for rules extensions to the base game, both big and small, including popular "House Rules" implementations. People have been house-ruling games since games began, and HS is no exception. Some people prefer more or less detail in different areas than the official rules go into. The interesting observation I've noticed is that this area has decreased as time has gone by, and the standard ruleset is used more and more. When the game first came out, there were LOTS of really creative ideas to enhance the standard rules, with things like Partial Cover rules, facing, morale, etc. The most common basic idea I've seen (still) tinkered with are the Order Markers (especially for larger army skirmishes). Some significant rules added to the game by HS fans are:

## Implementing True Flying in HS

Flying units in HS don't truly fly - they hop. At the end of their move, they must return to the ground and stay there until their next move. They are stuck on the ground during the opponent's turn(s). A member at the heroscape.net fan site started a group effort into implementing "True Flying" for HS - a way for flying units to stay in the air, thereby removing them from melee combat (a more realistic approach to the flight power). There was even a final version of these rules, using clear tubes to indicate the level that a unit was Flying at. It tried very hard to strip the rules to their base essence in as simple of way as possible. The whole ruleset was perhaps a couple of detailed paragraphs long, even with clarifying rules. Look for this thread to be re-posted at some point. Feel free to request the thread on the boards if you are interested in this well-done customs effort.

## Equipment Cards

Taking inspiration from the excellent HSGear mod and the custom Glyph work of other members, I applied the concept to custom unit design. The concept of Equipment cards is to allow custom units to save precious card-space by referring to the Equipment card for pieces of Equipment they carry (like a Magnesium Flare for the Taskmaster). All this Equipment would need to be used by other units is to give it a point cost. These point costs (5, 10, 25 points) allow the Equipment to be drafted with extra points during draft time. The blank glyph card template and glyph are used to make the components use the same ones as the standard game. This same approach can be taken with spells for magic-wielding units. A spell library can be created, for use by other unit creators. Balanced spells with associated costs can be worked out, to be used by units and for potions and magic items (Treasure) to be used in scenarios. This entire system is open for use by any creators wanting flexibility in their efforts.

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Customizing HS

# House Rules

Here are some of the most popular/requested House Rules, with some suggested implementations. These are more ideas than actual finalized efforts. Consider using any of them if they strike your fancy.

\* Partial Cover – if a % of the defender's figure is blocked by terrain, trees, or ruins/etc, he rolls 1 more defense die. The trick with this popular common-sense rule is "What constitutes enough cover to warrant a bonus? 25%? 33%? 50%?" and "How do we determine when the bonus kicks in, exactly?"

\* Flanking – "If the opponent you are attacking has more than one enemy unit adjacent to it, it is considered flanked and all attacks against that unit gain one extra attack die." (wording by Matt Robertson)

# Custom Units

One of Heroscape's advantages is its ability to accommodate fan additions. It is very likely that someone might want to see and play with a character that hasn't been released as an official figure. Or there may never be an official unit for that fan's favorite character (be it from movies, books, TV, etc). With a bit of work, a HS card can be created to accommodate that fan's tastes. There are tools that can assist this process, like HSToolkit, which can be downloaded from the heroscapehq.com web site. There are even high-quality templates, thanks to bunjee's great efforts, that can be used along with your favorite image-editing program (like Photoshop) to make cards nearly indistinguishable from the originals.

# Custom Mods/Kit-Bashing

We will discuss custom mods and kit-bashing and custom glyphs in future issues of the Codex – stay tuned! Future issues of the Codex will highlight more creations from members of the HS community. Thanks for joining me in an exploration and celebration of the custom HS community. Please – on behalf of all past, present, and future creators, please take a peek at our efforts and consider their use, and chime in with your thoughts on our efforts. Feedback is the very food of creativity.

# The Soldier and Death's Angel

Sgt. Drake Alexander walked along a land the color of ash and dead wood, boots crunching over pebbles and the bones of dead things he tried his very best not to look at too closely. His current mission placed him on the very fringe of the Volcarren Wasteland, and he couldn't say he was happy with that, but at least he wasn't deep enough in it to have to worry about lava or Utgar's ferocious Obsidian Guards. His footwear wasn't designed to be *that* heatproof, and he had no backup for this mission. It was to be as covert as possible, lest Utgar figure out what they were trying to do. This was a delicate operation. A *diplomatic* operation.

Idle memories of his briefing, such as it had been, drifted through Drake's mind as he traversed the barren, broken landscape.

*"I don't think I need to tell you how badly Utgar's forces outnumber us right now. I've been summoning likely allies with all possible speed-"*

*"Like that rabbit," Drake interrupted dryly, barely withholding a smirk.*

*"Yes, like that rabbit," Jandar said with a perfectly straight face.*

*"But it's simply not enough to even defend our current position at this point, let alone make effective offensive maneuvers." Jandar gestured at a glowing map made up of who knew what kind of mysterious sorcerous energies, which was color-coded to show the parts of Valhalla controlled by various generals, as well as the contested areas. Utgar's color, a dark, fiery red, dominated almost two-thirds of the map.*

*"That Marro warlord takes over a vulnerable mind whenever he gets the chance," Drake growled sourly, having a particular distaste for the enemy in question.*

*"And his warriors clone themselves like they'd never heard of reproducin' the normal way... I guess we*

*should be thankful that Utgar's forces are nowhere near the ocean. They're recruitin' weird things in weird ways, the lot of 'em."*

*"Indeed. So we're going to take a page from their book... I believe that is the correct usage of one of your human sayings?"*

*"Uh, yes sir, I guess. What'd you have in mind?" Drake frowned slightly. Anything that had a comparison to Utgar's forces in it couldn't be terribly wholesome or pleasant.*

And he'd been right, too. Here he was, slinking between shaky, craggy cliffs, hoping a boulder wouldn't see fit to fall on his noggin when he wasn't looking, on the mere chance that some strange, reclusive, nameless kyrie was to be found nearby. Knowing firsthand the power of Kelda and Raelin, he didn't question the usefulness of another kyrie ally, but the descriptions Jandar had given to him of the kyrie's appearance and personality were disturbing, all the more so for being incredibly vague. He'd gotten the impression that Jandar had wanted him thrown into this situation headfirst without any time to create assumptions about it - which meant that, for some reason, Jandar thought he was likely to have negative impressions on their hopeful new kyrie ally. And he was, honestly, by doing nothing more than walking. The larger animals here had died long ago; only bleached white bones were left of them. Of plants he saw nothing more than weeds, with oversized centipedes skittering through them if he bothered to look close enough, which he generally didn't. The air was hot enough to make him sweat slightly even though he was barely exerting himself, and smelled faintly sulphurous. The sky was half-shrouded in clouds of ash that made what little sunlight lucky enough to get through seem weak and ghostly. What kind of person would want to live in a place like this?

It was almost enough to make him long for the company of that stupid rabbit again. And that was really saying something, as much as it annoyed Drake to fight, train, and work alongside an obnoxious cartoon character who didn't even have any strong loyalty to Jandar in the first place. He ground his teeth slightly at the thought of Bugs's 'farewell present.'

*"Nyaaaaa, what's up, doc?" Smirking goodnaturedly, Bugs's eyes gleamed with innocent inquisitiveness, all the more maddening for the intelligence that Drake knew was hidden so carefully behind them.*

*"Enough with the lines, rabbit. In case you haven't noticed, there's a war to fight, and I've got a mission to accomplish. Don't defect or anything while I'm away." Drake started to march off, ignoring the boisterous calls of the Tarn Vikings, who wanted him to have one last ale before his journey. The problem with them was that there was no such thing as one last ale. He was fairly sure they were drunk, hung over, or trying to get drunk every waking minute of their lives. Bugs saw fit to follow him a little ways, feet almost prancing as they kept up with his marching soldier's pace effortlessly. "Who, lil ol' me? Defect? Why, I never hoid such nonsense in all my life!" he objected mock-seriously, paws clutching at his chest in a melodramatic pose. "Hey, don't walk so fast! You're gonna get my hind paws in a blister at this rate. Nyaaaa, since there's a rumor goin' around the vine a' grapes that you're doin' this one solo, I thought you might appreciate a lil good luck charm, ya know? T'show there's no hard feelin's. Whadda ya say, pal?"*

*Drake swore that for a moment he heard a mournful violin playing faintly as Bugs somehow enlarged his eyes to the size of saucers and made them sparkle wetly like those of a puppy. Sighing, he stopped, running a hand over his forehead, trying to stave off the impending headache that either Bugs or the weather's heat was starting to give him. "Alright, Bugs. That's very, um, thoughtful of you." Drake glared down at the canteen of carrot juice as though it were personally responsible for the five-way military conflict in Valhalla. Grumpily, he threw the canteen to the ground and let it spill its orange contents over the rocky earth. There was a sizeable opening in the left cliff wall, a crack-like hole twice as tall as he was and several inches wider. Judging from the depth of the blackness in it, there was at least a modest cave beyond. Forgetting the vexing lapine, Drake strode forward*

eagerly, leaning forward to peer into the dark. Jandar had mentioned that the kyrie woman had liked staying hidden from sight, and what better way to do that than lurk in a cave? Perhaps his journey in this awful place was near its end.

As he worked his way through the winding, unsteady path that seemed to corkscrew deeper and deeper into the earth with no end in sight, his hope only grew, spotting signs of potential habitation with the help of occasional cracks in the ceiling that let in light grudgingly. Either that, or just his wishful thinking. But he was a soldier, and soldiers didn't do that sort of thing, he reminded himself. Here and there, in the few softer patches of dirt left, there were indentations that looked vaguely like footprints. Oddly angular, uneven footprints, but footprints nonetheless, human-sized and roughly human-shaped. And then there were the scratches on the walls... lines, both curved and straight, deep and shallow, of the sort that would have been difficult to make without tools. Or very, very sharp claws. Some of them almost looked like they might have been half-formed pictures of people and places, and others still bore a suspicious resemblance to the sort of vertically grouped lines crossed out diagonally that people used to count out things. No doubt about it. He was making his way through the wretchedly overheated cavern more by touch than sight, and he'd knocked his head against a sharp rock, and his clothes were starting to get soaked with sweat, but by God, he was almost at the goal. The nameless kyrie Jandar wanted so badly to recruit had to be somewhere in here, and the cave couldn't go on for too much longer. The oppressive heat made Drake wish suddenly that he hadn't abandoned the carrot juice... he'd used up his ration of water long before, and he was terribly thirsty. Irrational, intense resentment against Bugs surged up in him, as though it was all the rabbit's fault. Damn the rabbit for taking something as serious as a war so frivolously, anyway. Damn Jandar for being idiotic enough to summon a cartoon character into a war in the first place. Damn the rest of them for accepting Bugs and bribing him with carrots to get him to stick around with them instead of running off into the woods to find a new rabbit hole.

It was unfair that the rabbit was even still alive at this point. As though the universe were sending Drake a cosmic message, that all the blood and death and hard choices didn't mean anything, that it was possible to just breeze through it all, if only you could rape the laws of physics in every last orifice.

Why was he even with Jandar, anyway?! Drake fingered the hilt of his magical blade with disdain. Leave it to Jandar to call one of America's finest into action and give him a sword instead of a gun. Utgar never showed such idiocy. Utgar's minions, one and all, were equipped as best suited their talents and tastes. Utgar's army was vast, outnumbering the rest of the generals even when the other four were stacked together, and Utgar's army was strong. Dinosaurs. Towering robots with machine guns and rocket launchers. The flame-breathing dragon Mimring. The unstoppable single-minded Marro. The cunning and swift-footed orcs.

They knew what war was like. They knew what it was like to kill. Utgar wasn't fool enough to summon damned cartoons into battle. Now that Drake thought of it, they were almost admirable in their ruthlessness... so pure in their purposefulness, lacking doubt or weakness. Those were true soldiers. He ought to be with them.

Yes. That was where he belonged. He would fight with Utgar, leading the best and greatest of his troops into the fray. And the first enemy he'd kill would be that stupid, carrot-chewing, New Jersey-accented rabbit!

The irritation of sweat suddenly sliding down from his forehead and into his eyes, blinding him briefly, was enough to derail his train of thought for a moment. But a moment was all it took for him to suddenly feel horrified.

What in the name of God had he been *thinking*?! Betray the generous, kind, Jandar, betray Raelin and Sullivan and all the others, and join with Utgar's monstrosities? What was *wrong* with him?! This was just like the time when Ne-Gok-Sa....  
...when Ne-Gok-Sa....

A familiar humanoid shape ahead, partly seen, partly intuited, burned itself into Drake's mind. The distinctive pointed plate on the right shoulder. The segmented metallic coating on the left arm, from shoulder to wrist. The deadly, praying mantis-like points at the ends of both limbs, and the bony flap that rose up behind the head like a particularly tall collar to a cape. The faint but persistent, sickly-sweet smell of rotting flesh.

"You again," Drake snarled quietly, glaring at Ne-Gok-Sa. His sword was out in an instant, and in that same instant he was full motion, charging with deadly intent towards the alien warlord that had twice, now, attempted to take over his mind and convert him to Utgar's cause.

A sharp hiss from Ne-Gok-Sa, sounding almost disappointed that his little mind trick had failed to work again, was the only sound the alien made, but he reacted to the offensive move quickly, bringing up his left arm to block the blow aimed for his neck.

It was the worst duel Drake had ever been in. Already tired, overheated, and dehydrated, fighting in a cramped, unfamiliar, unpredictable area, and more than half-blind from sweat and shade, he had only his instincts, his training (which was so well-honed that it was almost like instinct itself by now), and the Katana of Thorian to aid him against the vicious and experienced alien, who seemed somewhat more familiar with the place than Drake was. Blow after blow was struck between the two, twisting, turning, snarls of mutual hatred and pained exclamations exchanged, as the two remained in a deadlock for many tense moments.

Ne-Gok-Sa's armor and excellent defensive skills were difficult enough to pierce even when seen clearly, and Drake's uniform was not nearly so protective. Drake had a definite advantage in weaponry, but despite this he soon felt that he was destined to lose this fight. Therefore, when a bizarre, wavering screech echoed from the back of the cavern and Ne-Gok-Sa, after hesitating a moment, began to flee, Drake felt more relief than anything else, and simply leaned against a wall to await the next exciting surprise, knowing that attempting to pursue the warlord would be a fatal mistake. Did the nameless kyrie for whom he was searching somehow make that sound? Or was there some monster in this cave that even Ne-Gok-Sa feared?

What was Ne-Gok-Sa doing here in the first place? Looking for the kyrie, or was their clash a mere coincidence, with Ne-Gok-Sa being around for unrelated business?

Well, one way to find out...

"Hello?" Drake called out in the direction the sound had come from.

"Is anyone there?" He grimly ignored the little voice in his head that whispered urgently that people in horror movies who did what he was doing always ended up dead for it.

Silence.

Drake took a breath, steeled himself, and kept calling.

"I'm looking for a kyrie! A kyrie woman who drank from a wellspring!

Are you her?"

The sound repeated itself, but more slowly and gently, ending in a low hiss. Drake started to hear what sounded very much like light, unsteady footsteps coming towards him. He gripped his sword firmly, got into a stance to defend himself, and tried one more time.

"Jandar sent me to recruit a powerful kyrie that lives around here, to fight against Utgar!

Against creatures like that one you just drove off! She'll be rewarded for her help!

If you're the person I'm looking for, please say something!"

A voice crept through the gloom like the brush of an unseen spider's web.

"Yeeeeeesssss."

It was distorted and almost toneless in its gentle hiss, but definitely the voice of a woman. It would have been a very pleasant voice, too, if not for the odd distortion and the way the woman was speaking. It was very close by now, too. Close enough to talk with without shouting. Yet Drake still couldn't see a thing. He wondered if it was just that dark in that section of the cave, or if the woman were around a corner, hiding.

