

## Bastion Against the Murk

### DO YOUR PART

*Ruins of Laterreprosp!*

*Hop on over to Belciennes!*

*Find a mate!*

*Join the marshwardens!*

*Fight back against the rangol scum!*

*Protect our lowlands!*

*Come to Belciennes!*

### FREE FROM DRAGONS

Millennia ago, three dragons ruled the valley of Laterreprosp. Entixiir, the strongest of the trio, transformed the local frogs and toads into roobles and ruglunks, respectively. These amphibian humanoids were to obey and serve their dragon lord, for it was he who provided the arcane spark that allowed them to rise above their humble origins. Though bequeathed with the capacity to reason and comprehend the world around them, roobles and ruglunks (known collectively as “ruuns”)

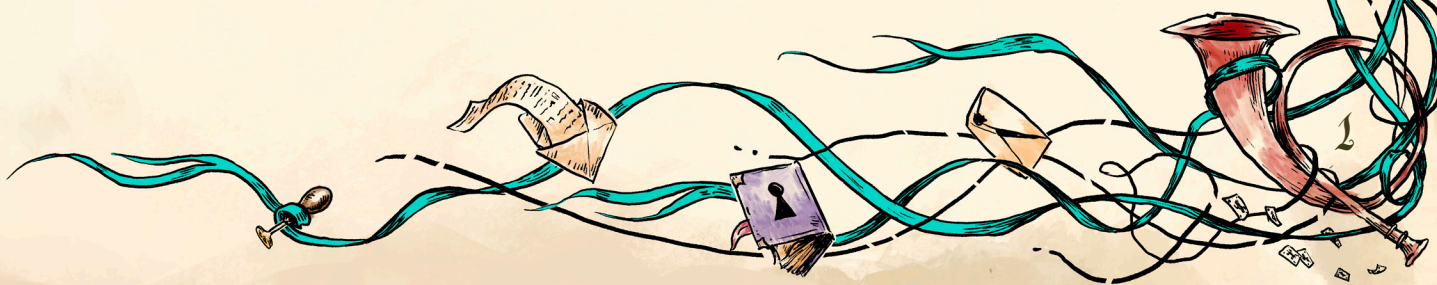
were robbed of their agency from the moment they first beheld their marshy home. Slaves to a cruel master, the ruuns toiled away in Entixiir’s lair, exalting their oppressive overlord in unending agony.

After centuries of exploitation, Entixiir abandoned Laterreprosp, never to be seen again. Perhaps he grew tired of squabbling with his brothers, or perhaps he was disappointed with the measly treasure hoard he had acquired in the forgotten valley. Some say he ascended beyond the realm, or that he was vanquished by one of his amphibious creations, but most recount legends of the day Entixiir flew off into the clouds, signaling the arrival of a new dawn for frog and toadfolk alike.

In his wake, Entixiir left his servants to found a kingdom of their own, free from the tyranny of their creator. Of course, the ruins of Laterreprosp had no understanding of the outside world. To build anew in the shadow of their enslavement, they had to rely on the information they could glean from Entixiir’s libraries. In the green dragon’s ancient tomes, the frog and toadfolk learned of feudalism, of grand towering architecture, and of knights and heroes. Legends of noble champions, beneficent monarchs, and epic quests inspired the ruuns. Undoubtedly, Entixiir viewed these fables as cautionary tales about the dangers of brave adventurers hunting wicked dragons, but Entixiir’s *servants* marveled at the stories. These legends were guides, timeworn instructions about how to structure a society that would never fall to draconic rule ever again.

The newly released ruuns built the great capital city of Oudaarde atop the former lair of Entixiir. They explored their valley home and developed a complex society, with technology and art rivaling those of their human neighbors. They expanded their reach across the lowlands—a region referred to as “Amphibios” by outsiders—and slowly, memories of their former draconic enslavement faded into distant memory.

Entixiir is gone, and there are no signs that he will ever return. That does not mean, however, that the dragons have been defeated. In the caustic eastern wetlands known only as The Murk, the fearsome dragon Acridathruix rallies his servants against a loose alliance of Laterreprosp cities. Oudaarde stands strong, but the walled city of Belciennes stands on the frontlines of the war.



## CITY OF EGGS AND RANGERS

On the banks of the increasingly tainted Vasteloc, one finds Belciennes, the second largest city in Laterreprosp. Though quaint in comparison to the grandeur of the capital, Belciennes has suddenly been thrust into the spotlight amid war with the murkfolk. With dense clay walls protecting the perimeter of the city, the Belcienians feel confident that they will be able to withstand a siege from the murkfolk. The city cannot last forever, but leaders in the town assure the citizens that the walls will do their job. On the other hand, if the murkfolk are bold enough to attempt to flank the city from the water, they will face the full might of the elite amphibian soldiers known as the marshwardens.

As with all lakeside cities in the region, part of Belciennes lies above the surface, and much of it below. The city's significant human population (roughly 15 percent of the city's denizens) necessitate that most stores and municipal services are located above water, but many roobles and ruglunks prefer to live along the lakebed. Terrestrial travelers are advised to temper expectations when witnessing the city from the road. Though Belciennes appears unimpressive at a glance, a quick dip into the lake will reveal the full splendor of Laterreprosp's second city.

Rooble superstition holds that an egg that hatches in Oudaarde bears the taint of Entixiir. As such, much of Oudaarde's population of nearly 5,000 roobles head to Belciennes to mate. Young roobles hoping for new tadpoles head to the Alabaster Lilies during spring, and then stay in town while they wait for their eggs to hatch into tadpoles, and for these tadpoles to grow into rooble children. Much of Belcienne's economy caters to these new parents: homes are rented for 6 months at a time (roughly the duration from spawning to rooble), small canals line the streets so that tadpoles can accompany their parents around town, and shops provide all the essentials for couples trying to get in the mood or new parents preparing for child-rearing.

