

FALSE PROPHET

Do you believe I revel in my being? No, I abhor it. I long for the time when mindless destruction fulfilled my needs. I am aware of so many things now, yet I feel more ignorant than when I was little more than an animated rock. My curse is that sentience cannot be undone. I must follow this course even to my destruction. To do otherwise would be unforgivable.

• WARMONGER OF PARLAINTH •

The player characters are hired by Pagmor Gilt Throat to discover the nature of an unusual occurrence in the section of Parlainth known as the Warzone. The continuous conflict has come to an abrupt stop as all three of the major factions seem to have banded together to lay siege to a fortified structure to the north of the area not far from the Laneways. A small group of falsemen has rebuilt the walls of the structure and seems to be holding off the hordes for now. To break the siege, the player characters must enter the stronghold and confront the leader, a sentient stoneman Named Warmonger.

NOTE

This adventure assumes the gamemaster has knowledge of *Parlaint: The Forgotten City*, a boxed set that was created for the **First Edition** of **Earthdawn**. This product is available as an eBook [here](#) and [here](#), and can easily be adapted to any **Earthdawn Third Edition** campaign.

SETUP

The player characters are assumed to be staying in Parlainth and to have built somewhat of a reputation for themselves in that town. They are approached by a fierce looking troll dressed in hide armor and furs, who introduces himself by dropping a purse of 50 silvers on their table. He simply states that the money is a stipend from Pagmor for a moment of their time at their earliest convenience. Pagmor's gambling den is well known to the people of Haven, so it will not be long for the player characters to track down if they are not already familiar with it.

On arrival, Pagmor explains the situation in the Warzone and also how the lack of territorial exchange is destroying his business that is largely based on the profits he makes on people gambling on the falsemen wars. He has discovered that the source of the new conflict appears to be a stoneman named Warmonger, who was once a prominent general in Guile's army. Pagmor offers the player characters a sizable amount of silver if they enter the Warzone and break the siege by whatever means necessary. He believes the most likely solution is to destroy Warmonger and release his shattered form to the assembled army. Only after the player characters have agreed does he reveal the source of this information: a waxman that he found waving down his drakkar from atop a wall by the Laneways.

EVENT ONE: STORMCROW

The player characters are led down to the basement of Pagmor's residence, whereupon they are confronted by something resembling a male elf dressed in an antiquated Theran naval uniform. However, much of the creature's original form is barely recognizable as it appears to have melted in a number of places on its body and reset in a hideous fashion. It is also noticeable that he wears a red cloth tied around his left arm that is not made out of wax. When questioned, the creature explains that he is a waxman and was originally the property of a Theran admiral. His Name is Stormcrow and his primary purpose is to find a party interested in breaking the siege. His war leader, Guile, has sent him to return with these adventurers where they will be aided in their mission.

The player characters may question Stormcrow for as long as they wish but may find it infuriating, as the creature understands very little about emotions or motivations other than the avoidance of pain and duty. It also has only a rudimentary understanding of time and can just barely use the concepts of before and after. Any questions or comments relating to these concepts will be met with a blank stare or an incomprehensible statement. It willingly informs the player characters of anything within its understanding which includes the number of falsemen within the building (about 30 when it left), that their leader is Warmonger and that troops are continually deserting from all three factions to aid the usurper. It also knows that there is a temporary ceasefire between the factions until the siege is broken. It does not, however, understand how such a small group has managed to hold off the combined might of three armies so far.

Pagmor knows little else besides what he has already told the player characters. He does however tell, if pressed, two important pieces of information. Firstly, that Guile has been a war leader for some time and is unique in that his tactics invariably involve deception of some kind. As such, it is unlikely that everything he says can be trusted. Secondly, Pagmor has noted that the defending cluster is using very unusual tactics and making use of fortifications and their environment far better than he has seen falsemen do in the past.

EVENT TWO: STONEMEN

When the player characters decide to set off they may decide to bring Stormcrow with them but will have to disguise him to get through the guards at the gates to Parlainth. Otherwise they may set off whenever it suits them. Either way, Stormcrow tells the player characters that the best way to get to the fortress is to travel the Laneways past the Screaming Fountain. About an hour after they start on this journey, they will encounter four stonemen standing on both sides of the Laneways. The largest of these will approach the player characters and say that they have been sent by Guile and are to escort them to their destination. Regardless of the player characters' opinion on this, these four attempt to do this and also guard them while they sleep. The stonemen are very stoic and do not engage in conversation in general except for the largest who is Named Hardneck. Its conversations are very basic though and it is not informed as to their eventual purpose. That night the party are attacked by bandits from the Smalls who should easily be driven off with the aid of the stonemen.