"You... you are the person I've been looking for, then?" he asked at a normal volume, wanting confirmation.

"There... are no otherssss... that live here... warrior. If you sssseeek... ssssomeone here, I am all there issss to find." The sentence was punctuated with frequent, somewhat unnerving pauses at which the woman breathed heavily in or out, the distortion somehow attached even to the sound of her breath itself.

Carefully sheathing his sword, Drake did his best to act like everything was perfectly normal, and he was having a chat with an ordinary-sounding woman over tea or something, and not a freakishly-voiced woman in the middle of a very uninviting cave. "Well, first thing's first. You saved me from that Marro, miss, by scaring him off like you did. Thanks, I really owe you one for that. If I can repay you in any way, just let me know." Throughout this he had to repress his nervousness at the steady sound of breath being forcefully inhaled and hissed out.

There was a faint, delicate fluttering, buzzing sound before the woman replied, sounding somewhere between amused and angry. For some reason, Drake felt a brief but sharp wave of weakness wash through his limbs, and he had to clutch at a wall to keep standing for a second.

"No thankssss necessary... man-thing. Hissss purposssse wasss much assss yoursss... though he availed himssssself much lesssss... of appropriate civility." The last word had a particular emphasis on it that gave Drake an idea as to what Ne-Gok-Sa had tried.

"So, he wanted to recruit you too, only he tried to take over your head instead of talking to you, is that it?" Drake asked, a bit smugly. The bad guys just didn't have any sense of tact. "You don't sound like the sort to be easily fooled by his mind tricks."

There was a sudden, cackling, nightmarish sound, and Drake almost drew his sword in a panic before realizing that the noise was the woman's laughter. "Flatterer! I am sssure you get... all the ladiessss with sssuch ssssmooth talk! Yesssss, he sssought my... ssser-viccesssss... by forcce, and failed. Yet he would not leave... he tried again and again to take me... the foolisssshhh creature! I am assss grateful for your aid assss... you are for mine, for it sssseems only when faccced with... the prossspect of both of usss... was he sssufficiently intimidated to flee."



"Glad to here I was of use to you, miss. Um... do you suppose we could step outside to talk more? If you don't mind terribly."

There was a brief silence, punctuated only by the usual breathing sounds. "Very well. Lead the way, good ssssir," the woman agreed, her voice playful on the last part.

Thanking God fervently that there were no branching tunnels in the cave, Drake felt around the wall until he got his bearings and began retreating from the cave with a haste born of joyful relief. The soft, uneven padding of feet behind him, as well as the breathing noises, let him know that his companion was keeping close by without any trouble, so he allowed himself to walk as fast as he felt like walking. Which was almost a jog until he finally saw the dim mouth of the cavern ahead and his eyes adjusted enough so that he could actually see everything around him clearly... or at least, as clearly as could be managed in the cloudy evening twilight. Then he slowed down and turned, curious to get a first proper look at his hopeful recruit.

His gaze fixed at eye height, what he saw staring back at him, looking from the gloom, was a salt-white skull, bare of the slightest bit of flesh, and stained along the teeth and jaw with blood both old and new. Drake stared and stared into those black, empty eyesockets as though the secret to the universe were hidden in them.

And for a very brief, horrible moment, he felt like a child come face to face with the boogiemán, and very nearly wet himself.

His mouth opened, and he only just had the presence of mind to clamp it shut again, repressing the reflexive scream. The skull tilted to one side slightly, and some part of Drake's brain that was still working just fine noticed that the skull was supported by a neck atop two very pale unclothed shoulders. Not the dead white of the skull, but with a faint bluish-purple tinge. His eyes roamed downwards, and he was far too frightened to feel any embarrassment over the fact that she was entirely naked, and had a very pleasingly slender and hairless figure, complexion aside. Drake wondered

vaguely, ludicrously, if bikini waxes were a custom among the kyrie. Aside from the skull, there were only two off notes: her fingers were far skinnier, longer, and more sharply-tipped than any fingers had a right to be, and as bloodstained as the skull's mouth, and sprouting from her back were two pairs of transparent insect wings, one set smaller than the other.

"Draw a picture. It'll lasssst longer." The woman... skeleton... insect... thing's... voice was sneering, and Drake blinked and started.

"Oh! Oh, I'm so, so sorry, I didn't mean to, to um, stare, that was very, very rude of me," he babbled desperately, hurriedly turning around and walking outside, wandering if it was too late to ask her if they could talk back inside where it was too dark to see. The woman followed, and Drake, by glancing at her from the corners of his eyes, saw that her lean against the lip of the cave and stretch, wings fluttering in a lazy motion, producing the fluttering buzz he'd heard earlier.

"Don't worry about it," she said almost kindly. "I'm ussssed to not... being the beauty I onccccc wassss... elssssse I would not sssstay here, after all."

"I see the wellspring had a pretty... drastic... effect on you," Drake said quietly, still unsure where to look, so keeping his gaze roaming back and forth, while trying not to completely look away from her.

"Yessss. It isssss not without... itsss benefitsss, however. Blood callssss to me now... death... decay... rot and russiaast... they bring me a pleasssssure that ssssurpasssssss the amussssmentsss... of my previoussss life."

Drake wondered what this pitiable, naked, mutated woman could do in pitched battle to be worth such an effort by both Jandar and Utgar, and then wondered, given her last words, if he really wanted to know.

Yes.

He did.

"Are you any good at fighting or military maneuvers, miss?"

The woman straightened up, and if a skull could have an expression, Drake would have thought the woman to be looking offended, as she took slow steps towards him. He forced himself to not move or change expression, but he couldn't help but sweat a little more. And then he felt another wave of weakness go through him, from head to toes, and he gasped,



clutching desperately at the rocky wall to try to stay upright and only half succeeding. The woman closed in on him and ran the fingertips of one hand down his jaw and over the side of his neck. It was like being caressed by a handful of needles, and the slightest pressure would have drawn blood.

"Entropy givesss to me... and I give it to otherssss in turn... my green-bedecked warrior. Thosssse near me, I weaken, sssso that I may... feed."

And with the suddenness of a flicked switch, the weakness was gone. Drake sprang to his feet, breathing heavily, and might have drawn his sword save for the fact that the woman had walked back to her previous spot and resumed leaning casually.

"That was very impressive, miss. Very... very... impressive." He paused and looked at her blankly. "Don't ever do that again."

She chuckled, and Drake half-heartedly joined in before quieting down and listening to the eerie sound, twitching slightly.

"Well... ahem," he said firmly, rallying his nerves and smoothing out nonexistent wrinkles in his uniform. "I can see why you'd be valuable to our cause. And I'm sure you can see what we can, err, offer you in return..."

"Death. In large numberssss. Very large numberssss... if I do not missasssume."

"Well, yes. But it's for a good cause!" Drake pointed out, feeling the need to defend his general. "Jandar wants to share the wellsprings with everyone... so that all kyrie everywhere have a fair share of their power. Doesn't that sound like the best way to go to you? And once that happens, we could even try to use them to reverse your, um, condition, if you wanted..."

A hiss and a negligent wave of a sharp-tipped hand indicated that the woman could care less about either of those things, and Drake felt his spirits drop. After all this, if he wasn't able to persuade the woman... what a waste... and her, just living like this, all alone... it was enough to drive a person mad, and he was really starting to feel sorry for her.

"There would be a lot of killing, though," he said in a low voice, sighing. "Plenty of it to sate anyone's

bloodlust. If that's all you really want now..."

To his shock, the woman sprang into the air with a strength that seemed impossible given the slightness of her body, and her wings began to buzz, flickering back and forth so quickly that they became a blur to Drake's eyes almost instantly. She hovering in the air, hands outstretched, fingers spread wide, as if to pounce murderously on something.

"Look at me, warrior!" The hiss in the voice was very sharp now. "Do you ssssee a... fair yet valiant maiden, like the famossss Raelin? A gentle lasssss like the... much-beloved Kelda? I have heard of your foolisshhhh human religion... the one with the winged guardian angelssss protecting the virtuoussss... and the helplessss. I am a guardian angel in reversssse... the weak call to me, and so I take... I take all they have... for that issss what the sssspring... intended me to do. Do not look upon me and ask for... petty morality... assss if I am not a monsssst. I know what I am. You know what I am. Do not tell an angel with sssscabbed wingssss... to fly to the heavenssss. My fate liesssss in the... oppossssite... direction."

Drake swallowed, and watched as she calmed down, drifting to earth with twitching fingers and a posture almost of humility. "Well, then. You've made your point, miss. So should I call you an angel now, or am I going to get your real name after all this? Mine's Drake. Sergeant Drake Alexander." After a hesitant moment, he offered his hand to shake, wondering if kyrie did that sort of thing.

The 'angel' hesitated likewise for a moment, staring at the proffered hand, then bent down in a partial bow, brushing the forehead of her skull against his hand before straightening up. Drake's skin crawled at the smooth, cold sensation, but he was very careful not to react.

"Call me assss you wisshh. My name... I shed... with my faccccce. I felt it... only appropriate."

"Alright," Drake said with a nod in agreement, mentally christening her Angel from that moment forward. It was a good thing he'd never been a particularly devout Presbyterian or he would have started wondering if the name was blasphemous.

"I will fight with you and yourssss," Angel announced suddenly, taking Drake off guard, "if you meet a condition."

"Yes?" Drake said hopefully. With luck it wouldn't be something horrible like sacrificing babies to her every full moon. With luck.

“Ssshould I wisssh to depart... for sssafety... or for feeding elsssewhere... I mussst be free to do sso. I will not betray your ssssecretsss to enemiiesss... but nor will I be chained to... politicsssss.”

So she wanted to be able to desert them whenever she felt like it. That sort of thing could easily ruin an operation or battle. On the other hand, she seemed honest enough, and he was inclined to believe her when she said she wouldn't leak information to the other generals... and it would be better to have her help on a temporary basis than not to have it at all, after all.

Wouldn't it?

It wasn't like it was wrong to recruit someone, just because they were hideous, and bloodthirsty, and, okay, completely monstrous.

Was it?

Long ago boot camp training sprang into Drake's mind and he smiled to himself a little. What was he worrying about it for? Good soldiers didn't question their orders... at least, not too much. This was only a tiny piece of a much larger puzzle Jandar was laboring over. He trusted Jandar. Therefore, he would trust the woman Jandar had asked him to recruit.

“Alright, Angel. You've got a deal,” he said with more cheeriness than he'd thought was left in him.

The walk back to the small camp that had been set up to enable Drake to go on this mission efficiently was quite uneventful, until an arrow hummed through the air and came within an inch of plunging into Drake's shoulder, only an almost inhumanly quick instinctive sidestep saving him at the last moment.

Swearing, he sought cover, twisting his body in such a way as to hopefully evade yet more arrows. Ducking behind a large, round rock, he tracked the first arrow back to its source as others plunked around him, and groaned aloud in despair.

Easily recognizable by his distinctive headgear, spectacularly-carved bow, and arrogant bearing was an elf standing high above on the cliffs. He wasn't even attempting to keep to a defensive position. Rather, he stood there, calm and sneering, and drew two more arrows in his hand, one eye squinting expertly to aim.

“Syvarris?!” Drake hissed to himself, outraged at this latest bit of bad luck. “What the devil is he doing here?!” Then he remembered Angel and looked back in a panic. Fortunately she'd had the presence of mind to duck behind another nearby rock, though there was little she could do to keep her larger wings from poking out. As Drake watched, two arrows swept through the air towards those wings, one arrow to each wing. He hissed out a wordless warning to her, and she understood, gesturing with her wings at just the right moment to let the arrows pass by harmlessly. “He isss not alone in thissss,” she cried, gesturing with one wand-like finger to the side.

Ne-Gok-Sa lurked on the cliffs as well, watching Syvarris's performance with what Drake would have sworn was a self-satisfied smirk. Syvarris was paying no attention to the Marro warlord, despite the fact that they were in plain sight of each other.

“He got Syvarris,” Drake said with a groan. “Damned arrogant, poncy, pointy-eared freak... I knew his pride was softening up that brain of his, and now here's the proof. He's got a good position to take us out from, too.” The ‘us’ was, in his mind, secretly amended to a ‘her,’ given that he was confident in his own abilities at dodging the projectiles from this range. “At least it's too high up there for Ne-Gok-Sa to jump down and engage too, or we'd be lost. Maybe we can make a run for it... look, Angel, if I shield you-”

He flinched as a few more arrows clattered just a bit too close to him, and ducked down a bit more.

“Run? From a mere two foessss? Thissss is the decc-cissssion... of a great war hero?” Angel sounded amused.

“Look, Syvarris is the best archer I've ever seen. If we close in it'll give him the opportunity to send a couple arrows into my eyeballs, which he can't do so long as I stay down here. And then we'd have to deal with Ne-Gok-Sa as well as ol' pointy ears. The terrain's got plenty of cover, and the camp's not far from here... we can work our way through things if we're careful, get reinforcements, and route these two without risking any casualties...”

“And reveal to them where your camp isssss, of coursssse... ass well ass leaving ussss... quite weary by the time we engaged. I think not. Don't move for one ssssecond... and when we arrive, take care of Ne-Gok-Ssssa... as I deal with the archer...”

“Just a mi- GAH!” Drake kept still just as she'd asked,

but only out of pure shock, as she pounced on him, wrapped her overly long fingers around his upper arms, and began flying straight at a very surprised-looking Ne-Gok-Sa while carrying him, dodging arrows as she went. She threw him at the alien warlord like a baseball, and he regained his senses enough to use the momentum to slam his grappling hook into the alien's jaw, then drawing his sword to follow up and finish the warlord off while he was vulnerable in a sweeping stroke aimed for the throat. He hoped Marro had jugulars. For that matter, he hoped Marro needed to breath.

An enraged, pained shriek from Angel distracted him for a moment, and he winced as he saw an arrow sticking out of her thigh. She'd attempted to close in on Syvariss and been just a little too slow. A little back part of his mind noted with faint interest that she bled red, just like anyone else.

The distraction very nearly earned Drake a wound of his own as Ne-Gok-Sa stabbed towards his torso, but he managed to dodge it just in time. Couldn't afford to take care of Angel now... she'd have to care of herself. Gritting his teeth, Drake swung with all his might, intending to learn more about Ne-Gok-Sa's anatomy in a very brutal way. He lost himself in the dance of parrying, slashing, and stabbing for countless moments, but something seemed off. The alien seemed so much slow and clumsier, even the armor didn't feel as strong to strike against... and Drake wasted countless opportunities, thinking the alien was feinting, before realizing that it had to be Angel at work with her mysterious powers. By the time he figured this out, he saw that the alien had inadvertently maneuvered so that Drake was between him and the cliff's edge. With a grin, he decided to end the fight a bit early, and bullrushed Ne-Gok-Sa furiously with a wild yell. The alien didn't expect the move, and was easily pushed off the cliff and into the air, and fell down a rather long distance with what was, for Drake at least, an extremely satisfying thud.

He then turned to rescue his companion, but winced as he saw that the kyrie had no need of rescuing whatsoever. While the champion of ranged combat,

Syvariss clearly hadn't been able to hold his own against the woman in a melee. The elf was covered with deep cuts, clothes and armor more shredded than not, and Angel looked like she was preparing to bite down on the elf's throat in a decidedly fatal manner.

"No! Don't!" Drake cried out hastily. Angel's head turned to look at him, and although she was incapable of making any expression, he got the impression that he was giving him the kind of look sisters usually give their brothers when said brother has said or done something exceptionally stupid.

"Why not?" she asked in a vexed tone, fingers twitching like spider legs.