In addition to rooble mating, Belciennes is known as the primary training site for Laterreprosp's marshwardens. These specialists are the first line of defense against Acridaethruix and his murkfolk army. While the marshwardens are officially headquartered in Oudaarde, aspiring rangers train in Belciennes, learning how to wield blowguns and rapiers, ambush creatures native to The Murk, and wage war atop giant geese. As the fight comes to the city's doorstep, Commander Marie-José Bullion

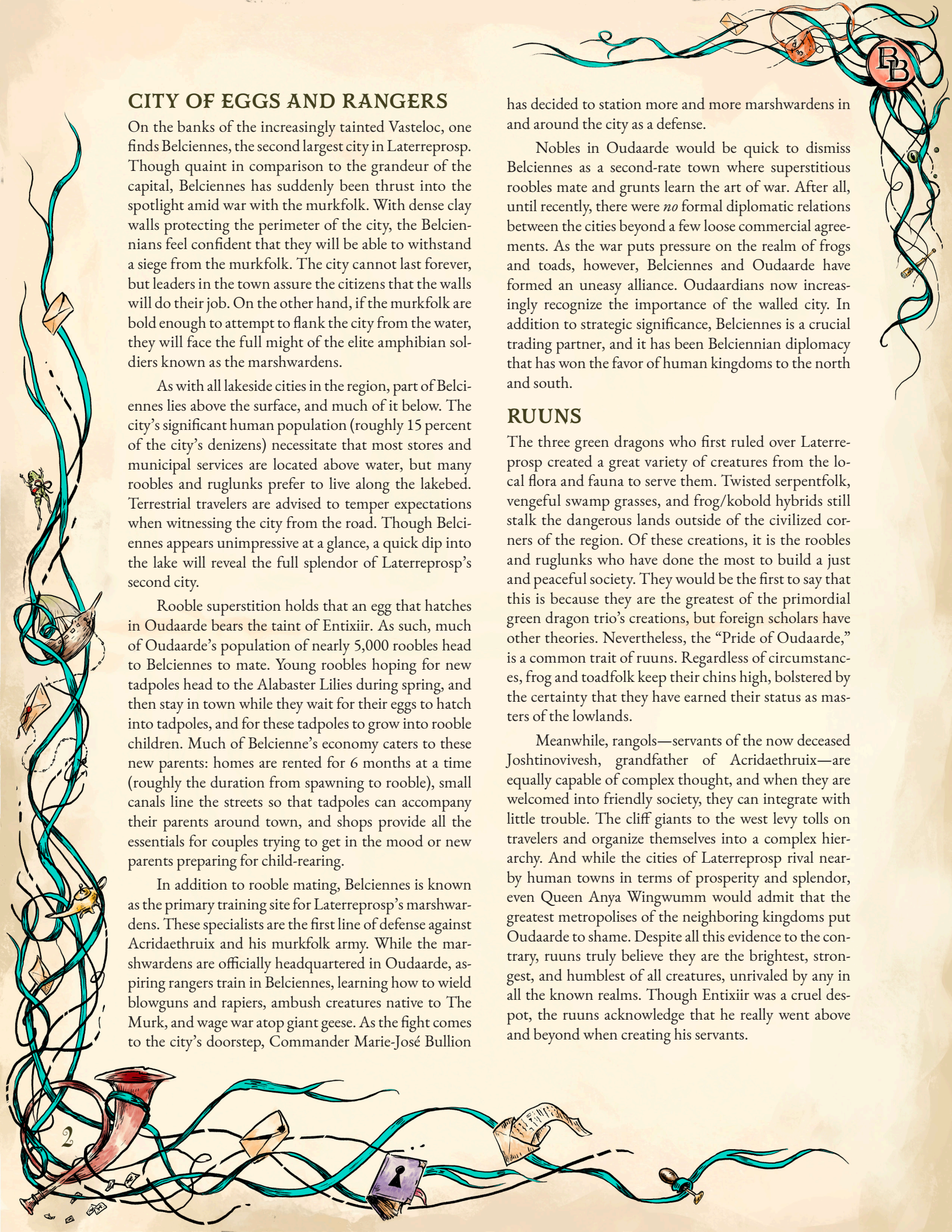
has decided to station more and more marshwardens in and around the city as a defense.

Nobles in Oudaarde would be quick to dismiss Belciennes as a second-rate town where superstitious roobles mate and grunts learn the art of war. After all, until recently, there were *no* formal diplomatic relations between the cities beyond a few loose commercial agreements. As the war puts pressure on the realm of frogs and toads, however, Belciennes and Oudaarde have formed an uneasy alliance. Oudaardians now increasingly recognize the importance of the walled city. In addition to strategic significance, Belciennes is a crucial trading partner, and it has been Belcienian diplomacy that has won the favor of human kingdoms to the north and south.

## RUUNS

The three green dragons who first ruled over Laterreprosp created a great variety of creatures from the local flora and fauna to serve them. Twisted serpentfolk, vengeful swamp grasses, and frog/kobold hybrids still stalk the dangerous lands outside of the civilized corners of the region. Of these creations, it is the roobles and ruglunks who have done the most to build a just and peaceful society. They would be the first to say that this is because they are the greatest of the primordial green dragon trio's creations, but foreign scholars have other theories. Nevertheless, the "Pride of Oudaarde," is a common trait of ruuns. Regardless of circumstances, frog and toadfolk keep their chins high, bolstered by the certainty that they have earned their status as masters of the lowlands.

Meanwhile, rangols—servants of the now deceased Joshtinovivesh, grandfather of Acridaethruix—are equally capable of complex thought, and when they are welcomed into friendly society, they can integrate with little trouble. The cliff giants to the west levy tolls on travelers and organize themselves into a complex hierarchy. And while the cities of Laterreprosp rival nearby human towns in terms of prosperity and splendor, even Queen Anya Wingwumm would admit that the greatest metropolises of the neighboring kingdoms put Oudaarde to shame. Despite all this evidence to the contrary, ruuns truly believe they are the brightest, strongest, and humblest of all creatures, unrivaled by any in all the known realms. Though Entixiir was a cruel despot, the ruuns acknowledge that he really went above and beyond when creating his servants.





## ORIGINS OF COMPARATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Today, the prevailing theory is that roobles and ruglunks thrived in the absence of their master specifically because of the books they acquired. These weathered texts provided a blueprint for the newly freed peoples and set them on a path toward growth and prosperity. The rangols to the east, however, continue to serve generations of draconic lords in The Murk. As such, most remain faithful to their leader Acridaethruix. They have no grand cities or masterworks of art, and violence in their lives is unavoidable.

Scholars have long debated whether rangols would continue to obey their oppressive masters if they were welcomed into rooble and ruglunk cities with open arms. Is the violence and mayhem of rangol life simply the result of Acridaethruix's wicked influence? Nevertheless, Belceniens view rangol deserters with suspicion. Some of these frog/kobold hybrids have entered Belciennes society, but the vast majority are turned away or treated with extreme prejudice.

Roobles and ruglunks share many traits. Both can breathe through their skin, leap great heights, and swim as deftly as they can hop. Unlike the common frogs and toads that linger in the underbrush, all ruuns stand on two legs.<sup>1</sup> Though their long limbs make for an excellent adaptation for the environments they call home, ruuns tend to be rather clumsy when navigating hilly terrain on foot. Both species have leathery skin that is resilient to a wide range of environmental hazards.

Though morphologically similar, roobles and ruglunks are indeed distinct species that cannot interbreed. Humans are prone to confusing the two races and may assume that they are both physiologically and culturally uniform, though anyone who has spent time in a Laterreprosp city would laugh at the confusion. Most of the distinctions between common frogs and toads manifest themselves in the two humanoid species.