EVENT THREE: SCREAMING FOUNTAIN

Not long after breaking camp, the player characters hear a screaming noise up ahead. This is the Screaming Fountain located at the crossroad of the Laneways. The fountain is in the center of the crossroads between the Laneways and is spraying blood in a wider area than usual, even sprinkling the player characters as they pass. The range of its mental assault power (see *Parlaint: The Forgotten City*, p. 10) is also temporarily increased and may affect the player characters as they pass. Any player characters that are adversely affected by this assault will be carried out of the crossroads by three of the stonemen. Hardneck, however, does not help and perceptive player characters may notice an uncharacteristic expression of strain on its face as they pass the fountain. Any mention of this will be met with a stony-faced glare. The entire encounter should incite paranoia and unsettle the player characters.

EVENT FOUR: GUILÉ

The player characters eventually are led into the jungle-like terrain of the Warzone. Along the way, they witness vast clearings containing large craters and ruined buildings. After some hours' walk the trees and vegetation clear enough for them to see a fortified tower in the distance surrounded by what appears to be hundreds, if not thousands of falsemen. They are led straight through these camped armies to a temporary pavilion type structure made from the surrounding vegetation. Perceptive player characters may note that the soldiers all sport armbands similar to Stormcrow's but of various colors.

When the player characters reach the structure, they are greeted by a ferocious looking steelman Named Guile. Guile is characterized and limited by his treacherous whims. He speaks intelligently to the player characters and is quite imaginative in his answers if he believes it will get them to do what he wishes. He tells the player characters that Warmonger was once a trusted general but that Guile was forced to expel him from the ranks because he refused to follow the falsemen rules of combat including surrendering in the face of a superior foe and accepting the surrender of his opponents. These rules are followed so that the falsemen do not destroy themselves while participating in their continuous wars. Warmonger's refusal to obey these rules endangered their continued existence. Guile further explains that Warmonger has since amassed a war band of ruthless followers and has continued to follow these brutal tactics since. The threat became so great that all three major falsemen armies agreed to a truce so that they might eradicate the danger. However, Warmonger has fortified the tower to such an extent that he may be able to hold back the siege indefinitely. For this reason, Guile believes a small group of highly trained adventurers would succeed where he has not.

This of course is wholly untrue. Guile and the other war leaders are puppets being controlled by the Warzone Horrors who are angry that Warmonger has broken free of their control and is spreading this ability amongst their other toy soldiers.

EVENT FIVE: WARMONGER

The player characters may enter the fortress through any means they like, though a frontal assault is unlikely to succeed. The walls are manned by strawmen and waxmen mostly armed with bows. The exact nature of the fortifications, defenses, and traps inside the tower is up to the gamemaster but should pose a considerable challenge if faced head on. Once the player characters get inside, they find themselves surrounded on all sides by stonemen and steelmen in a large room in the tower. Additionally, strawmen and waxmen archers have positioned themselves on internal balconies overlooking them. Then a booming voice echoes around the hall saying, "All that you have been told is a lie."

In that time the largest stoneman they have seen thus far comes from a side chamber and introduces himself as War-monger. He quickly says that he means them no harm and if they just but listen, he can explain himself and hopefully come to a solution that will benefit both sides.

CLIMAX

The adventure can go a number of directions from this point. The player characters may attempt to destroy Warmonger which, if successful, would satisfy Pagmor. However, this should be extremely challenging. Additionally, Guile will set his troops on them once they emerge from the

fortress. Although this does not benefit him in any way, his nature compels him to betray them. As such, the player characters have a running battle to get back to Haven.

If the player characters allow Warmonger to speak, he explains how he gradually gained more awareness over the centuries until he reached a tipping point where he achieved sentience. This at first amused his controlling Horror a great deal, who enjoyed the resulting pain it caused him. However, recently he developed the ability to block the Horror's influence and also learned how to teach this to other falsemen. Since then, they have been hounded by the other factions, yet they have managed to survive due to being able to overcome the limitations their Names used to place on them. However, they are now trapped in this fortress and need help to escape. If the player characters wish to help, they must find a way to get the 150 or so falsemen out through the surrounding armies to either another part of Parlainth or even further afield. If they get into trouble while attempting this, they may get aid from an unlikely source. Hardneck, the stoneman who originally accompanied the player characters, has achieved sentience and will order his platoon to stand down if he encounters them. Once this is done, the Horrors cut their losses and break the siege as Warmonger will not be able to influence the remaining falsemen.

SEQUELS

A number of issues will come about if Warmonger survives the siege. Where will he locate this new army and what will he do with it? Will it be a force for good or evil? Will others attempt to persecute and destroy them because of their link with the Horrors? Also it is unlikely that he will be content to leave the Warzone for good, as he will want to help his kinsmen break their hold, too, and so may get into trouble again. Game-masters who like a tragic element to their story may say that Warmonger's sentience came about because of the intense magic of Parlainth. As such, Warmonger and his falsemen may succeed in setting up a small society outside the Warzone only to gradually lose the sentience they gained and becoming monsters harassing their neighbors once more.

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