"He's just mind-controlled, you can't kill him for that!"

"Mind-controlled?!" Syvariss spoke up, outraged.

"How dare you! Your feeble human mind may succumb to mental tricks easily enough, but my superior elven brain became well aware of Utgar's magnificent, elegant military superiority without any help! Cowardly wretches, I will!"

Drake kicked him in the head. Hard. And thankfully, Syvariss shut up.

Angel looked at him. He could swear she was snickering.

"Just because we shouldn't kill them doesn't mean we can't knock them out. Besides, a boot to the head is supposed to cure this sort of thing."

She continued to look at him. The snickering got a little louder.

"Alright, fine, let's just go!"

"What of your alien nemessssissss?"

"Oh, I'm sure the fall... killed... him..." Drake said confidently, looking back, his voice slowing as he saw that there was no sign of the mind-controlling warlord anywhere. "Ugh. Typical. Let's not push our luck, okay? I'd like to get out of here before the elf wakes up."

A gentle hiss was Angel's only reply as they continued hastily campwards. Drake hoped that Ne-Gok-Sa wouldn't be able to get to Syvariss while the elf was still knocked out... taking one of Ullar's greatest champions hostage would have been more trouble than their small force here on the edge of the Wasteland was equipped to handle. They weren't overflowing with medical supplies, either. Never had he missed Kelda's ministrations so much.

Drake was greeted with loud enthusiasm by the vikings, which quickly changed into astonished, dubious curses as they saw Angel trailing behind him, sucking

the last remnants of elven blood from her fingers.

And then Bugs's voice rose over all.

"Hey, stars'n stripes, ya came back after all! What a woild, eh? How'd ya like the carrot juice? Freshly-prepar... uh, prep... uh, uh, uhhhh..." Bugs slowly stutered his way into silence as he saw Angel.

And for a moment, everything was quite and still, and Drake had the feeling that he was looking into a twisted mirror that reflected opposites, as Angel looked at Bugs, and Bugs looked at Angel, both of them standing straight, both of them quite motionless.

Then, faintly amused, he watched as the color slowly drained from Bugs's body, leaving him white as a ghost. Angel watched as well, skull sliding down slowly to follow the color as it went away. Then she put up a hand and waved her fingers slightly.

"Hi."

"Heeee," Bugs said, trying to say hi but not getting it quite out.

"Heee, haaah, hoooo, huuuhhhh..." And then he promptly dissolved into a small white puddle, which began worming its way over to a tent stealthily, looking as terrified as any puddle Drake had ever seen look.

"Okay then," Drake said cheerfully. "Angel, that was Bugs, and those hygienically-challenged guys over there are our resident vikings. That's Arinbjorn, the loud one's Griotgard, that's Raghild, and the handsome one's Hedinfrid," he named and pointed them out each in turn, saving what he personally thought was the ugliest of the foursome for last. Hedinfrid gave him a great big smile, which reminded Drake that he needed to introduce the Tarn Vikings to the miracle of brushing. Except that it was already too late for about half their teeth anyway.

"Welcome back, lord Drake," Hedinfrid said with a grin, ambling up unsteadily. His breath reeked of alcohol slightly more than usual, and Drake repressed the urge to strike a match from it to see if he could create a viking-sized Mimring. "Is this beautiful woman here to fight, or just boost our spirits with some dancing?" he asked, smirking at Angel in a way that was apparently supposed to be witty and mischevious.

Drake and Angel stared with identical, dead-silent incredulity. Slowly, Drake shuffled over to Raghild, who was closest of the other vikings, who seemed likewise stunned speechless. "How much did he have to drink today?" he whispered hoarsely.

"Helluva lot more'n me, 'parently," Raghild muttered back, then shook his head and threw the bottle he was holding to the ground, looking queasy.

Thankfully for all concerned, Hedinfrid passed out before his clumsy advances could get too far. Drake ordered the other three to keep him away from the ale for a week, and limited the others to no more than two bottles each per day, down significantly from their usual one and a half dozen. Then he had Angel's leg tended to as best they could manage; she ended up looking quite odd with a single bandage tied firmly around her thigh, but didn't seem to be bothered by the injury terribly much, claiming it quite shallow.

For his part, Drake was in need of a drink mentally if not physically, so he took advantage of the surplus ale while the three conscious vikings packed up camp in preparation for their departure in the morning. A few days journeying and they would be home... and Angel would be properly assimilated into the army. Yeah, *that* would be fun.

Or immensely disturbing.

Probably both, he decided as he finished up the last of the bottle and stowed it in a pocket. But for now, sleep. He didn't know if Angel slept, but he'd ordered the vikings to give her a blanket if she wanted one. Drake found a nice smooth spot in the dirt and stretched out there, staring at the stars, hands beneath his head. He hadn't seen any familiar constellations in the sky here. Whenever he stared at the stars, they turned into military maps for him now... visualizing this dot as a Soulborg troop, that one as a wellspring. The thoughts tended to follow him into his dreams, too. Sleeping or awake, there was never any escape from the fighting.

People just didn't like getting along.

A memory of Angel's voice hissed into his brain, at the same time searing as flame and cold as ice.

*"I know what I am. You know what I am. Do not tell an angel with sssscabbed wingssss... to fly to the heavenssss. My fate liesssss in the... opposssite... direction."*

People were what they were, and nothing would change that.

20

Fan Fiction

Nothing changed people, no matter what kind of people they were.  
He caught a flicker of light out of the corner of his eye. A shooting star? More likely just a figment of his imagination.

Nothing changed people, nothing changed, but he couldn't help but keep hoping for otherwise....  
And thinking such wistful, uncharacteristically gloomy thoughts, sleep took him.

Given that the multiple harsh, bubbling warcries was his wakeup call, Drake knew before his brain was fully awake that something was wrong. His body acted reflexively, leaving his mind behind in half-slumber as he drew his katana and leapt to his feet, eyes darting all around to access the situation.

The situation was a small horde of darkly glowing, charcoal-like figures charging towards them, cantaloupe-sized fists flailing, while Ne-Gok-Sa barked orders from behind them, limbs twisting in vicious gestures.

Drake's brain woke up to join the rest of him with a snap. The Obsidian Guard were far from their usual patrol areas. Ne-Gok-Sa had to have grabbed a contingent to take with him for his mission to capture Angel. He leapt into the fray and started hewing at the two closest of the molten monsters, trying to distract them from Bugs, who had been suffering from their double-teaming. He counted nine of the monsters all told. That plus the Marro warlord... it was too much for their small force to handle, even with Angel's strange aura weakening the formidable defenses of the enemy. The vikings were holding their own, but just barely. Angel was systematically tearing a Guard to shreds, the sound of it like shards of glass scratching stone, but he was pummeling her severely in turn, her distorted cries of enraged pain mingled with the low, rumbling roars of the Guard in a nightmarish symphony. It was all Bugs could do to hold on and survive, even with Drake's help. The cartoon animal was pulling out all manner of odd random gadgets and tools, everything from a Hawaiian hula girl costume to a rapid-fire watergun to a box of TNT, but seemed too shaken to use any of it properly, between the relentlessly brutal assault of the enemy, the sudden wakeup from sleep,

and the distractingly vicious combat techniques of Angel, who Bugs kept glancing at nervously, seeming almost as frightened of her as of Ne-Gok-Sa's forces. Even as Drake watched, a Guard landed a heavy, winceworthy blow on Bugs's jaw. Being a cartoon character, the rabbit didn't bleed or break anything, but he did stumble back, a quartet of small blue songbirds suddenly appearing and flying circles just above his head.

For a moment, Drake almost hated himself enough to stand still and let the enemy have him. He should have known Ne-Gok-Sa would have had additional support; with Utgar's vast forces, there was little reason for any of the troops to work alone. He should have had everyone pack up and march through the night instead of basking in the false confidence brought on by his and Angel's relatively easy victory over the warlord and his erstwhile brainwashed minion. They were losing, some of them could die, and it would be his fault....

He wasn't going to let anyone die. He wouldn't let his mission be tainted by casualties. So he did the only thing he could do.

"Retreat!" he yelled loudly enough to cover the battlefield, his voice raised over the sounds of melee. He grabbed Bugs and shook the rabbit hastily, ducking under a swing from a Guard. "Snap out of it! Make for the softer ground and burrow your two-dimensional ass back to Jandar so he knows the score in case some of us don't make it! That's what we brought you for, remember?!"

"Wha- where- who?" Bugs murmured dazedly, the birds popping one by one. He blinked, sense restored to his eyes. "Oh. Oh! Yeah, right, pal, I'm off like an airplane!"

The vikings were obeying his order reluctantly, the Guards managing to keep pace with them until Raghild let out a yell that seemed to inspire his comrades, and they sprinted well out of sight into the darkness.

Drake was forced to linger for Angel, who was very definitely not fleeing. Her frail-seeming body was covered with bloody bruises, but she'd taken down one of the Guards, and was busy trying to sink her teeth into the shoulder of another one.

"Dammit, Angel, fly out of their range and get out of here!" Drake snarled, taking off the molested Guard's head with a clean swipe of his blade. There were six left, the vikings having taken care of one of them,

and Ne-Gok-Sa was closing in purposefully, the slow, steady march of someone who knew when he was in a winning situation.

"They would be lambsss... to the sssslaughter, ssshould you sstop holding back! Ssstop fearing for thosse under your command... and ssstrike with any fury you have, righteous or not!" They were passionate words, delivered in an ugly, condescending hiss, and they were the last coherent sound Angel made before Ne-Gok-Sa pierced her slender torso from behind, dangling her mockingly before Drake like a pinned butterfly before dropping her to the ground and planting his foot firmly on the woman's neck. Drake stared, feeling frozen in time, at that violent, grotesque, but frail and broken form, draped on the ground as helpless and wounded as a half-drowned kitten. The reason for this whole mission was dying before him, and there was nothing he could do but salvage what could be salvaged, and run away. Slowly, he hefted up his sword and licked his lips, feeling the oppressive heat emanating from the encircling Moltarn eat at his sweaty skin.

But he wasn't going to run away.

He knew this, but he couldn't remember making a decision on it. He simply knew that he was going to fight, and die, because he wanted them dead more than he wanted to live.

Was it because he didn't want to admit to Jandar that he'd failed?

Or had he actually become attached to the hideously mutated, bloodhungry woman?

Or maybe her final words had stirred up some long-forgotten, long-abandoned remnants of pride in his individuality, of joy in savagery without shame, of an essential violent core that lurked in every man whether they wanted to admit it or not.

He didn't know what it was, but he started swinging, and screaming with an abandon any viking berserker would have been proud of, froth on his lips, eyes wide and unblinking in their search for target after target to chop to bits and see bleed out.

And, contrary to all statistical likelihood, contrary to

everything he'd learned of strategy and tactics, contrary to everything Drake had ever learned about fighting from boot camp onwards, the Obsidian Guards were [i]easy[/i] to take down. They touched him, of course. Bashed him, bruised him, crushed and seared him. He paid it no mind, and it didn't seem to hurt at the moment anyway. His enemies were not nearly so stoic. Every wound he brought them gave him an opening to add on another wound still, and only a short time later, the Guards all laid at his feet, making sounds that approximated to pained moans and pleas for mercy.

He then stared at Ne-Gok-Sa, who was a mere dark, still outline against the almost equally dark night air. Slowly, Ne-Gok-Sa took a step backwards... and another... and then, as Drake charged, the alien's nerve broke entirely and he ran.

Drake almost ran after the alien before remembering Angel, and he hurried back to her, looking that eerie body over in desperation, hoping there was some chance to save her. His hands ran over her form, no longer caring of her nudity, no longer caring of her hideousness, only caring for figuring out which bones were broken where, and if there was any internal bleeding or other severe damage.

It was as bad as he could have ever feared.

"Damn..." he said softly, his head dropping down.

"*Feed me...*" she hissed at him, so softly that he almost didn't hear.

He spasmed briefly, eyes locking onto her empty sockets. "Feed you?"

What are you supposed to be fed? How can I help you, Angel?" His fingers tightened on her shoulders, hoping the pressure would keep her from slipping away.

"*Feed me... death...*"

He was confused until he remembered something similar she'd said to him earlier, in the cave.

"*Entropy givesss to me... and I give it to otherssss in turn... my green-bedecked warrior. Thosssse near me, I weaken, sssso that I may... feed.*"

She killed because she got something from death in return... just like anyone else, just like any predator, that killed to eat for nourishment. Was it possible that death could give the dying kyrie life?

Drake's gaze roamed slowly over the weakened, wounded, helpless, but still living Obsidian Guards.

He knew what he was going to do, he knew what he had to do, but he felt sick inside for it. There was only one way to save the objective of his mission.

And they were the enemy.

As merciless and inhuman an enemy as anyone could ever hope for,

And he was about to become just as merciless as them.

He walked to the nearest Moltarn, dragging the tip of his sword wearily over the ground in the way that he had always known to avoid even with regular weaponry, and stood looking down on the creature for a moment. It looked back up, facial expression somewhere between pleading and contempt.

"I'm sorry," Drake said. And he meant it.

But his expression was as calm and frozen as a still arctic sea as he gutted the warrior with an expert twisting stab, and proceeded to the next one.

The slaughter... for that was all it could really be called... was over quickly enough. He didn't look back over at Angel until it was done. By then, she was standing up and stretching leisurely, wings abuzz.

Her skin had smoothed out, bereft of the wounds that had marred it earlier, the only reminder left being old blood, and that could have been the enemy's as much as hers.

"Feeling better?" he asked with a hoarse, dust-dry voice.

"Yesssss." She gestured in the direction their companions had fled, and then offered her hand in an incongruous, mockingly lady-like gesture, as if they were on a date. "Sssshhall we?"

He nodded briefly, and strode off without touching her. She followed after, a demonic chuckle lingering in her throat.

Drake hadn't expected to catch up to the others, but it turned out that they'd lingered a distance away once they'd realized he hadn't been quick in following. Leave it to a cartoon character and a bunch of primitive berserkers to disobey orders. Yet he was grateful for it, not really wanting to spend much time

alone in the company of Angel.

He was even grateful, he found to his great shock, for Bugs's proffered carrot juice canteen. The rabbit had more than one, apparently. Drake wished he knew how much random junk the rabbit could store... wherever it was that the rabbit stored objects on his person.

"Whoa, stars'n stripes! Ya look like ya been through a wild a' hurtin'! Have some refreshment, on da house."

Against his own common sense, Drake took a swig, then made a face, only just getting it down. "I don't see how you can drink this stuff," he muttered, limping along and handing the canteen back.

"Meeeh, me mamma always said, everyone's got their own tastes," Bugs replied with a cheery shrug, taking a few healthy chugs himself. "Let the bunnies have da carrots and the vikin's have da booze, right?"

"And the monsters have their victims, I suppose?"

Drake asked, wiping sweat off his forehead with a filthy hand.

"Eh?"

"Nothing... nevermind. Let's just get home."

And so they marched in silence for a while, but that didn't keep Drake from having a conversation with himself in lieu of other dialogue partners.

Was it right for Jandar to recruit someone like Angel? Was it right to let a creature like that even live, let alone fight alongside them? Had he done the right thing in killing helpless enemies to save the life of an ally just as wicked as the enemies themselves?

He asked himself more questions, a great many more, but for the entire trip back, not a single answer came to him, while the delicate form of Angel soared overhead, a reaper well-fed by the entropy that had very nearly ended her, but for the loyalty and pride of an erstwhile soldier of America's army.

23

Fan Fiction



# Logrey and LandSCAPE

**Q: How do you feel about LandSCAPE and where it is right now?**

L: I'm fairly proud of it right now, considering that making little apps like that is just a hobby. Not to sound too conceited, but I think it's one of the better fan-made utilities out there. I can say that it has way more features than I initially thought it would.