<sup>1</sup> Varieties of intelligent quadrupedal frogfolk are extremely rare, but adventurers may encounter one or more if venturing into The Murk or deep beneath Lake Lebonke. Cursory research indicates that these creatures are evolutionarily distinct from other varieties of frog and toadfolk found in Laterreprosp.

## ROOBLE TRAITS

Pointed nose

Green or blue skin, typically smooth

Leaner, with longer limbs

Prefer to live in water

Speak quickly

Slippery

## RUGLUNK TRAITS

Broad, flat nose

Brown, black, or gray skin with warts and protruding glands

Stouter and wider

Prefer to live on land

Speak slowly, with exaggerated body language

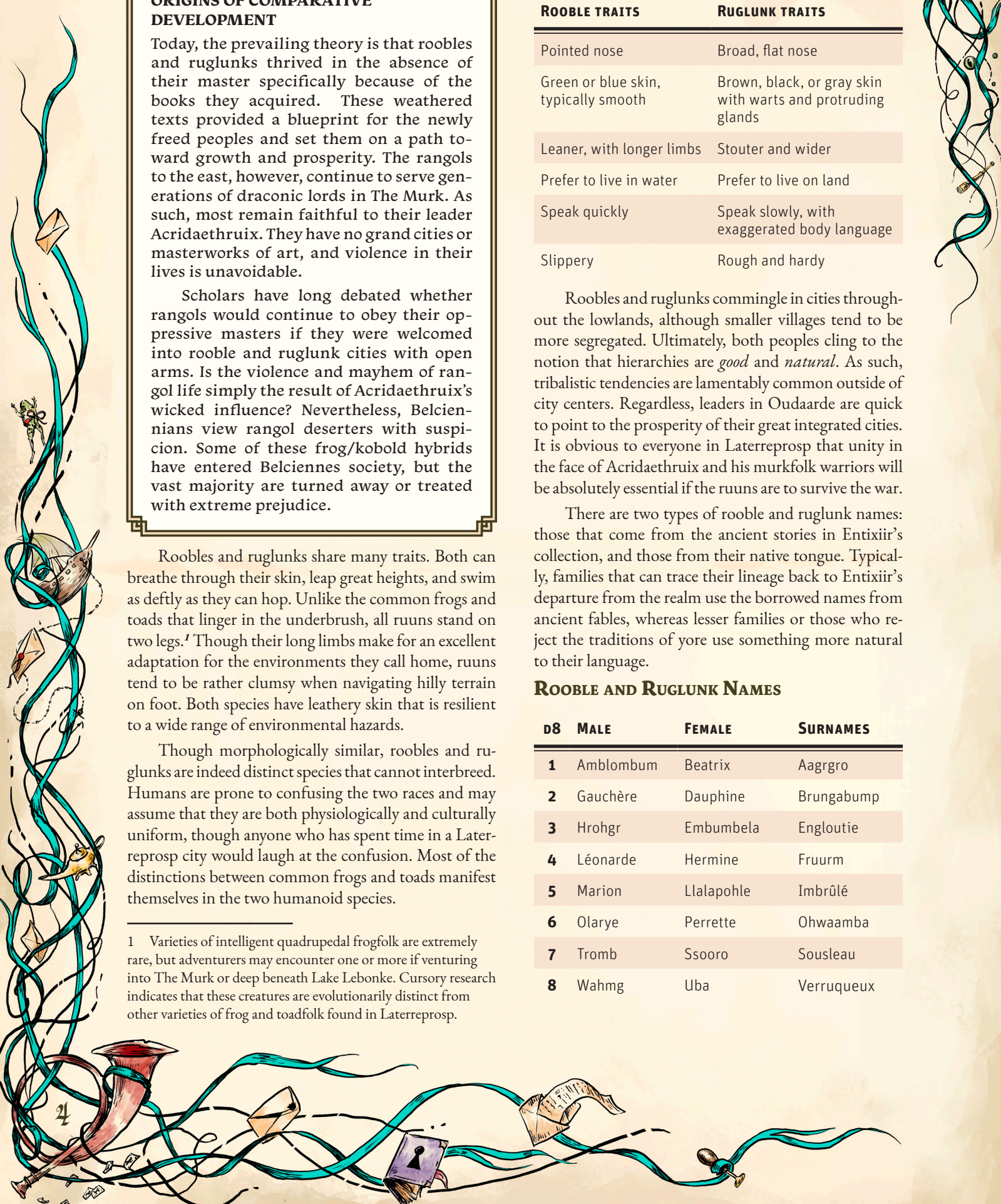
Rough and hardy

Roobles and ruglunks commingle in cities throughout the lowlands, although smaller villages tend to be more segregated. Ultimately, both peoples cling to the notion that hierarchies are *good* and *natural*. As such, tribalistic tendencies are lamentably common outside of city centers. Regardless, leaders in Oudaarde are quick to point to the prosperity of their great integrated cities. It is obvious to everyone in Laterreprosp that unity in the face of Acridaethruix and his murkfolk warriors will be absolutely essential if the ruuns are to survive the war.

There are two types of rooble and ruglunk names: those that come from the ancient stories in Entixiir's collection, and those from their native tongue. Typically, families that can trace their lineage back to Entixiir's departure from the realm use the borrowed names from ancient fables, whereas lesser families or those who reject the traditions of yore use something more natural to their language.

## ROOBLE AND RUGLUNK NAMES

D8	MALE	FEMALE	SURNAMES
1	Amblombum	Beatrix	Aagrro
2	Gauchère	Dauphine	Brungabump
3	Hrohgr	Embumbela	Engloutie
4	Léonarde	Hermine	Fruurm
5	Marion	Llalaphle	Imbrûlé
6	Olarye	Perrette	Ohwaamba
7	Tromb	Ssooro	Sousleau
8	Wahmg	Uba	Verruqueux





## MARSHWARDEN COLISEUM

Belciennes has a small force of reserve soldiers ready to help defend the walls of their city. Some 300 citizens have pledged their support to the city if crisis demands it, though these soldiers maintain civilian occupations. Most residents rest assured knowing that the heroes of Belciennes are the ever-vigilant marshwardens. These specially trained commandos are fully equipped to defend Belciennes and the surrounding countryside from murkfolk attacks. Of course, they are also always training for the inevitable: a full assault on The Murk.

The armies of Acridaethruix make Oudaarde and Belciennes's combined forces appear miniscule by comparison. As such, each member of the marshwardens must be capable enough to slay a dozen murkfolk in a

given battle. For the cities of Laterreprosp to stand a chance against the vile forces to the east, the marshwardens will have to exceed even the highest expectations they've set for themselves. The Pride of Oudaarde will not be enough.

