

## The Three Brothers Of Deheubarth: The Founding Of Kephira

Adda, Geraint and Rhisiart of Deheubarth were tough brothers of the Galarus Jarin from Aberth in the second century TR who made their name fighting the Anoa, Taelda and Ymodi tribesmen, and Lothrim and his foulspawn. The brothers were even in on the sacking of Elkall-Anuz, and harpers soon sang of their exploits.

They returned to Aberth and turned their efforts to raising families, but soon grew restless. Adda and Geraint were often involved in drunken brawls while Rhisiart gained a reputation with the married women of Aberth. Tensions mounted and finally by 126 TR the three brothers decided to once again venture south to the Kald region.

At this time the Kald region was in turmoil. Lothrim's empire had collapsed, the Kingdom of Nurelia was in its infancy, and petty lords vied against each other for supremacy. War bands, mercenaries and Gargun roamed freely, while merchants and travellers rarely ventured out.

By late spring the brothers arrived at Olokand, the seat of Sanric I, and promptly invaded the bars. It was there they met Shala of Kephira - a young disenfranchised knight. Shala, recognising the Deheubarth brothers for who they were, joined them for a night of drunken revelry, and a friendship soon developed. Whereupon, the clients of the bar were said to have heard the following pledge:

*"...By Larani, you are right, I will regain the land that is rightfully mine, and more besides! I shall once again be Lord Kethira!" bellowed the drunken Shala.*

*"But more, with our help, you shall be a King, and sit upon your own throne and wear a crown of gold and gems!" cheered Geraint.*

*"And carry a sceptre royal!" yelled Adda.*

*"But sooth, I know not how!" said Shala softly.*

*They all fell quiet, until Rhisiart spoke forth...*

*"Brothers, let us find the jewels of Drenis. The treasure will surely pay for an army, and supply the jewels of state!"*

According to rumour, the royal house of Drenis had managed to hide their treasure from the onslaught of Lothrim and his foulspawn in 113TR. However, no one knew truth behind the rumour, and few believed the quest could succeed. The brothers of Deheubarth, through, were not men to shirk from a bargain made,

even if made over a keg or two of ale and mead. The next day provisions for the journey were obtained, and the small band set off in search of the fabled treasure.

They travelled to ruins of Kelapyn-Anuz to seek clues among the wreckage of Lothrim's second city. On the thirtieth day of their search, when their hopes were all but lost, a wizened man appeared and bore greeting to them.

*Shala, hail my future king. Lord of yon realm to be, unless thine greed betrayth thee. Seek first the crown and orb of the Drenis kings in the vale above the ancients' lake. There to seek the stone that sings, when the wind god's howl is great. A gash of sorts in the face ahead will lead to the fated place. But hark the treasure's lustre is only for the base. Take what thou need, but nothing more and leave to whence thee came. Or the sleeping guardian Vachan thou may face, if hesitant in thine race.*

Shala turned to the brothers with a forlorn look, and inquired if they knew where the old man bade him go. Adda told him of a wondrous temple in the Felsha mountains, which he had seen in the war. So off to the wilds they went, and on their way they battled Gargun and tribesmen and strange and loathsome beasts. Geraint then saw the valley as the headed past the lake. "Up there we'll find the singing stone" he cried and raced on up the slope. They searched for eighty days before a fearsome gale blew through the woods and Rhisiart heard the song. The men followed the sound and there in a clearing, they found the singing stone

A small cave was seen nearby, and Shala ventured forth. The brothers followed and they all entered the chambered vault across a fractured floor. There, all manner of wonder did they survey, gold and gems, but true to the old man's words, only what they needed did they take, and left in due haste. And Vachan the sleeping giant arose and watched them leave, a smile upon his face.

With what they found, Shala equipped a force, and rode across the Kald. Then, where the quest had truly started, Shala made his claim.

*Shala stood where the old man had been two years before, and held the crown aloft and roared'*

*"Here on the ruins of Kelapyn-Anuz shall stand our capital. Men will know it hence as the House of Shala — Tjshala... Tashal"*

Kephira was now founded, and the Brothers of Deheubarth, with their pledge made good, rode off into the rising sun, as the new dawn broke.