**Q: Where do you want LandSCAPE to go in the future?**

L: There are things I'd like to do, and things I know I can't do. In the "can't" column are things like true 3D tiles. Flash just doesn't support 3D. Flash also can't save out to a file (besides the PDF-print thing). So, it's disappointing that I can't add those features, even if I'd like to.

But in terms of things that are possible, I'd love to see a better way to share maps. There's been talk about making it online enabled - with upload/download features, ratings, etc. That doesn't mean it will be easy (or that it's 100% going to happen), but it's technically possible. And it's the next big thing I'd like to see.

**Q: Fans have been clamoring for the overlays in 3D mode. What is your stance on this?**

L: I'd love to have overlays in 3D. I never used to care, because initially overlays were glyphs and ruins - not too exciting. I had them on a separate area because that's how the official scenarios were laid out. But now there are bridges and trees. I'd LOVE to see 3D trees.

But from a design point of view, I haven't decided the best way to do it. Right now, all overlays go on the "overlay" layer - there's no information about what height level they should be sitting at. So, I'm looking at two options: putting the overlays in with the other tiles (so they'd have defined heights) or try to do some kind of auto-detection (for example, check what's below the tree and try to adjust its depth accordingly).

**How is LandSCAPE going to change when Heroscopae.com releases Battlefield Builder 2.0?**

L: That's a very good question. I have no idea, but I've thought a lot about it. My guess/hope is that the official builder may not fulfill our needs and LandSCAPE will still serve a purpose. I'm basing this on the fact that Hasbro is using the website as a promotional tool, primarily marketed at young children. There isn't a lot about it that says "serious gamer". Yet, we've got guys here with 30+ sets, who

want to make these behemoth maps. They want to run the program offline. They want to have their suggestions listened to from the creators of the program. I believe programs like LandSCAPE may work better for those purposes.

**Q: What new features can we look out for?**

L: I'm currently working on the next update (which might be available before anyone reads this). It's a technology update, really. A new version of Flash gave me some new features to work with, and I'm including those. A lot of it isn't visible, but there are speed increases and some subtle changes. And, of course, tile info for the new Wave 3 stuff.

After that, I've got my eyes on the official builder. If that's the "best thing ever" - then I probably won't plan many major updates to LS. It can be a lot of work to add new stuff, and if the audience is fragmented, then I might throw in the towel. (But again, I doubt it.)

Assuming I keep working on this thing, I'd like to explore some of the new things introduced in Flash. My favorite is the ability to search your hardware and import images. Something so simple wasn't possible before. But now I can bring up a browse window and you can navigate to any JPG/GIF/PNG on your machine. That could add a lot of flexibility to map design. Also, in version 3.0, I added tons of options for printing, but my original plans were much more elaborate.



I'd like to explore those more - allowing people as much creativity in designing the printout, as they have in designing the battlefields.

**Q: Are we going to see LandSCAPE on HQ.com?**

L: I'd like to see LandSCAPE integrated with HQ.com. I'm not sure I'll physically move it there. It's not much, but I do have my own site that I'm adding content to (www.logrey.com). I have plans to add more materials there, including programs for other games (I have something up there for Mage Knight Dungeons and hope to do something for FFG's Descent)

But, I see the integration that's possible as being fairly seamless. I've promised Glasswalker that once I get some time, we're going to see about enabling a way to save data directly to HQ.

**Q: Could you combine the HS Manager with HStoolkit (or an army card builder) to create cards and keep track of them at the same time?**

L: Originally HS Manager was supposed to do that. Shortly after making LandSCAPE, I envisioned an all-in-one character/team builder with a card designer. Flash has a LOT of graphical prowess, and I think it could be a great platform to make a graphical card designer.

I actually started working on it, when I finally checked out HStoolkit (I'll be honest - I've never made a custom unit). I saw that I was duplicating a lot of features, and didn't want to step on any toes. I think the more people doing this kind of thing, the better. I'll probably release something, at some point, but I don't want to interfere with any of the great things done with HStoolkit.

**Q: How have your LandSCAPE fans influenced you to add or change the program as it progresses?**

L: Immensely. I'd say most of the stuff in LS is a direct result of forum questions or private messages. The first LandSCAPE had only 9 levels, no saving, and very questionable printing. The first thing I heard was "more levels" and "we want to save", so version 2 had those (seems kind of obvious, now). For version three, I made a list of every request I remembered seeing and then went through them - rating each on whether they were technically possible and then a difficulty level.

I'd like to point out two of my favorite examples, because they show how the program has evolved to server different types of gamers. The first is a recent feature I added to "Details", where you can change the number of tiles in a map. I read a story where a map was started, hours were spent on it, and then the designer realized he hadn't specified enough tiles - and couldn't finish it properly. I felt really bad about that, so I worked to get that flexibility in there.

The other is "Onion Skin Mode". It turns out a lot of people were like me - I like to design using the plastic tiles, but would use LandSCAPE to record them. Trying to work top-down is such a pain. I couldn't even envision how to do it, when someone suggested a mode where they could see a "onion skin view" of the next layer up. When I read that, I couldn't believe I hadn't thought of it. It was brilliant.

**Q: Is there anything you want to tell all of us a HQ.com?**

L: I think there's been a big upswing of battlefields popping up on HQ and I think it's great. People are getting more creative and we're getting access to terrain that makes for some great possibilities (tree/roads/castles). I made LandSCAPE selfishly - I wanted maps to play and I hoped to do my part in making the game popular enough that we might get some expansions. Now we've got tons of great user maps and more expansions than I can afford. So a big thanks to the great community for making all that happen.

**Q: Are you going to expand the build area for cough\*42\*cough master sets?**

L: If I do, I'll call it "Chameleon Mode". It always amazes me that people have so many tiles. I can barely find storage for my 5 masters. But I'd like to bulk up how LS can handle the power-users.

In previous versions the creation area was fixed, but in 3.0 I made it bigger - but apparently, not big enough. So, I need to create an intelligent system where it grows and shrinks as needed. And then, if we're lucky, one day someone will upload a 50 page PDF document for a map requiring 42 Master Sets....

**Q: How are you planning to incorporate castles into LandSCAPE?**

L: Ahh, castles... Good question. Personally, I can't wait for castles. And somehow I'm dreading them. I have no idea how they're going to incorporate into LandSCAPE.

Then again, I know so little about them, I have no idea how they'll work in general. I expect they'll require a fair amount of work, because they're not overlays, and they're not tiles - so I'll have to incorporate them in the levels somehow, and make sure they appear in 3D view. Yeah - it's going to be interesting....



# Bhandikar Gorge

This is the map that started it all. This is the map that came out roughly last December that made us all realize the potential of multiple sets of terrain. The object is simple, race your opponent to the end and kill as many as you can along the way. This is also the first map that introduced “reinforcements” which are cleverly introduced into the game as different “zones” are crossed.

The game is divided into 2 teams to be controlled by 2 or 4 players. One team is given the red starting zone and one team is given the yellow starting zone. Both teams only start about 2/3 of their drafted army with the rest coming in the game later. Both starting armies traverse the beginning of the board with a river separating them. Some ruins provide cover but this early part of the board is full of ranged-attack possibilities. Very shortly there is a bridge that will force the two armies to merge as the river no longer separates the two armies.

Once player 2 has crossed the bridge, the game shifts to melee and positioning along the many different heights the board offers. It's about this time where both teams cross into zone 2 triggering their reinforcements to enter the game.

From this point on, the melee continues as both players climb the steps leading to the bridge that will lead them to the portal that allows them to score. Before Road to the Forgotten Forest came out, this was the first map to illustrate how to construct a bridge using paper clips. That technique became inspirational as many map creators started using paper clips in all their maps. I would love to see somebody actually build this map with real bridges and take a picture.

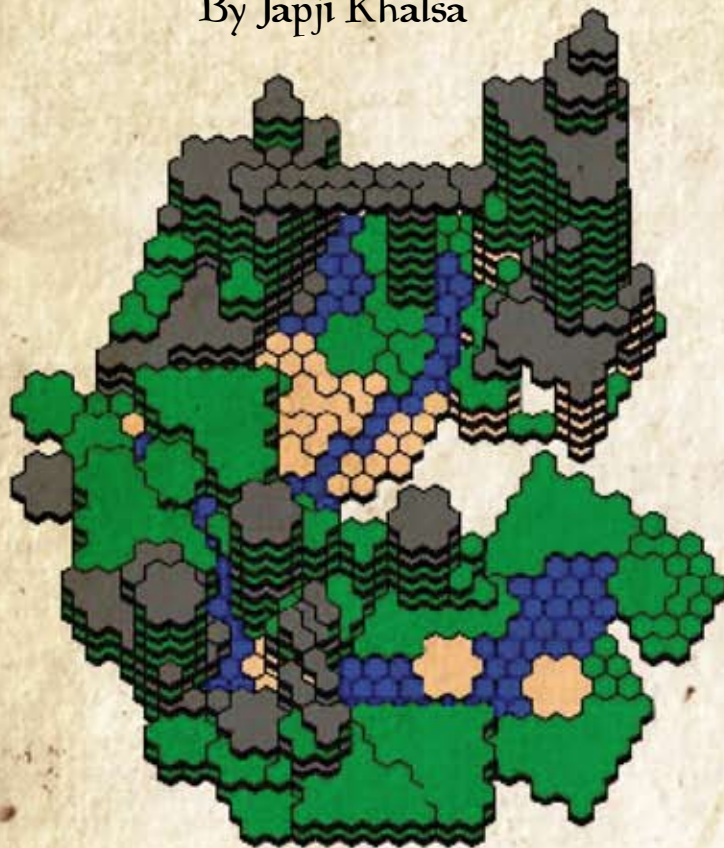
A few randomly placed glyphs make traversing the unknown parts of the board worth while especially since this scenario is played for points and is timed at 20 rounds. That glyph might just give you the edge you need to outlast your opponent.

If you have 5 sets of terrain this is a scenario that you should try and if you have more than 5 sets this is a scenario that cries “make me bigger!” *Bhandikar Gorge* is the codex's pick for Best 5 or More Set Scenario.



# Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty

By Japji Khalsa



**Goal:** Players compete to get as many of their units to the end of the gorge... or prevent their opponents from doing so.

The victory conditions, in order are:

- 1) Have the highest unit point value of figures that have reached the Glyph of Brandar by the end of the 20th round, or when one team has no more units on the board or in reserve, or;
- 2) If no player or team has reached the Glyph; have the highest point value in armies remaining in play at the end of the 20th round, or;
- 3) Destroy all your opponents figures before either team/player has a unit that reaches the Glyph of Brandar.

**Setup:** Place the Glyph of Brandar face up on the indicated spot. (Layout is on next page.)

Shuffle the remaining glyphs, except any Glyphs of Brandar. Randomly choose four -- and place them face down on the four spots indicated by "?."

Use FIVE sets of HeroScape to create this scenario for two players or two teams (4 players). Barren cliffs, hundreds of feet high, give shape to the Bhandikar Gorge as it snakes its way slowly downriver -- a meandering, but treacherous offspring

of the pairing of time and gravity.

Your band of heros has been summoned to aid in a great battle elsewhere in Valhalla. For days, you've travelled down the gorge -- charging to the magical

portal that you and your fellow heros will use to answer the call to duty.

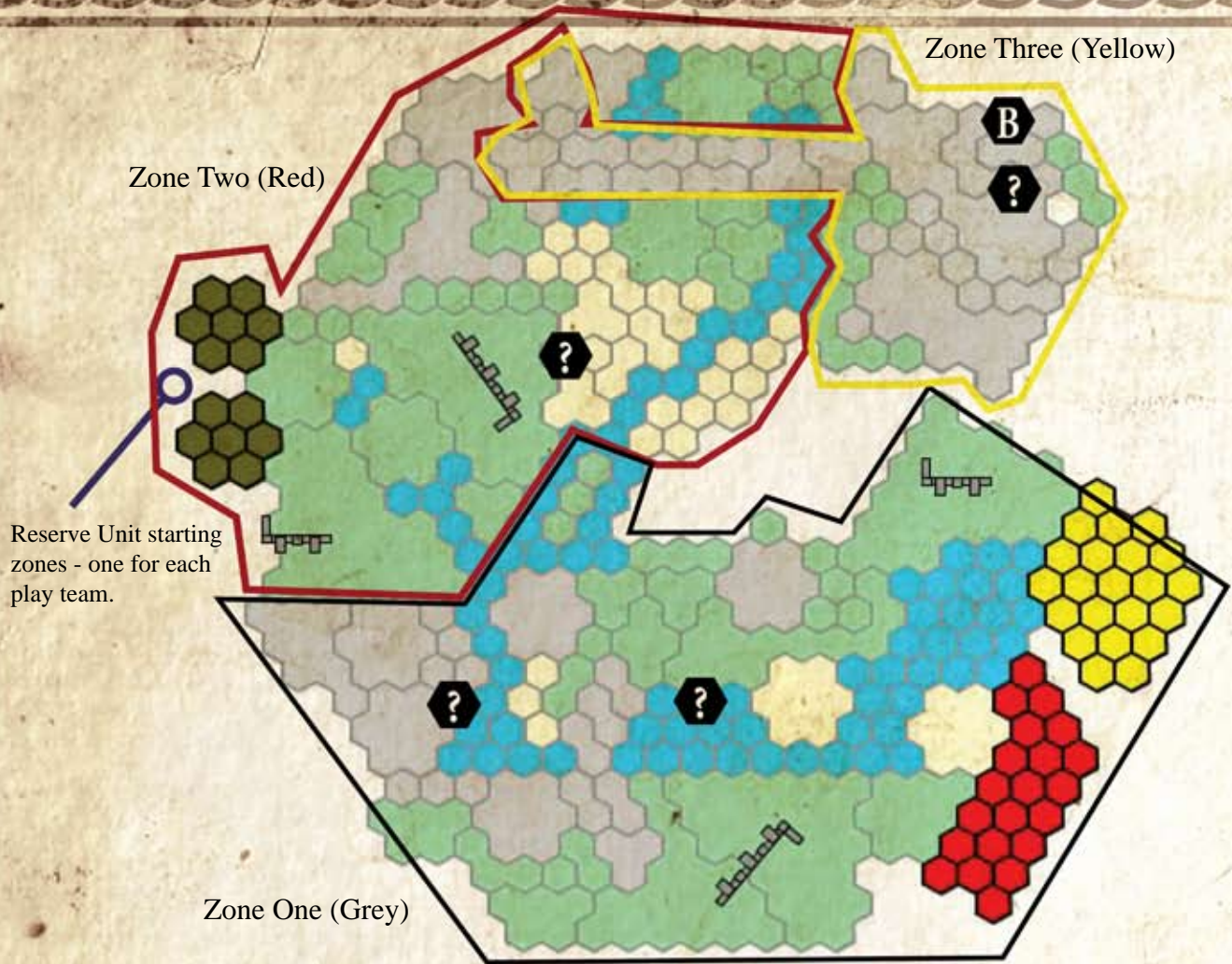
Unfortunately, your enemy seems to have received the same summons. Your scouts bring news of an enemy force travelling in a fork in the gorge that soon merges with yours. You know the transport is near, but will you be able to beat your enemy to it through sheer speed, or will you have to destroy them first - eliminating their chance to do more harm beyond the portal?

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Yellow and Red starting zones are for two players or two teams. If there is not enough space for all of a player's or team's units, then remaining units will be placed before initiative is rolled in the second round of the game. The green start zones are for reserve units - described later.