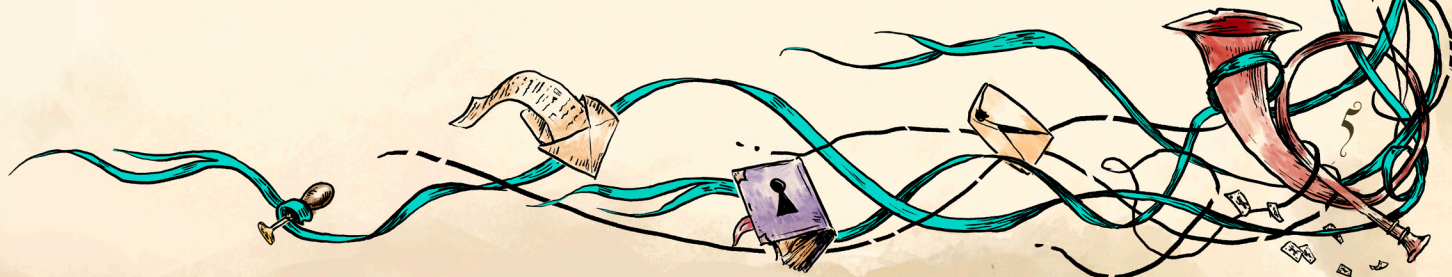
At any given time, some two dozen marshwardens are stationed outside Belciennes to scout for invading armies, but far more operate within the city walls. All marshwardens are trained in Marshwarden Coliseum, an elaborate facility that towers over the shore district. Recruits practice their leaps, swimming, and camouflage, hone their blowdart marksmanship, and acclimate themselves to the acids with which they coat their armor.

Ruuns are highly competitive, and the marshwarden sergeants have learned to use this to their advantage. Recruits compete in a variety of exercises, and training sessions are almost always open for visitors to spectate. Each marshwarden-in-training does their best to prove that they are worthy to be a hero of Laterreprosp. While this form of individualistic training would be counterproductive for squadrons of soldiers expected to hold ranks, the marshwardens always conduct missions solo or in small bands. An emphasis on individual excellence suits the needs of this force and the strengths of its recruits.

## SERGEANT MELISENDE GERDONK

No matter how courageous or well-equipped a marshwarden finds themselves, their capabilities in battle will always be limited by their training. Luckily, Sergeant Melisende Gerdonk (she/her) is an expert of military pedagogy. She trained with the legendary hero Sir Alec Varion—Belciennes's most famous former resident—and has conducted countless raids of her own into The Murk. She is hardened by battle, but unlike many of her veteran kin, she has not lost sight of what is truly important. The people of Laterreprosp fight not because they want to, but because falling to Acridaethruix means bowing to another tyrannical dragon. The ruins of the lowlands will never again succumb to slavery under Entixiir or any of his kin.

Sergeant Gerdonk is a tough leader. She does not compromise her expectations, and if a recruit does not show promise, she politely encourages them to seek opportunities with the reserve soldiers. When Sergeant Gerdonk finds a recruit who demonstrates a natural proclivity for combat and a willingness to learn, she



gives the recruit every resource they need to excel. Unfortunately, the scarcest resource at the moment is *time*. The war is coming to Belciennes, and Sergeant Gerdonk simply cannot dedicate the time needed to properly drill all the viable candidates.

Though many in Belciennes often forget it, Sergeant Gerdonk is not the leader of the marshwardens. That honor belongs to Marie-José Bullion in Oudaarde, Sergeant Gerdonk's former squadmate. The two traveled alongside Sir Varion in countless adventures across the lowlands. While Commander Bullion treated Sir Varion with the utmost respect befitting a hero of his stature, Sergeant Gerdonk—then just “Melisende”—acted much more casually around the legendary knight. Perhaps due to Melisende's friendly relationship with Sir Varion, a few rumors spread that the two had become romantically involved. Though there was no truth to these rumors, Queen Anya Wingwumm took them to heart. After the death of her beloved Sir Varion, Queen Wingwumm appointed Bullion the head of the guard. To this day, Sergeant Gerdonk considers herself the superior ranger, and the dishonor of the queen's snubbing continues to sting.

Ultimately, Sergeant Gerdonk understands that some 150 marshwardens across all of Laterreprosp will never be able to defend Belciennes indefinitely. It will require more manpower, and likely aid from the neighboring kingdoms. If the adventurers traveling to Belciennes demonstrate their martial prowess and an interest in helping the cause, Sergeant Gerdonk will happily provide them with work in Belciennes and the surrounding countryside.

## JOBS FROM SERGEANT GERDONK

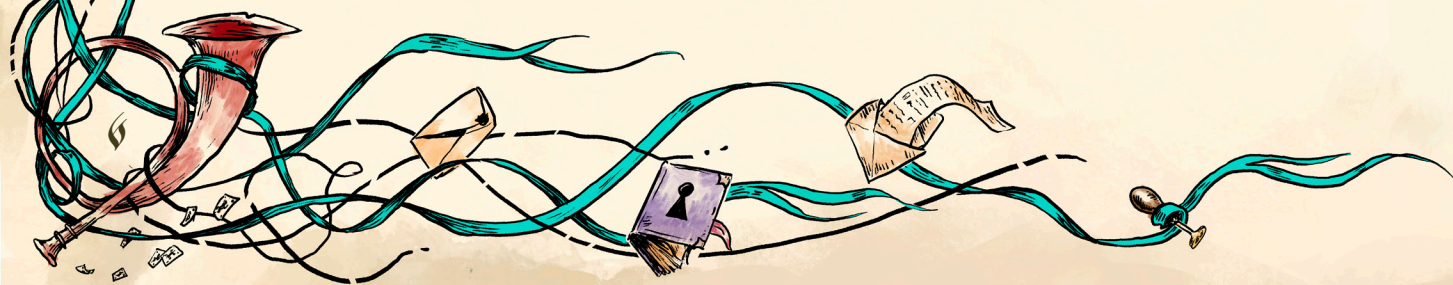
1. As the tainted heart of The Murk continues to infect Vasteloc, strange creatures are beginning to emerge from the lake to the southeast. A **strange breed of animated moss** has recently been attacking travelers and dragging them into the lake. The creatures are immune to poison and acid, and marshwarden darts and rapiers seem particularly ill-equipped to injure the plant beasts.
2. Twelve moons have passed since Marquis Quemurre's decree that Belciennes would grant asylum to fifty rangols per year. Sergeant Gerdonk is making an effort to quell her own prejudice against the noncombatants, but new intel suggests that **Acrid-**