This is one in a series of articles on the legends and folklore of Hârn and Lythia, collectively called *Common Knowledge*. These tales are presented in two parts: the legend itself and GM notes, arranged on separate pages, so that the GM may give a photocopy of the Legend to his players.

## The Story

The Kephira adventure of the three brothers of Deheubarth is known mainly in South Central Hârn, and is often the subject of harpers' songs, and campfire tales. The foundation of Kephira is also well known among learned circles throughout Hârn, particularly in the east.

## The Deheubarth Brothers

The brothers were swords for hire from about 120 TR, until their death (?) in 147 TR at Aberth. Their part in the foundation of Kephira is one of their more famous adventures. Similarly, their earlier adventures during the wars against Lothrim, or their later in Orbaal/Nuthela/Himod could offer additional source material for players to follow up.

## The Drenis Tribe

The Drenis Jarin settled in the needle-leaf forest on the southern shore of Lake Direna around 600 B.T.. Initially, they adopted a hunting-gathering lifestyle like the neighbouring Mendar of Anisha. However, by the time of Lothrim, the Drenis had developed a shepherding agriculture and built a few small settlements. They had also discovered a source of mineral salt which meant they could produce salted meats. Thus, trade with neighbouring tribes supplemented income, and generally conditions were profitable and peaceful.

When Lothrim came to power, the tribal king was too weak to resist, and the Drenis became vassals of Lothrim. Unable to provide suitable military aid to the Foulspawner, the Drenis were reduced to slavery and dispersed through the empire. After Lothrim, few ever returned to their homeland.

Today, the Drenis are a very minor tribe with no permanent encampment. Like their ancestors they exist by hunting and gathering, but now they compete with the Gargun that infest the hills, and they are now quite poor. While they have oral traditions, the location of the cave is lost to them, but they still range in the area of the cave from time to time.

## The Treasure Cave

The treasure cave of the Drenis is located in the needle leaf forest above the shores of Lake Direna (the ancient's lake) and below Mt. Uthoc, 5 leagues southeast of Anisha [H5/I5 on the Hârn map].

The cave contents are left to the gamemaster's discretion, but should be protected both by Vachan and treacherous circumstances (the fractured floor?). It was the storehouse of the Drenis treasure, and possibly more, but the treasure should be well hidden. The cave is also the old salt mine.

## Vachan, The Sleeping Giant

Vachan was once one of the best warriors of the Drenis and was chosen to guard the treasure. To make him more formidable, he was enchanted by the Drenis Shaman Myfainn and is now an Hru (Harnmaster Bestiary 7). It was this enchantment that has given him a long life, but he expected to be released from the spell some time ago and is now tired of his task. Like the Hru, he is a solitary being who enjoys his own company, but he will talk with those who approach him peacefully. Usually encountered asleep, he will wake instantly if bothered, although quiet and restrained individuals may be able to obtain items from the hoard without his interference. His stats are given below:

HarnMaster I Stats:

Str	32	Spd	09	Int	12	Mob	45
End	28	Eye	02	Aur	02	Dge	40
Dex	08	Hrg	05	Wil	16	Ini	76
Agl	07	Smt	19			FR	01
Unarmed Combat: 92 / 12b							
Armour: B8 E6 P5 F9 S12 T6 (except eyes)							

BattleLust Stats:

Vachan, The Sleeping Giant							
INI	PHY	GAC	MOV	Cost:			
76	18	4*	14	WP:			
WEAPON	ML	WQ	A/D	IM	AF	DF	INJURIES
Unarmed	92	•	2/5	+12	62	77	
BattleLust							

\* GAC is due to skin, and counts as GAC 2 for AF/DF.

## Lead-Ins

The amount of information the players have about the brothers of Deheubarth and their efforts in the founding of Kephira should be determined by the lead-in option preferred by the gamemaster.

*1] The PCs hear of the story of the founding of Kephira while in Kaldor, and set out to find the treasure cave themselves for whatever \booty might still be found.*

*2] The PCs could be hired by a sage or Shek Pvar who wishes to discover the location of the cave for academic reasons or financial gain.*

*3] The PCs are visited by a wizened man who tells them a similar tale of glory awaits them if they find the cave.*