Two player setup: Each player brings or drafts a 600 point army. Take turns placing units in the starting zones. In the course of placement, each player must set aside reserve units totaling 150 to 200 points. Setting aside a reserve unit counts as placing a unit in the start zone.

Four player setup: Each player brings or drafts a 400 point army. Take turns placing units in the starting zones. In the course of placement, each player must set aside reserve units totaling 100 to 200 points. Setting aside a reserve unit counts as placing a unit in the start zone. These units come into play later in the game. (See special rules.)



**Special Rules:**

**Impenetrable cliffside** - All table top (no hex) areas of the layout are impenetrable cliffs, hundreds of feet high. As such, there is no line of site through them, and flyers may not fly over them.

**Zones** - the rather large setup is divided into three zones, as indicated in the map. Zone One is active at the start of the game. Zone Two becomes active as soon as any player's unit ends movement in Zone 2. Zone Three includes the large bridge and the cliffs beyond, but not the first level water or land below the bridge.

**"Drop" units** may only drop into an active Zone One or Two, and may never drop into Zone Three.

**Reserve Units** - Several of your heros have raced ahead, and now have the transport portal within view. They await the rest of the teams' arrival in order to help them get to the portal safely.

The waiting heros are the reserve units that you placed aside

during setup. As soon as any player's unit ends movement in Zone Two, then players will place their reserve units on the board.

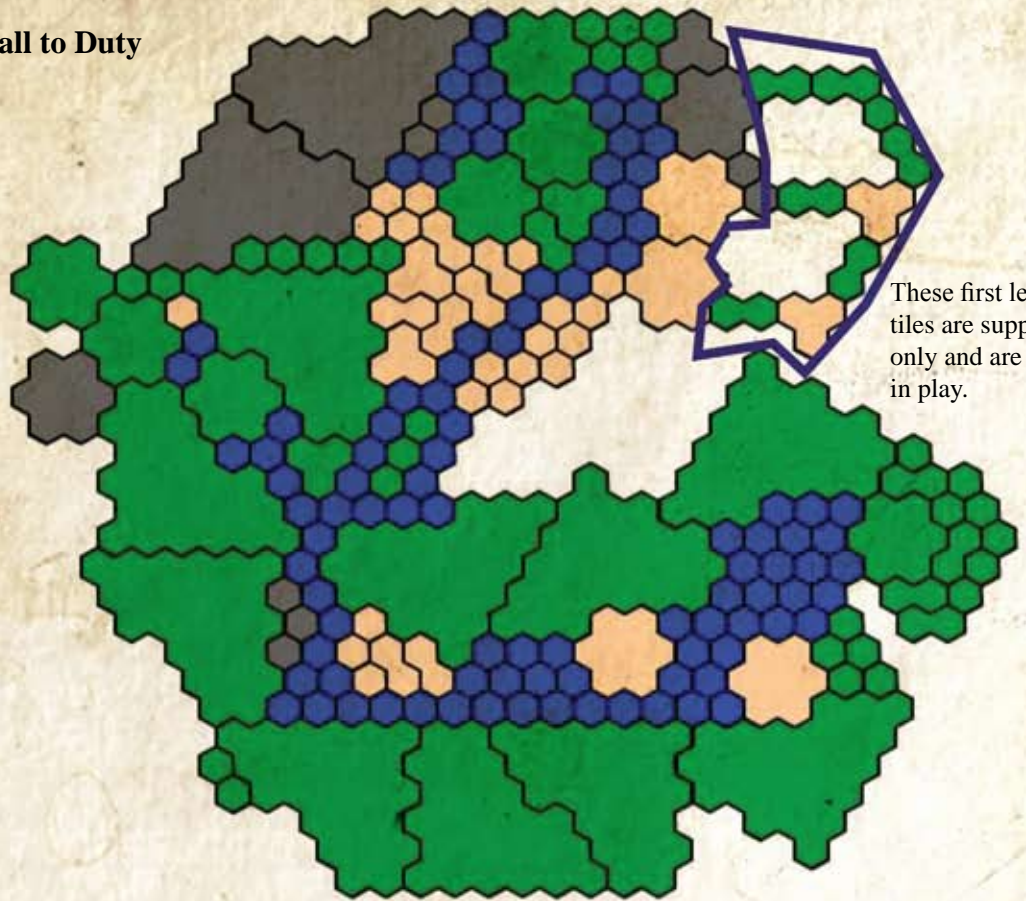
The player who activated Zone Two places one of his reserve units in either of the two green starting zones. In turn order, the opposing player/team places a reserve unit in the other green starting zone. Continue placing until all reserve units are on the board. If there isn't enough space for all of a team's units, then remaining units will be placed at the end of the next round. Note: all players place their reserve units on the board once any player has reached Zone Two.

**Terrain** - All sand pieces cost two movement. In Zone Three, there is a 2 length green tile that serves as support for the larger structure. (See layer 1 setup)

**Scoring** - Once a figure reaches the Glyph of Brandar, remove the figure from play and score the unit's point value for the player/team. In the case of squads, score the entire Squad's value once any member gets to the portal (glyph). Do not score additional points for any more figures from the same squad.

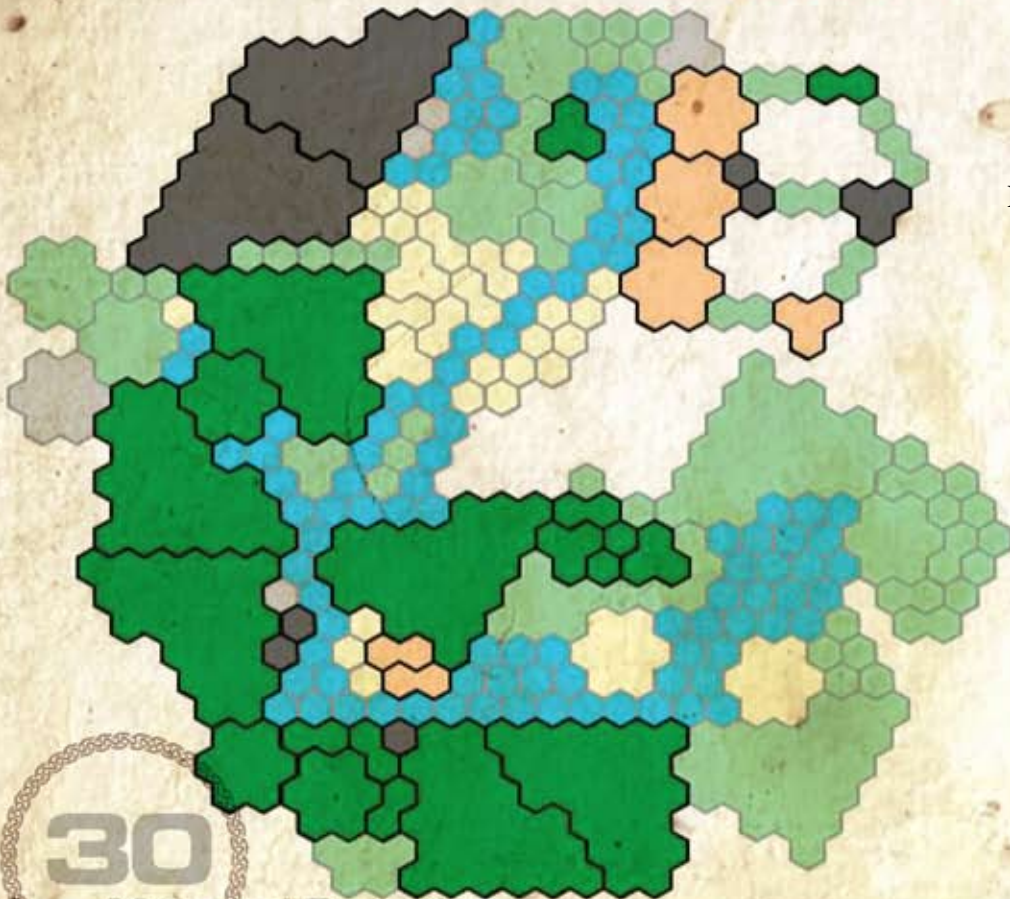
Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty

Level 1



These first level tiles are support only and are not in play.

Level 2

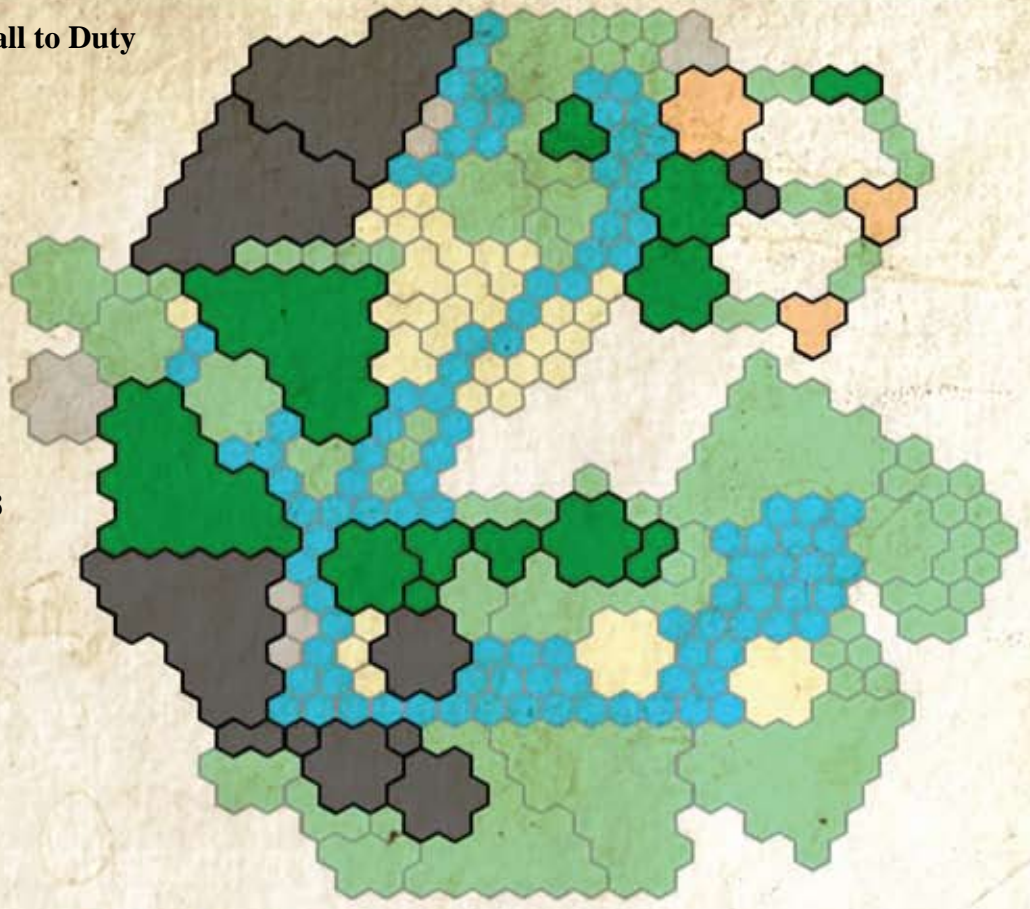


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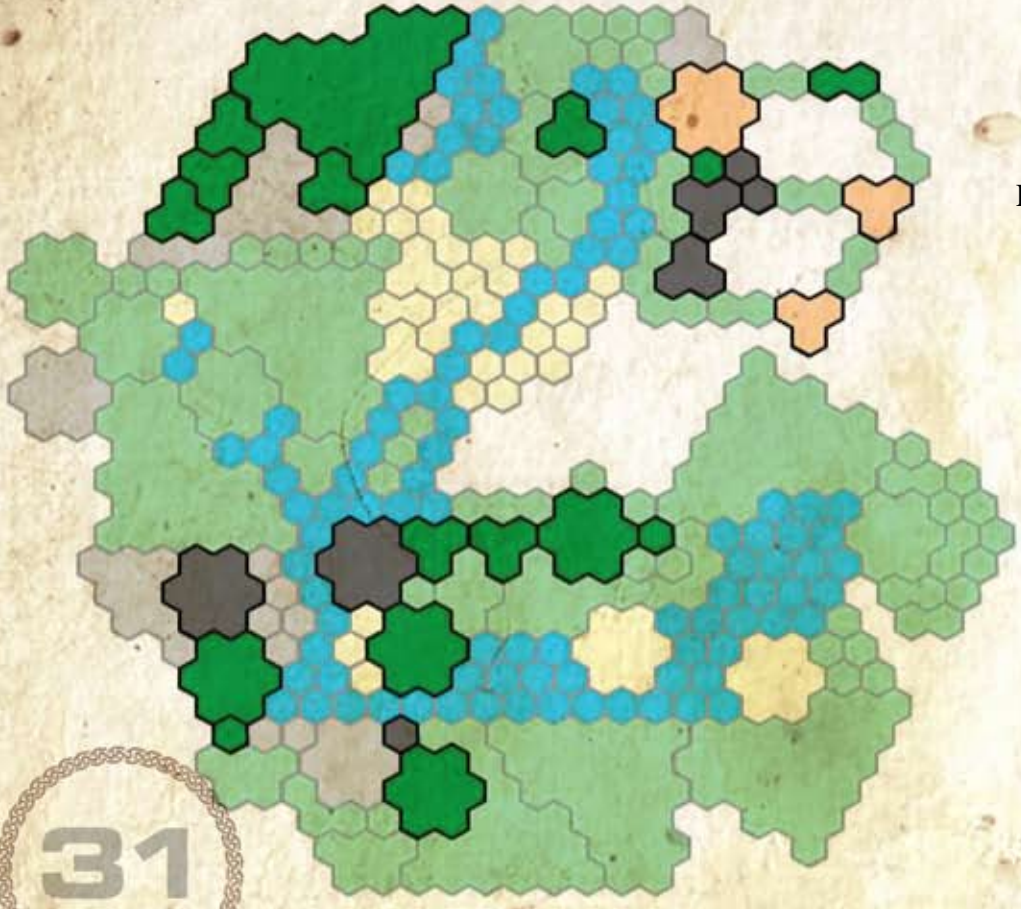
Maps and Scenarios

Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty

Level 3

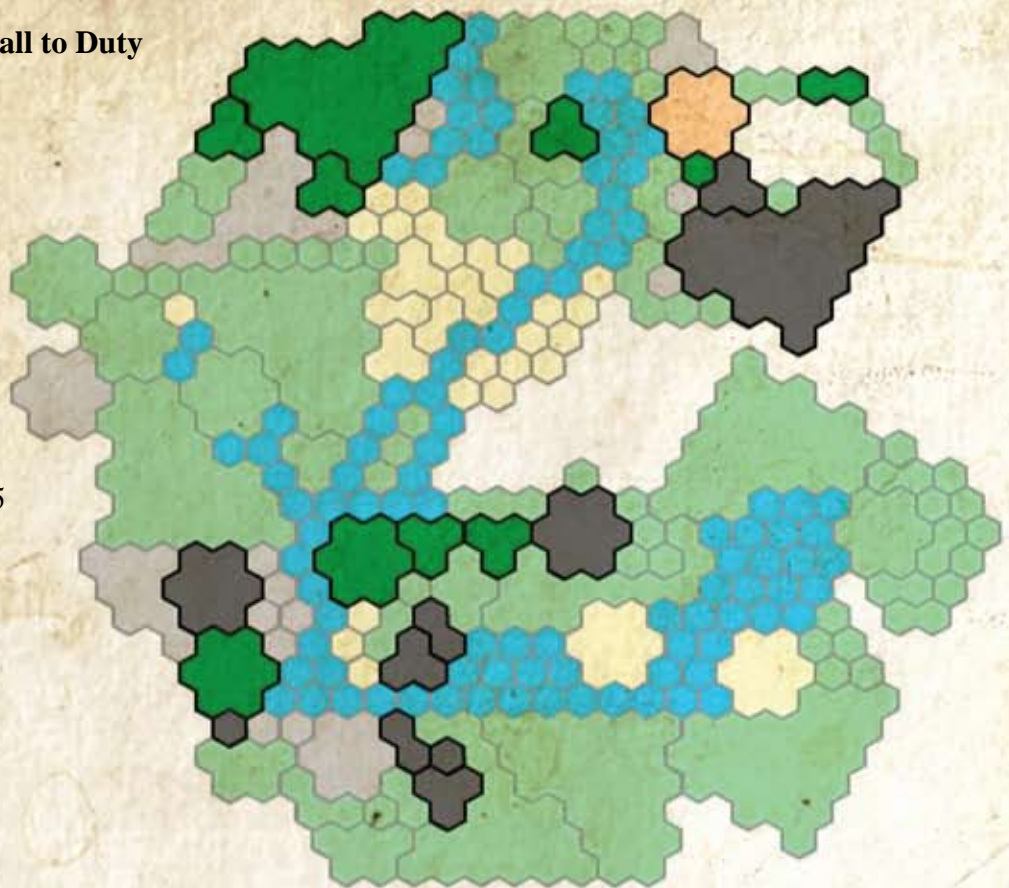


Level 4

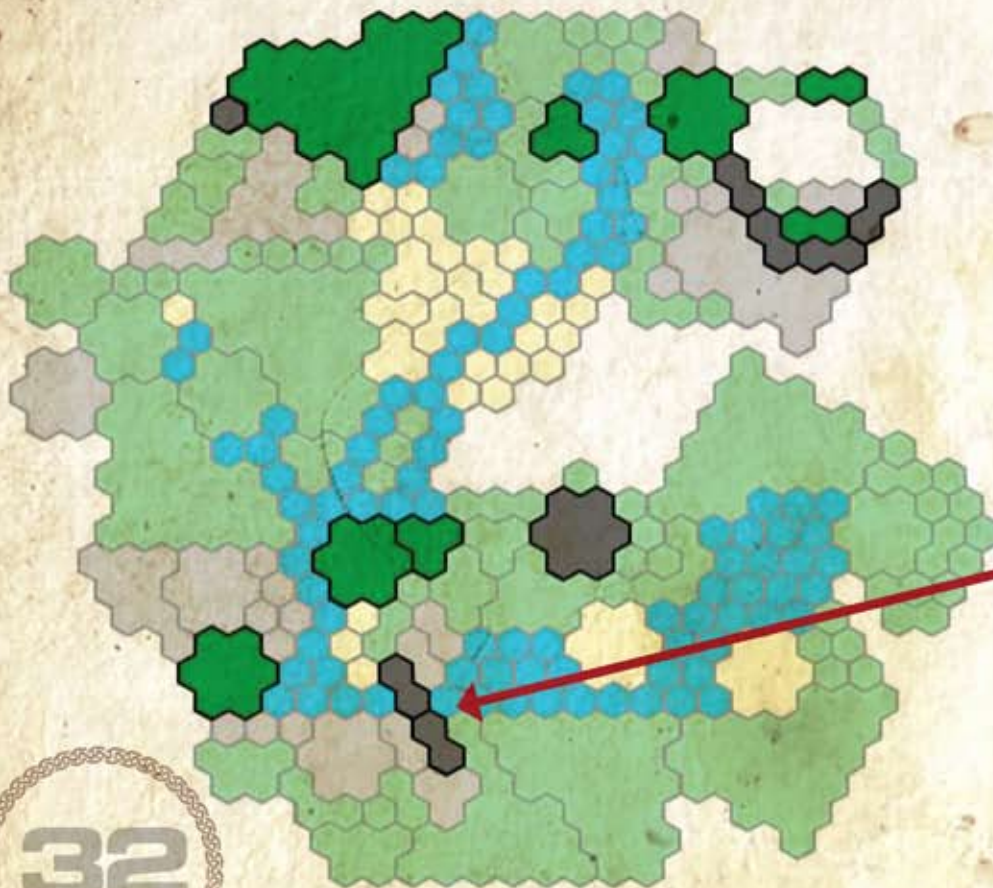


Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty

Level 5



Level 6



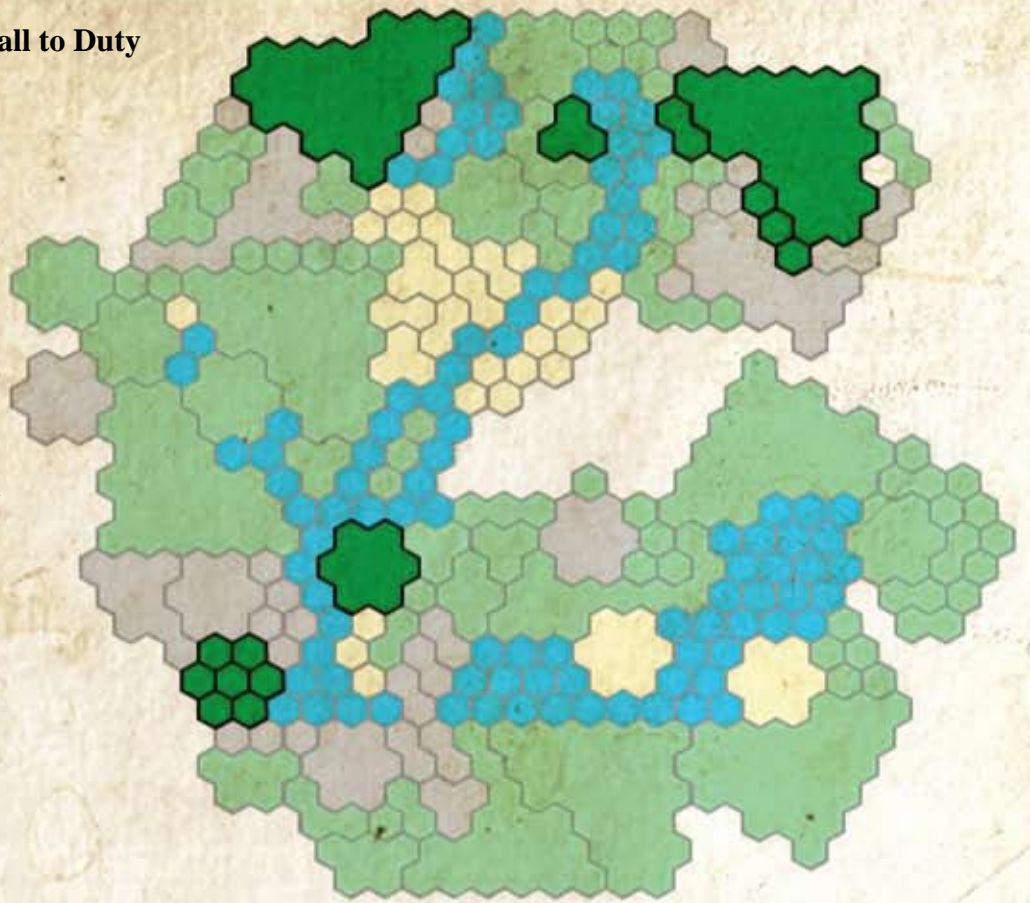
Use Clips on bottoms of tiles to make bridge .



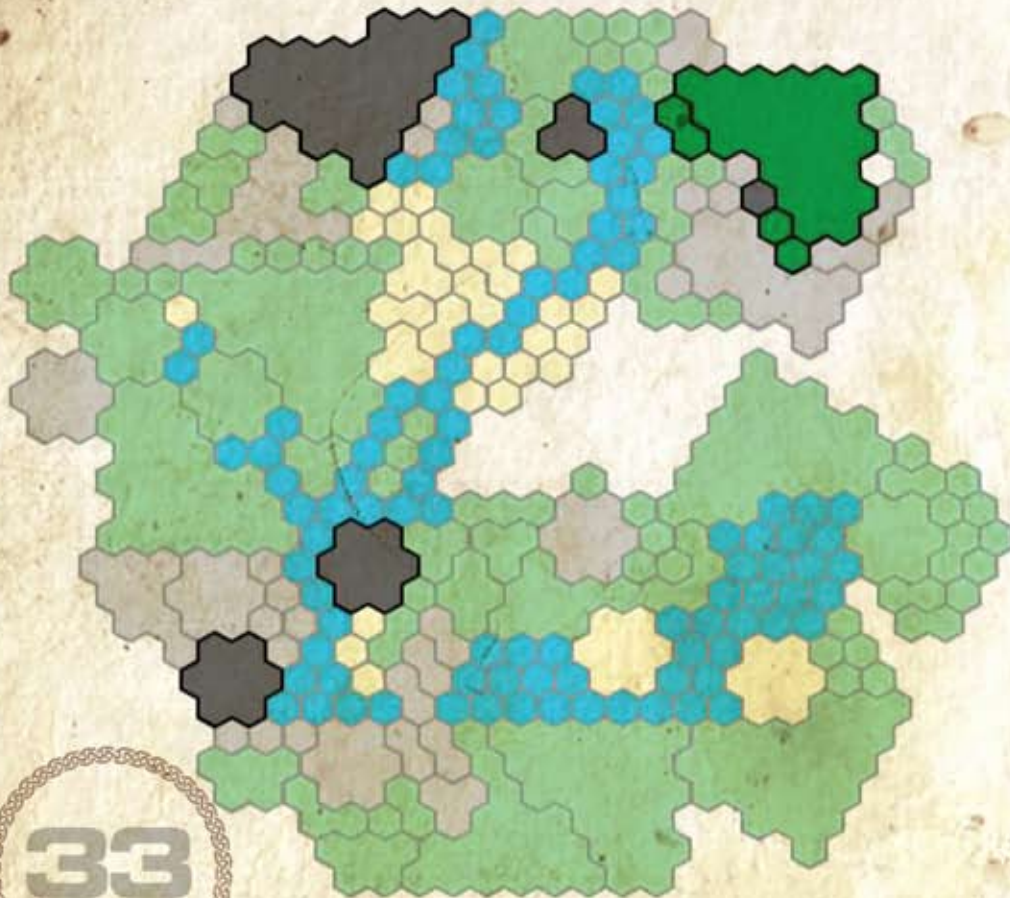


Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty

Level 7



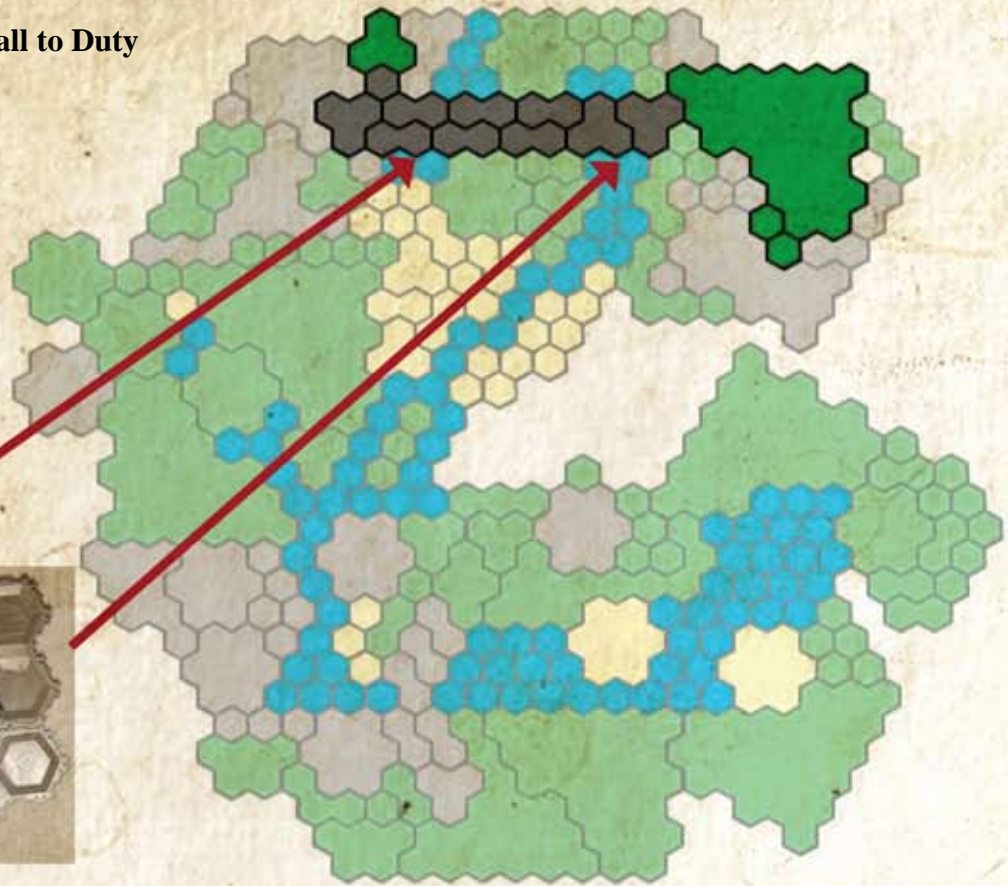
Level 8



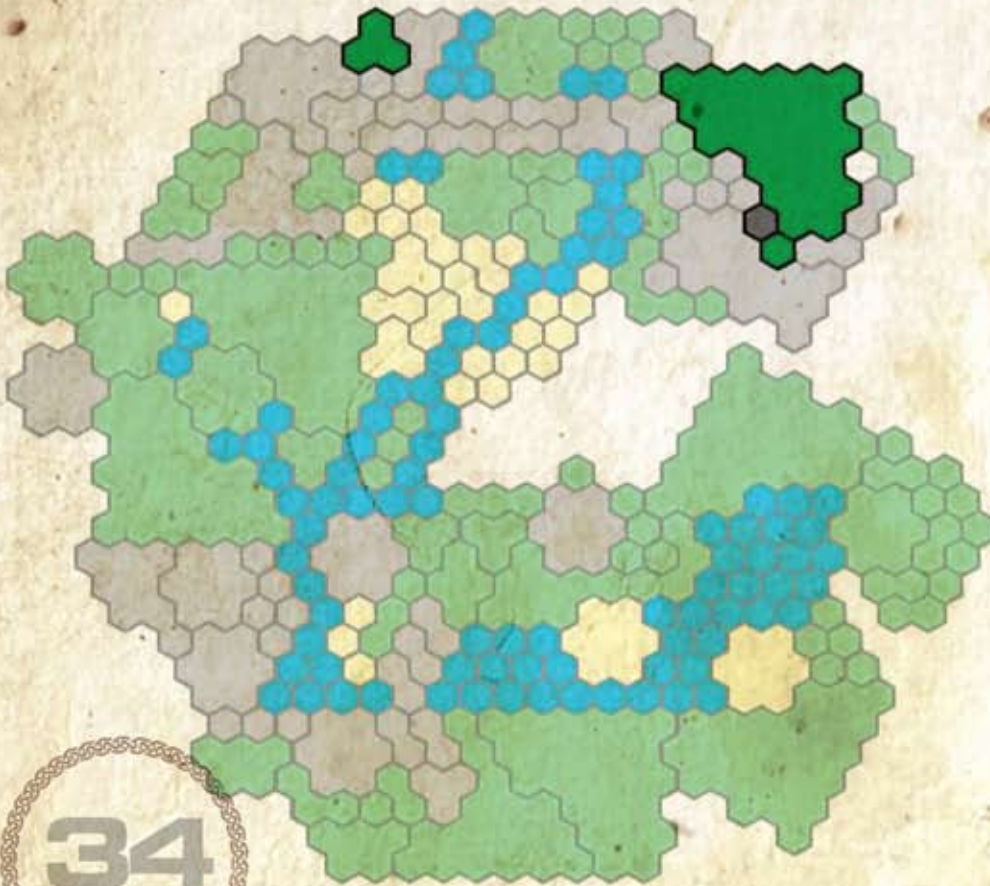
# Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty

Level 9

Use Clips on bottoms of tiles to make bridge (s).