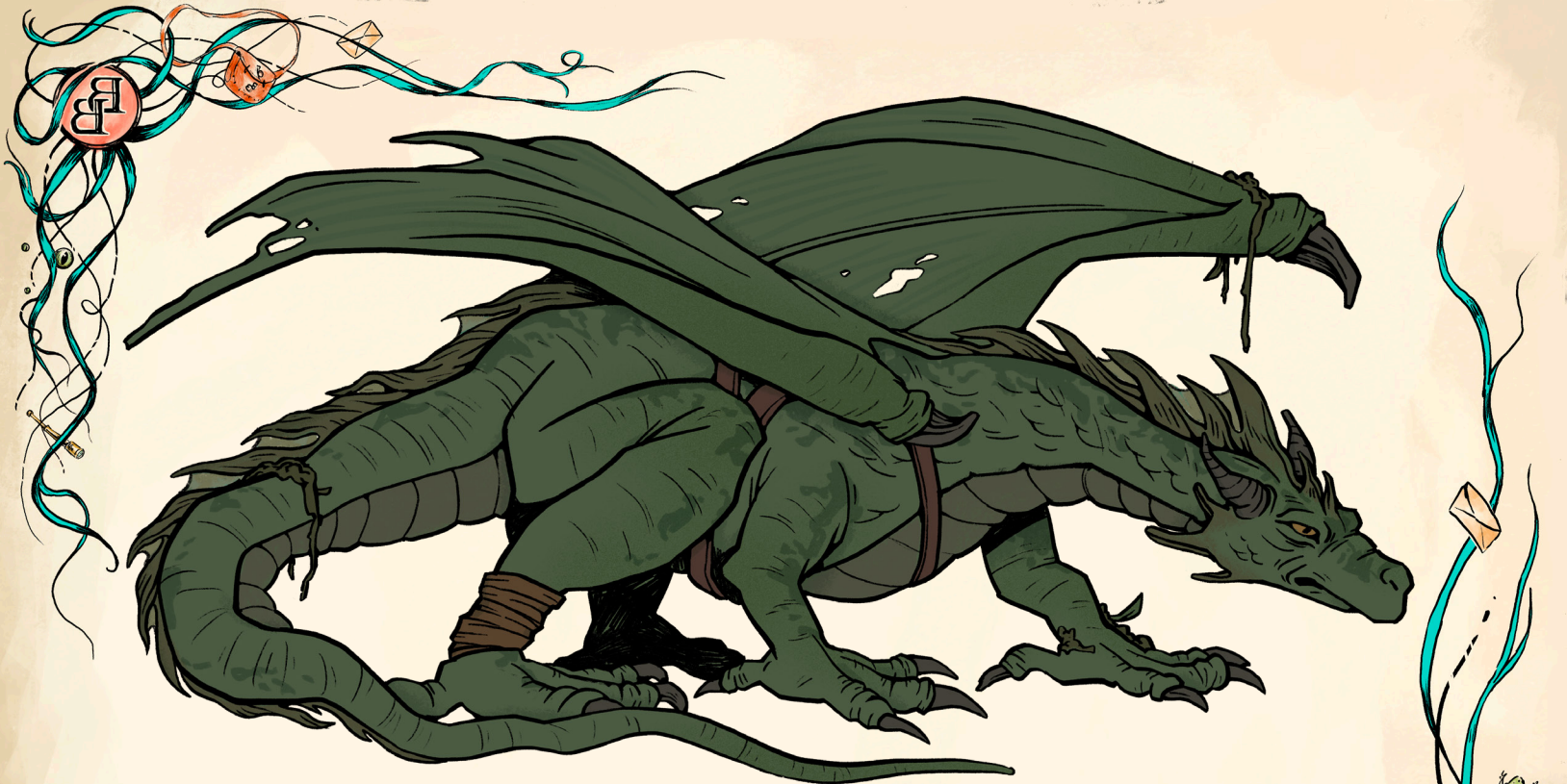
**aethruix has placed agents among their ranks.** She suspects these rangol moles may be spying on marshwarden training and reporting back to their lord. Sergeant Gerdonk wants a team to investigate these rumors without rousing anti-rangol sentiments in the city.

3. One Jean-Paul Sanguinon has been **removing ancient artifacts** from Belciennes's tombs each night, exiting the city, and then returning the artifacts each morning. Jean-Paul is an ebonhand, a priest of the God Dhennia. It would be improper for the marshwardens to investigate a holy figure, so Sergeant Gerdonk needs outsiders to figure out what nefarious plot Jean-Paul may or may not be up to.
4. Broderick Varion, Sir Alec Varion's nephew, wishes to join the marshwardens. While he certainly has the pedigree, Sergeant Gerdonk worries that Broderick may not be ready to join the elite team. She wants an adventure to **duel the young lord** in an effort to judge his potential. This bold adventurer must be careful not to kill or embarrass Broderick if the chap proves ill-prepared.

**ALISÉE OGOMBOP:** Grappling is not considered a priority for most marshwardens. They prefer to stealthily take out opponents with their blowguns or crossbows, quickly dispatch stragglers with their rapiers, and then slink away back into the mud or the trees. Wrestling foes isn't exactly the quickest or quietest way to eliminate targets. Alisée (she/her), a new rooble marshwarden defending the Belciennes perimeter, sees it differently. The rangers don't need to worry terribly about enemy grunts; lightly armored rangols are easily enough defeated by the reserve soldiers. Instead, marshwardens need to focus on the big targets: frogres, serpents, and bog trolls. For these heftier opponents, teamwork will be key. Alisée has trained to subdue these foes, and then hold them in position while her companions wallop the creatures with their traditional weaponry. Sergeant Gerdonk isn't certain that this is an optimal strategy for wartime, but far be it from her to quell the impressive marshwarden's fervor for hand-to-hand combat.

**CEDRIC LENNOX:** Though Sir Alec Varion, a human, fought alongside some of Laterreprosp's most decorated marshwardens, he was not technically a member of their elite ranks. Very few humans have joined the marshwardens, despite the sizable human population in





Belciennes. Nevertheless, Cedric Lennox (he/him) has trained day and night to prove himself to Sergeant Gerdonk and the other ranking members of the marshwardens. He knows he will never be able to jump as high, swim as fast, or wriggle as nimbly as his amphibious kin, but he's determined to show his higher ups that there's more than one way to be a marshwarden. He is nearing the end of his training, and while he feels he has earned his place among Belciennes's finest, he'll first have to demonstrate his capabilities in his final examination: a solo raid of a nearby rangol camp.