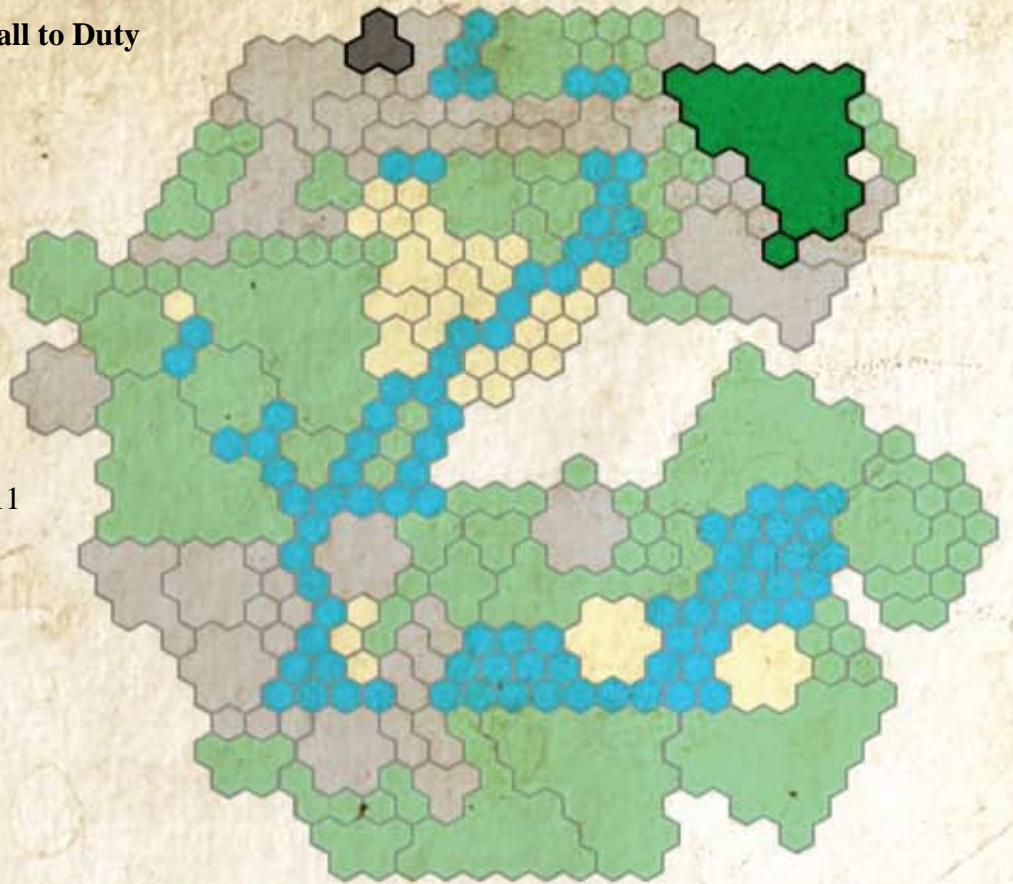


Level 10

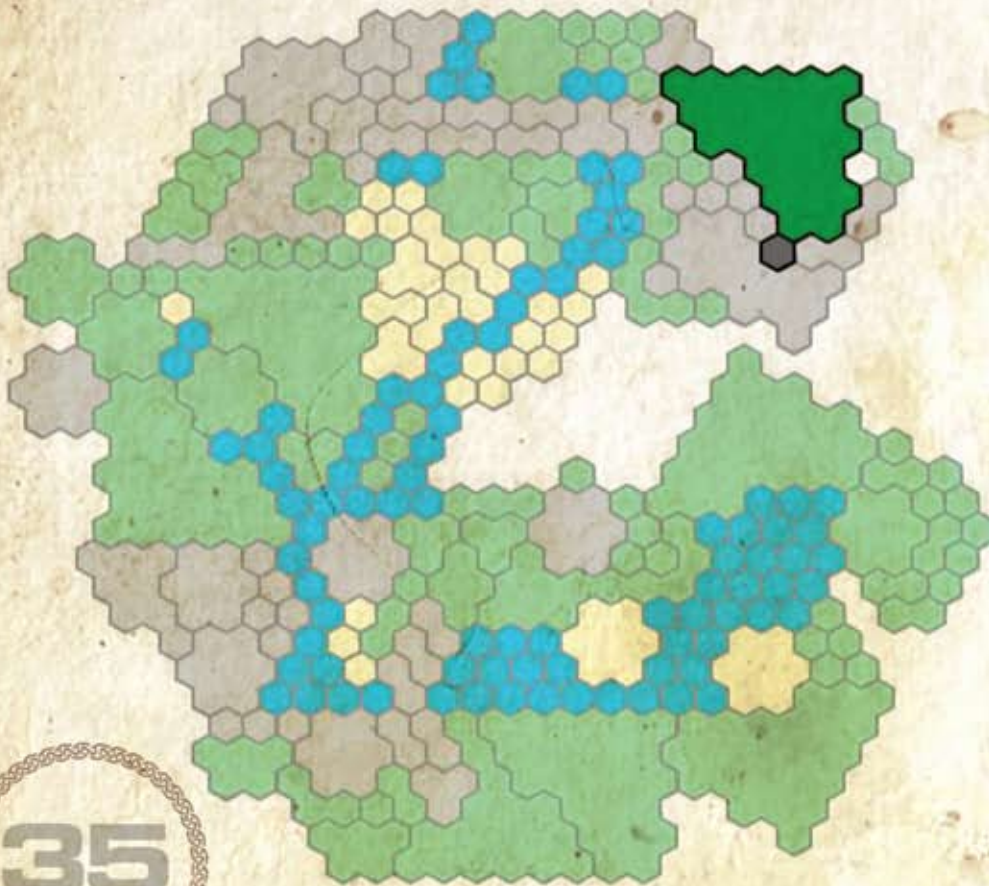


Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty

Level 11

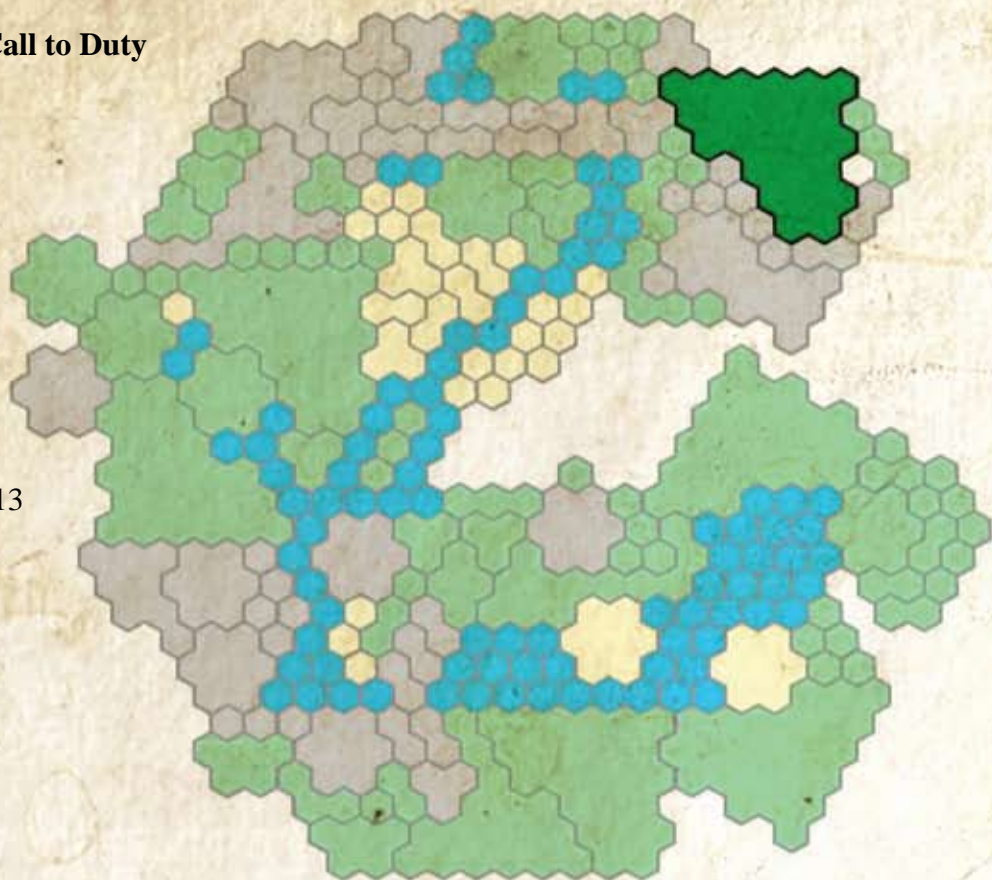


Level 12

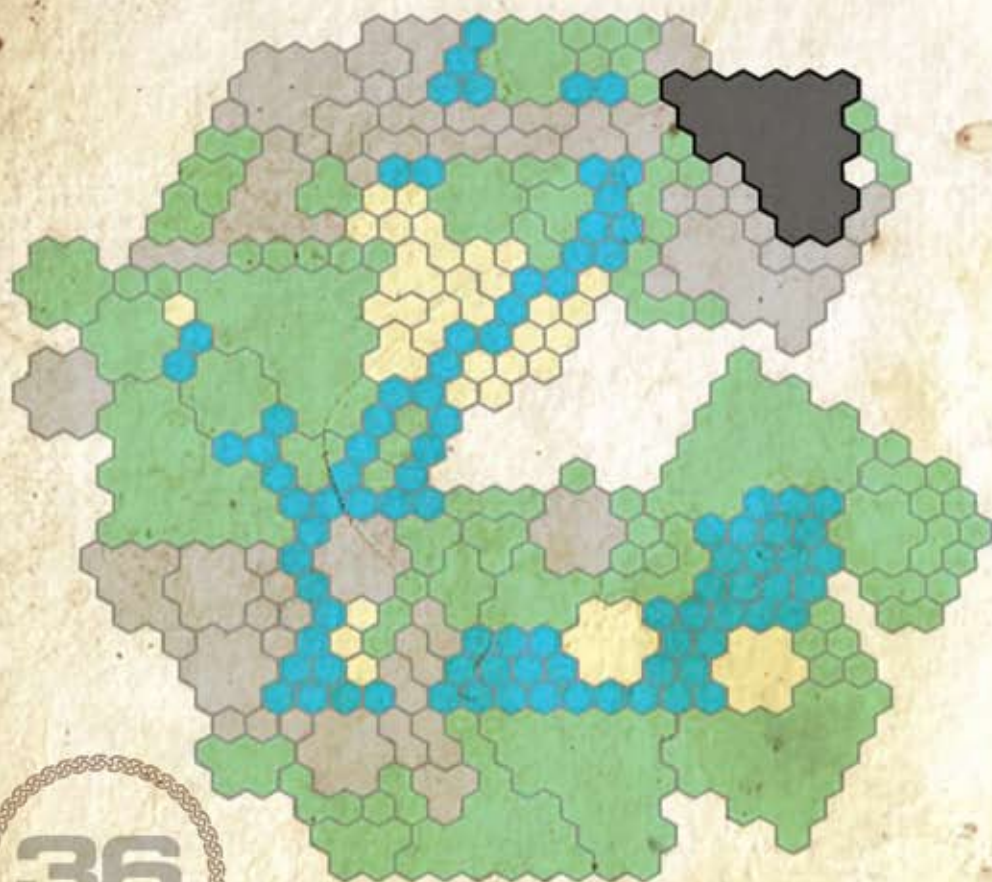


**Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty**

Level 13

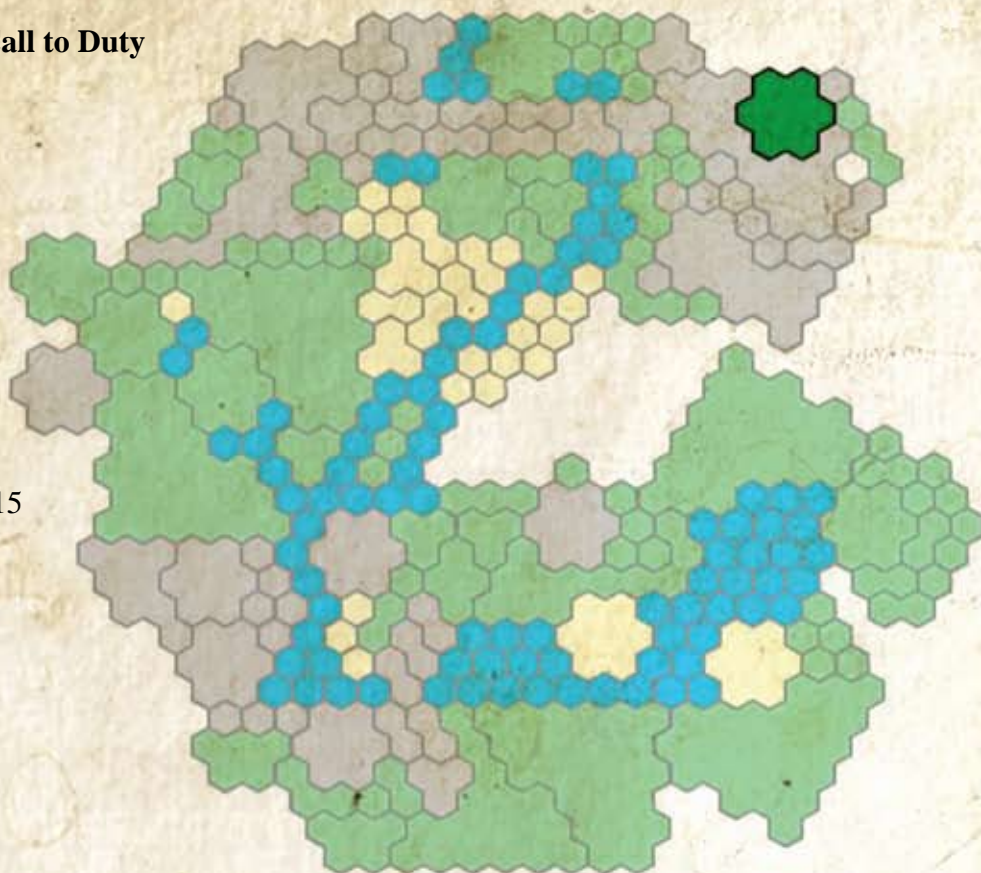


Level 14



**Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty**

Level 15

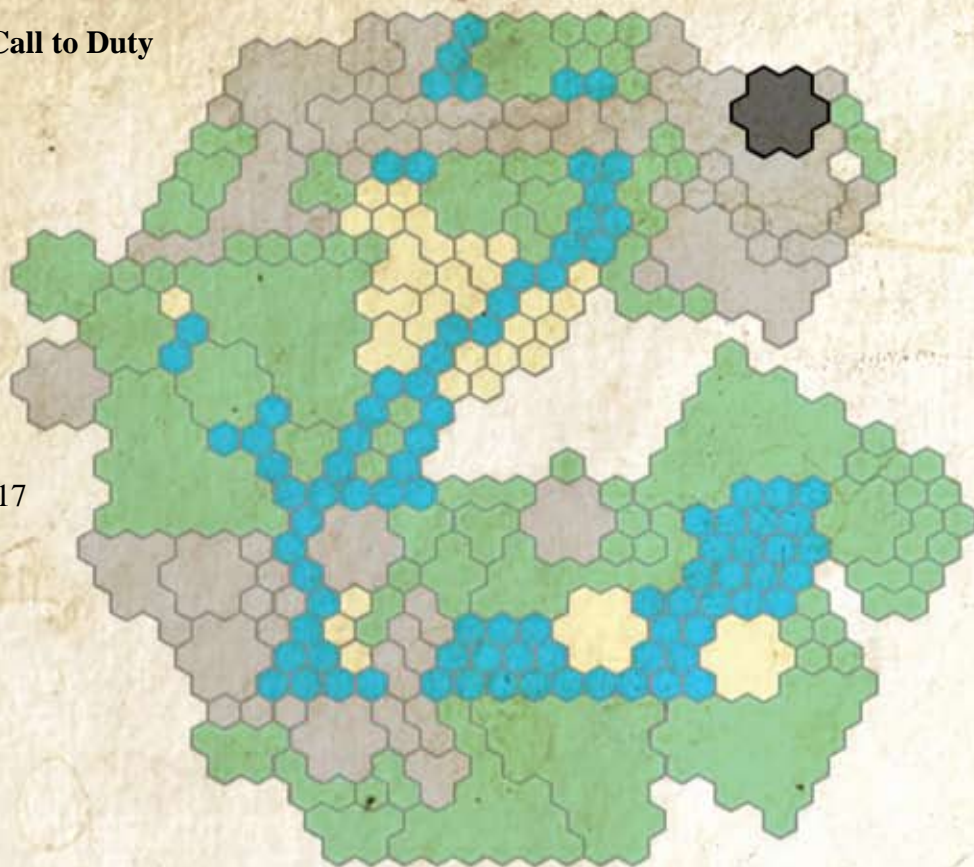


Level 16

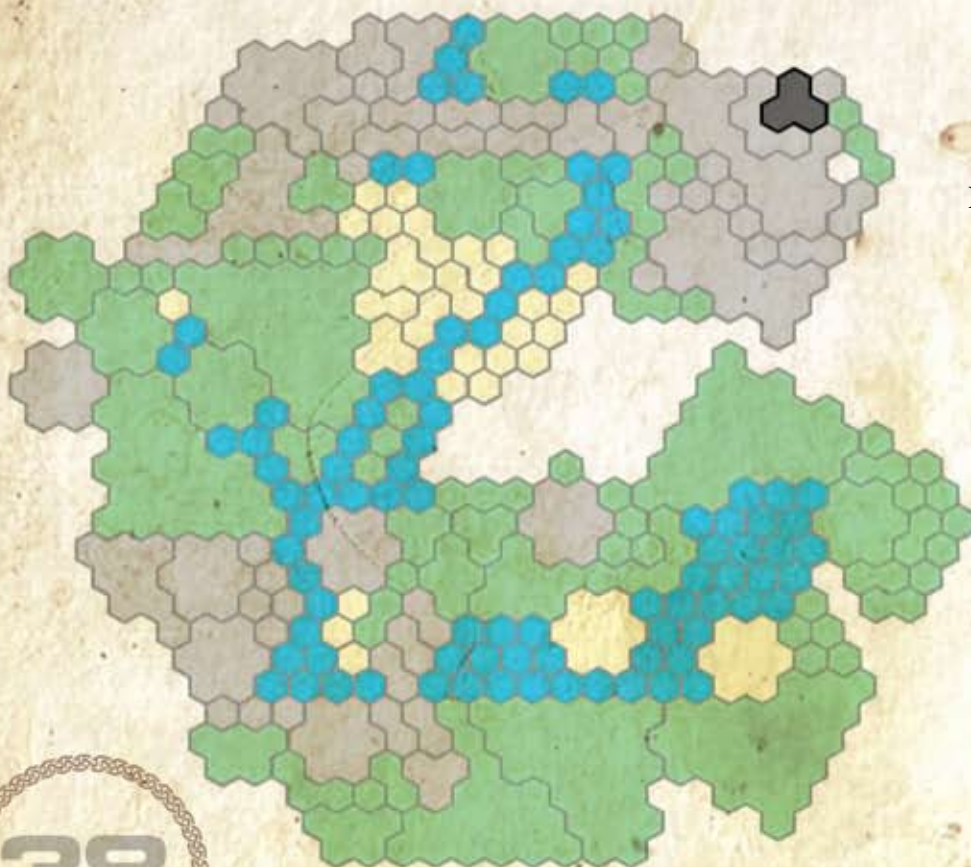


**Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty**

Level 17

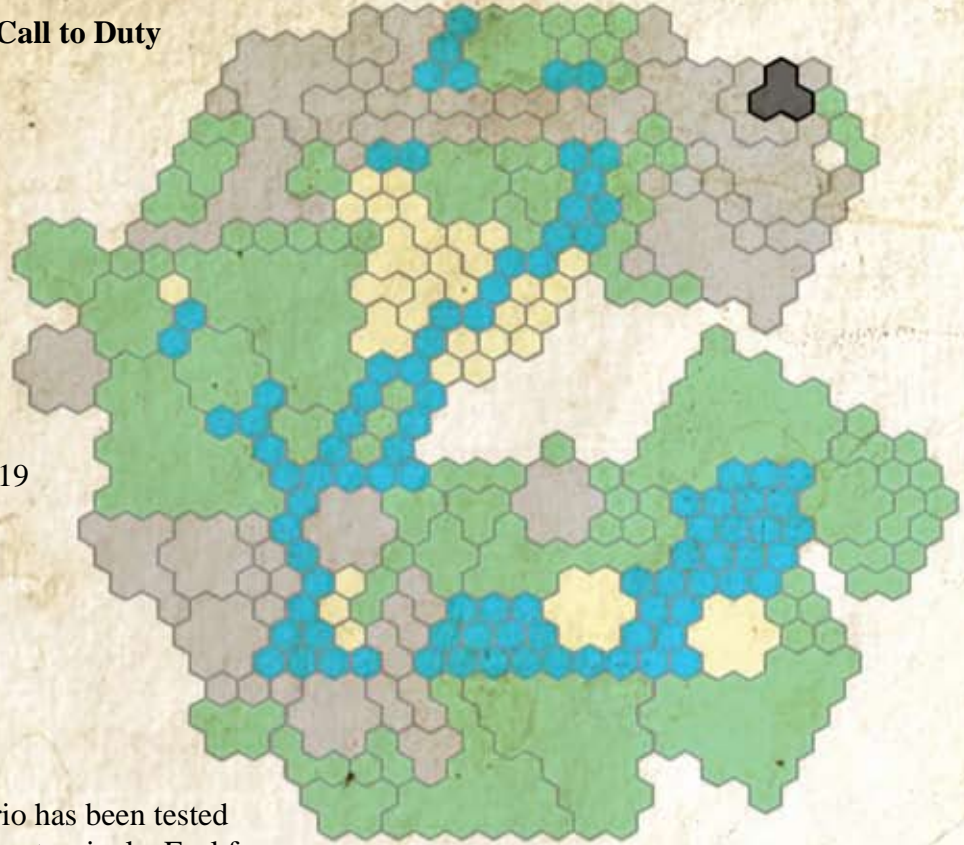


Level 18



## Bhandikar Gorge - Call to Duty

Level 19



### Notes on Game Play...

This layout and scenario has been tested somewhat, though not extensively. Feel free to modify elements of the layout or scenario to fit your group's style. I welcome all comments at [jajji@kublacon.com](mailto:jajji@kublacon.com)

The terrain for the two starting zones are significantly different.

The Yellow player has a thinner, shorter route to get to Zone Two, but gets slowed down by having to cross water, either by jumping into the river, or by crossing the bridge into the other player's "side."

The Red player has a clearer shot through the gorge, but it is somewhat longer.

While this scenario and map have a large "dead zone" in the middle (the cliffs of the gorge), there are enough pieces to be able to fill the center in and create a larger/broader board.

I don't have scenarios for this yet, but welcome any comments or scenarios you may create.

Enjoy.

(The picture below isn't exactly like the final setup.)



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Maps and Scenarios

# HeroSkirmish

## Welcome, Traveler, to the Lands of Valhalla

Our once peaceful land, I'm afraid, is now in the midst of Dark Times. You can thank the Wellsprings for that. When these mysterious waters arrived, many Kyrie, unable to control their curiosity, drank from them and received tremendous powers and disturbing visions. But there were five Kyrie Generals, alike in power, who knew just how important these Wellsprings were. These Generals were able to interpret their visions and harness their newfound power to summon warriors from across time and space. This is how you find yourself among us now.

Currently among these, two Generals stand above the rest; two opposing forces, a yin and yang that hold the balance of power. Jandar and his allies long for peace. Utgar and his minions yearn for ultimate power. These Generals not only hold the fate of Valhalla in their hands, they hold your fate as well. It is in your best interest to follow the orders of your General. Do this and you may live; disobey and you will surely perish. I will pray for you.

This is rest of my knowledge. I know Utgar gave orders to Taelord, one of his most ruthless followers to take a wellspring in the hills of Laur. A small band of Jandar's forces hold the wellspring now. Whosoever controls the wellspring will grow in strength, and they will surely push their newly empowered forces on and attempt to destroy their enemy.

I hear the call of your General now. You best hurry if you are to take command of His forces. Why yes, command. Why else did you think you were here? You best hurry. Generals don't like to wait.