## BEASTS OF LATERREPROSP

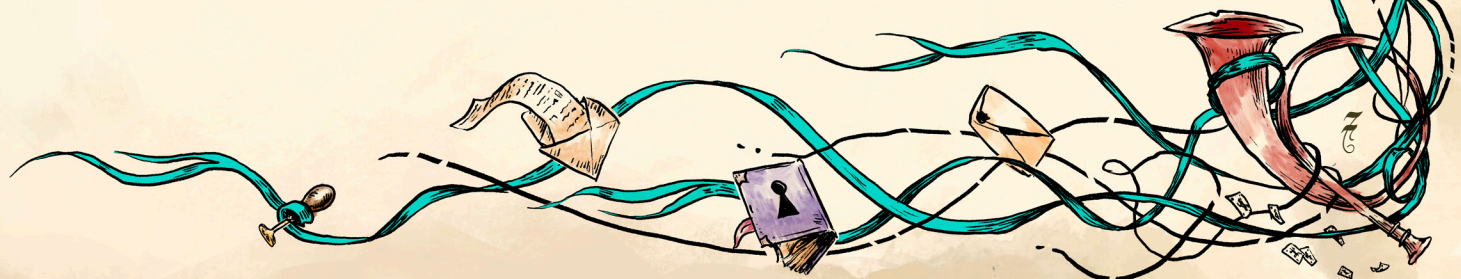
Like the kingdoms of humans to the north and south of the lowlands, the roobles and ruglunks of Laterreprosp have come to rely on beasts of burden to aid in many of their tasks. Most of the draft animals common to neighboring realms are unfit for the marshy topology of the lowlands, but the native fauna in the basin excel at traversing the wet terrain. Soldiers, farmers, traders, and coachmen alike take advantage of these strange beasts to aid in their work.

The most treasured animal among the people of Belciennes is the giant swamp goose. These "noble" beasts have become something of a symbol for the city, featured in the heraldry of most of the royal families. Giant swamp geese are exceedingly difficult to tame, but also make for the best mounts for marshwardens or

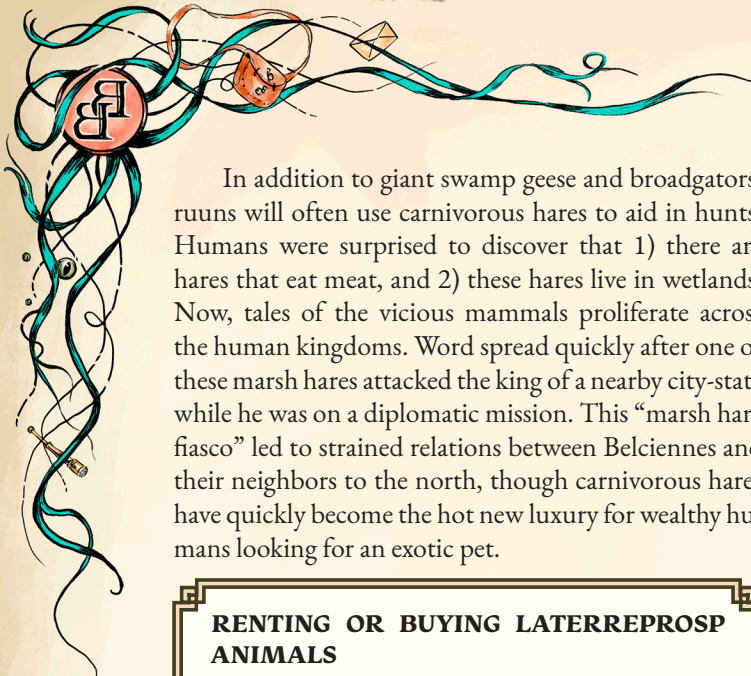
travelers without cargo. In all but the rarest instances, a rider may manage to win over but a single goose who will then act as its trusty steed for years to come.

Though giant swamp geese can easily fly on their own, they can only hover for a few feet with a marshwarden saddled. Some in Belciennes dream of breeding giant swamp geese strong enough for sustained flights, but unfortunately, the belligerent birds simply cannot be tamed or domesticated in such numbers. Nevertheless, a small burst of flight can still be an incredible boon in combat against earthbound foes. In most instances, riders will simply trot to their destination. Traveling astride an ambling goose is still far superior to marching or trying to maneuver a horse through the wetlands.

Much of the farming near Belciennes takes place in flooded paddy fields or exceedingly moist soil. The oxen of the human kingdoms do not fare well in these environs, so local farmers employ broadgators, a species of endemic reptile. Broadgators are easy to domesticate, provided one can find enough meat to feed the large beasts, and a single one of these creatures can plow acres and acres of farmland before tiring. Normally docile, broadgators who spend time in the Murk-infested waters in the southeastern portion of Vosteloc may become hyper-aggressive. As such, farmers and scholars alike predict that the expanding influence of Acridaethruix may severely hamper efforts to maintain healthy stocks of the draft lizards.







In addition to giant swamp geese and broadgators, ruuns will often use carnivorous hares to aid in hunts. Humans were surprised to discover that 1) there are hares that eat meat, and 2) these hares live in wetlands. Now, tales of the vicious mammals proliferate across the human kingdoms. Word spread quickly after one of these marsh hares attacked the king of a nearby city-state while he was on a diplomatic mission. This “marsh hare fiasco” led to strained relations between Belciennes and their neighbors to the north, though carnivorous hares have quickly become the hot new luxury for wealthy humans looking for an exotic pet.

### RENTING OR BUYING LATERREPROSP ANIMALS

Adventurers traveling to Belciennes may be interested in procuring animals to aid them in their journeys. Hunters and sneaks will be particularly fond of the clever and ferocious marsh hares, whereas just about anyone looking to cover lots of marshland distance quickly may want to mount a giant swamp goose. All animals can be purchased or rented from stalls outside of the city walls, though swamp geese pose an interesting conundrum. Vendors will sell these ill-tempered waterfowl to anyone with enough coin, but honest salesmen will make no promises that a given traveler will be able to actually win over the beasts. Only the most experienced, patient, or commanding riders will be able to ride a giant swamp goose without immediately getting bucked into the mud.

### THE ALABASTER LILIES

Belciennes’s biggest draw for civilian roobles is the set of floral islands floating in the shore district. These broad lily pads make for the perfect place to deposit fertilized eggs. The gently lapping waters of Vasteloc are said to rouse the tadpoles-to-be, and rooble “egg maidens” keep watch over the eggs until they hatch. Once a tadpole emerges from its egg, parents are informed, and the tadpole can swim into the canals that line the streets of Belciennes, following their parents from building to building while feeding off of the microscopic plant nutrients in the waterways.