## Campaign Dynamics

**A**rmey Selection: Using the Standard Heroscape Drafting Method, both players will draft armies of equal points. This army will be each player's collective pool of troops to use throughout the campaign. Armies should be of fairly large point values to accommodate troops lost in battle, unable to return. (Recommendation: 1000-1500 pts each).

**Glyphs:** Any unit that lands on a glyph grants the normal glyph bonus to its entire army. If a Unique Hero lands on a glyph, the hero may choose to pick up the glyph and claim it for themselves. A Unique Hero may pick up a glyph before or after moving, but before attacking. If a Unique Hero does this, remove the glyph from play and place it on the Hero's card. The glyph no longer grants bonuses to the player's entire army, but is now the possession of the Hero and only grants the Hero the appropriate bonus. This bonus will stay with the Hero throughout the campaign or until the Hero dies. A Unique Hero can have no more than two permanent glyph bonuses.

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Maps and Scenarios



## Strategic Battlefield Points

On each of the first 2 maps there will be three face-down glyphs. These glyphs represent Strategic Battlefield Locations. At the end of each match any player who has a figure on a Strategic Glyph will receive 50 reinforcement points for each glyph, to be used in the next battle.

## Death & Reinforcements

In keeping with a campaign format, any Unique Troops that fall in battle are permanently removed from the game for the remainder of the Game. It is important to protect those Uniques! Unique Heroes that have any wounds on them at the end of the game are restored to full health before the next battle. In the case of Unique Squads, all members of the squad must be killed to be removed from the Campaign or they may be used in the next game at full strength. Any Unique Troops that fall in battle are permanently removed from the game for the remainder of the Campaign.

At the end of the battle, each player will draft a new army (of the specified amount and excluding any fallen Unique units) from their army pool. Each player will then use any reinforcement points they have available to add additional troops to their force for this battle.

No player can have more than 125 reinforcement points per game.



# Map I Building Guide

Level 1



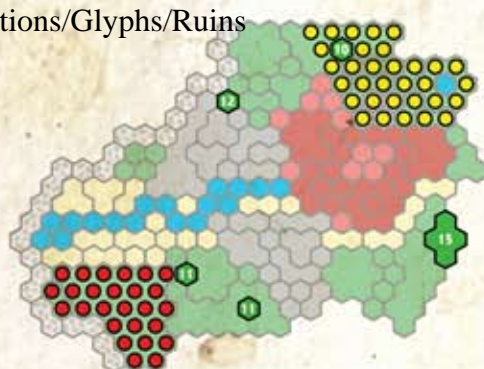
Level 4



Level 2



Starting Positions/Glyphs/Ruins



Level 3



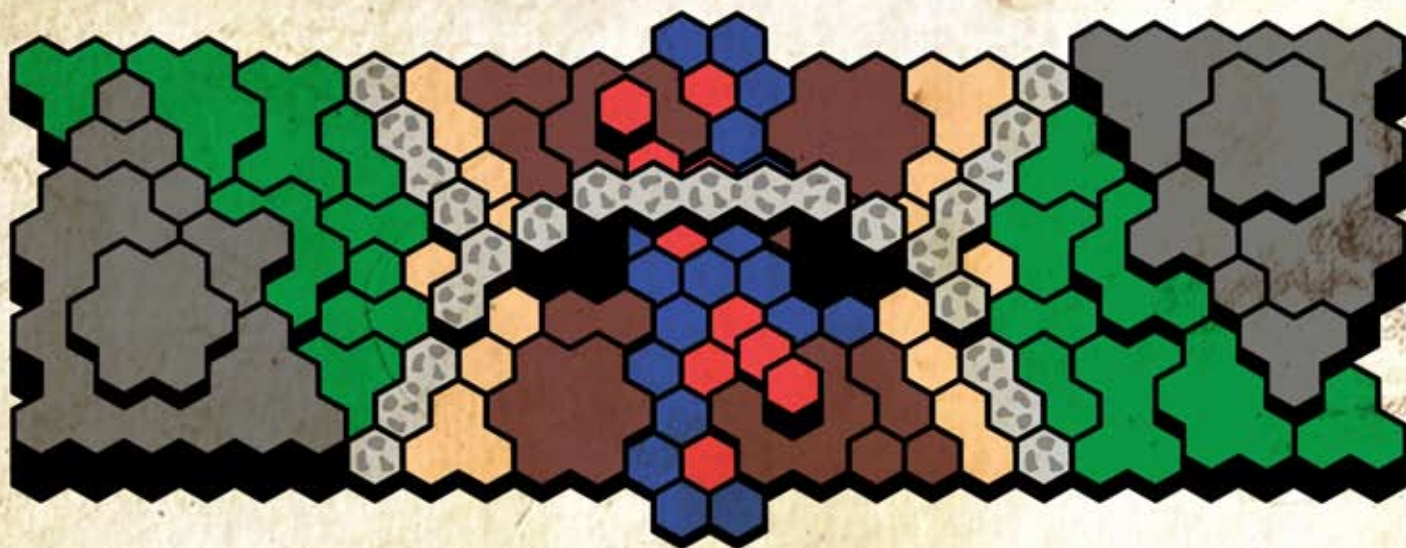
## HeroSkirmish Part II

In the aftermath of the battle for the wellspring, one general stands victorious over his prize. He relishes this moment, knowing that his power will increase and his resolve will strengthen.

Drinking deeply from the water, the general sees wondrous things. Among these is the fabled Hammer of Thor. Laid upon a bridge, in the Valley of Laur, this mystical artifact waits to be claimed. Though it is hidden in plain sight, only an individual who has seen beyond this reality would know where to find Thor's Hammer. The General wastes no time. Assembling a new fighting force, the General marches towards the valley and the Hammer of Thor.

The opposing General, knowing of the visions and their power, sees his foe rally his troops in a hasty departure, leaving only a small garrison to protect the wellspring. Seeing an opportunity to make quick work of the garrison and drink from the waters, he hurries to the Bridge in the Valley of Laur. He is almost a full day behind; the General orders his troops to travel light and move at double time. He knows of a seldom-used path to the valley, a much shorter route, but he and his troops must overcome swamps, bogs, and hostile creatures. With luck the General may be able to beat his enemies to the bridge - but he is too late.

The winner of the Wellspring War has already set up camp on the far side of the bridge beyond a lava flow. They arrived first, but are unaware of their pursuers. Content in their position, they rest. Little do they know that battle will soon be upon them.



# Map II Building Guide

Level 1



Level 4



Level 2



Level 5



Level 3



Level 6



Starting Positions/Glyphs/Ruins