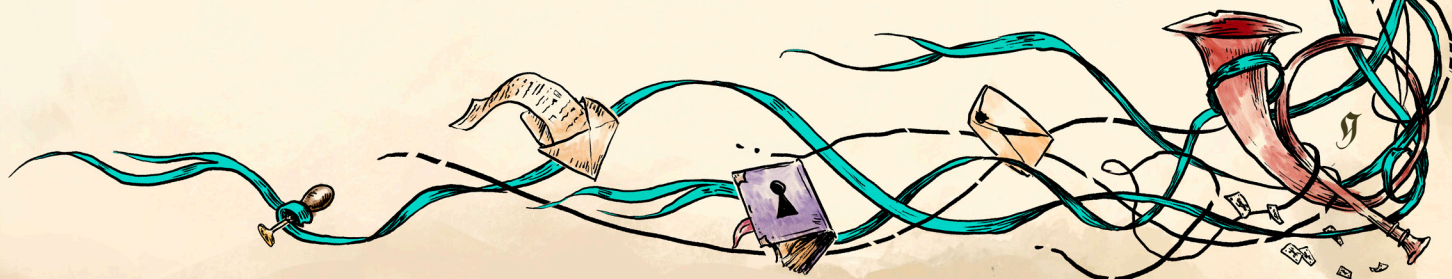
Roobles know that they don’t *have* to come to Belciennes to procreate. Many tadpoles still hatch in Oudaarde, distant Longstone, or any other tiny hamlet throughout the marsh. Returning to the Alabaster Lilies is a ritual, and sometimes rituals can be reassuring. It is said that Dhennia, the Ebon God of Death, hated lilies, and thus would never harm a creature who takes refuge on the broad floating leaves. While many roobles are less religious today than in ages past, this legend still gives expecting parents a great deal of solace.

Curiously, the significance of the Alabaster Lilies is one of the most notable differentiators between rooble and ruglunks culture. While the specifics of rooble and ruglunk mating are nearly identical, it is only the froglike roobles who make the trek to Belciennes to hatch new children. Some ruglunks say that their kind is too practical to dabble in superstition, but a more likely cause is that ruglunk eggs are far slipperier than rooble eggs. As such, Belciennian egg maidens have trouble keeping the ruglunk eggs in place when waves rock the lilies.

**REEBRUM DUBUBUM:** Catering to dozens upon dozens of rooble eggs at a time can be quite a chore, and Reebrum Dububum (she/her) is admittedly still getting used to it. While rooble eggs can hatch with little to no extra care, a bit of attention from an egg maiden can go a long way toward ensuring a safe and healthy birth. Unlike common frogs, a female rooble only lays between one and three eggs at a time, and so ensuring the safety of each and every one of these gooey embryos is crucial. Newbie maiden Reebrum is slowly getting the hang of carefully walking across the lilies to avoid disturbing the eggs, mixing the proper concoctions of watery nutrients with which to “bathe” the eggs each morning, and how to manipulate the flower petals to provide ideal shade for each egg. The work is trickier than she expected, but she’s up to the challenge. After all, protecting the future of the rooble race is an honor.

### PLOT HOOK: RESCUE THE DEFECTORS

For better or for worse, it’s not terribly difficult to grab the ear of Sergeant Melisende Gerdonk. Training sessions in the Marshwarden Coliseum are open to the public, and the marshwarden leader often spends time speaking with the audience after a duel or between rigorous exercises.



Over the past few weeks, a particularly assertive rangol refugee named Yeka (he/him) has repeatedly begged Sergeant Gerdonk to help him rescue some of his kin from a nearby murkfolk outpost. Yeka claims that his former squadmates hate serving Acridaethruix, and that they want nothing more than to desert and seek asylum in Belciennes. Yeka claims that these rangol soldiers have been collecting critical military intelligence about Acridaethruix's plans for the ongoing war that they hope to use as a bargaining chip to gain entry into the city.

Sergeant Gerdonk has deployed scouts to spy on this outpost, and she has every reason to believe Yeka's story. Unfortunately, she sees three problems with Yeka's request.

1. The city has already accepted as many murkfolk refugees as Marquis Quemburre will allow this year.
2. There is a swath of enemy territory between Belciennes and the outpost.
3. The outpost is filled with additional loyal soldiers and other beasts who will attempt to stop the adventurers.

Sergeant Gerdonk believes that rescuing these defectors is both the right thing to do and a potential tactical masterstroke. Each murkfolk that changes sides is another murkfolk the marshwardens won't have to worry about on the battlefield, and military intelligence the rangols can supposedly offer may prove invaluable to the combined forces of the ruins. Unfortunately, she cannot spare her own commandos for this effort. If the adventurers are up to it, however, she can promise favor with the marshwardens.

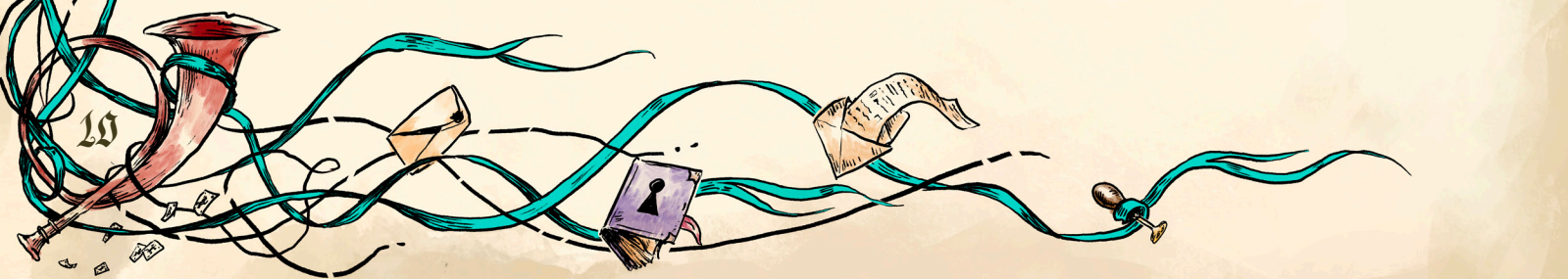
## CONVINCE THE MARQUIS

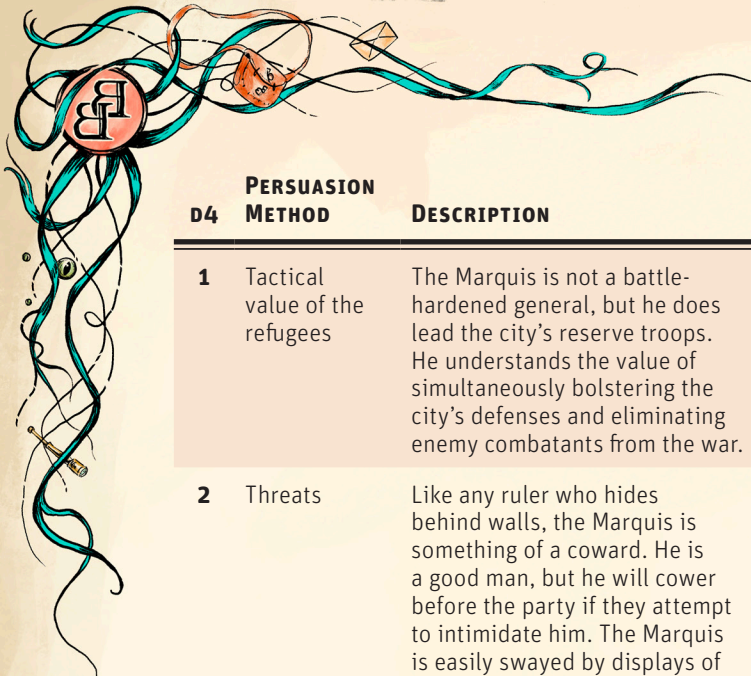
Marquis Quemburre (he/him) is the ranking lord in Belciennes, and the de jure leader of the city's reserve soldiers. He is a ruglunk of unfaltering pride and incredible stature, wider than most of the city's doorways. The Marquis is doing his best to take the moral high road throughout this war, but tensions in the city are running high. For a town his size, fifty refugees per year seemed generous, and he was happy that he was able to do some good for those rangols who would prefer to join ruun society. Nevertheless, many in his city are more prejudiced than he. The Marquis is thus unlikely to expand his asylum allowances unless convinced otherwise.



The Marquis holds court in the Anuran Bastion, a tower that rises from Belciennes's outer walls. Getting to the Marquis will be a challenge for the adventurers. They will need to request a favor from the marshwardens—someone *other* than Sergeant Gerdonk, who has fallen out of favor with the Marquis—or gain the trust of some of Belciennes's nobles. The party would be wise to seek out Duke Todrick Varion, younger brother of the late knight Sir Alec Varion. Duke Varion has a soft spot for adventurers that remind him of his elder brother.

Convincing the Marquis to loosen restrictions on incoming refugees will be no easy feat. The Marquis is a good man, but he will not risk letting prejudice and social tensions thrust his city into chaos. Welcoming enemy soldiers into a walled stronghold during a war is a tough sell regardless of how benevolent that city's ruler may be. The adventurers will have only a few options that may sway the Marquis.





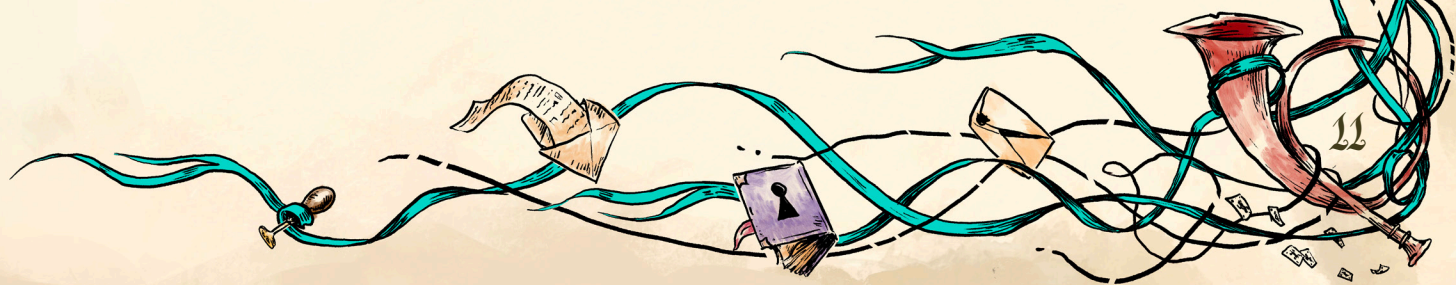
D4	PERSUASION METHOD	DESCRIPTION
1	Tactical value of the refugees	The Marquis is not a battle-hardened general, but he does lead the city's reserve troops. He understands the value of simultaneously bolstering the city's defenses and eliminating enemy combatants from the war.
2	Threats	Like any ruler who hides behind walls, the Marquis is something of a coward. He is a good man, but he will cower before the party if they attempt to intimidate him. The Marquis is easily swayed by displays of strength, although it may be a bit embarrassing to witness.
3	Assurances and oaths	The Marquis is a trusting man. If the party assures him that they will take responsibility for the refugees and see to any societal unrest, he will take them at their word.
4	Sir Gilles Longchambon	Queen Anya Wingwum is <i>technically</i> an ally of the Marquis, though Quemburre is extremely competitive with the beloved warrior queen. She has a faithful rangol bodyguard, the one-armed duelist Sir Gille Longchambon. Wouldn't the Marquis like to have a badass rangol refugee to serve him as well?

## APPROACH THE OUTPOST

Between Belciennes and the outpost lies one mile of Belciennes farmland, one mile of no man's land, and then two miles of enemy territory within The Murk. If the party is going to get to the outpost, they'll have to make their way through the caustic swampland that has engulfed eastern Laterreprosp. The Murk is about as hostile a terrain as the adventurers will find anywhere. The air is dangerous to breathe, the waters can burn through sabatons, and vile creatures—both wild and allied with Acridaethruix—threaten all travelers.

As the adventurers make their way through The Murk, consider rolling on the Murk Complications table.

D6	MURK COMPLICATION	DESCRIPTION
1	Roving frogres	Small rangol bands should be no problem for seasoned adventures, but a group of two or more frogres will prove to be far more challenging. These hulking brutes are surprisingly well-equipped to traverse the terrain of The Murk, and their dangerous blows can end a hero's adventuring days for good.
2	Faux-gold lode	Through Acridaethruix's draconic influence, the Murk has begun to spawn eerily realistic lodes of faux-gold. Rangols soldiers have booby-trapped many of these alluring deposits with canisters of debilitating poisonous gasses. Greedy adventurers will undoubtedly get their comeuppance.
3	Tainted broadgators	Though unaffiliated with the murkfolk, broadgators who make their way into The Murk become exceedingly aggressive and will attack adventurers on sight.
4	The enemy's spies	The marshwardens have learned by now that birds in The Murk will somehow report troop movements to nearby soldiers. If the adventurers spy any birds whatsoever, they will be advised to eliminate the flying spies as quickly as possible.
5	Sagorax	Acridaethruix is not the only dragon in The Murk. Sagorax, a scrawny dragon that has fallen out of favor with the Lord of The Murk, has turned to dark sorcery as a means of dispatching foes. He hopes to find a new trophy to bring home to the king of dragons.
6	Spring bulbs	Throughout The Murk, large bulbs of coiled plant matter grow just beneath the surface of the soil. When a heavy enough traveler steps on one of the bulbs, it will erupt, spraying seeds all over the surrounding terrain and launching the adventurer dozens of feet into the air.



## EXTRICATE THE RANGOLS

Once the party has made their way to the outpost, their final task will be to locate the defectors. Yeka claims sympathetic rangols will have woven goose feathers into their tunics, so they should not be difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the camp is heavily guarded, with frogres, large squadrons of loyal rangols, and at least one extra-powerful commander. Yeka isn't sure who is in charge of the outpost, as he believes his former commander would have been executed after he deserted. He has provided a list of potential villains who may be leading the camp.

**GM NOTE:** If your party is itching for some tricky combat, just throw all four of these murkfolk leaders at them. No need to roll the dice. Load the deck against the adventurers with a tough gauntlet of minibosses to face.

D4	OUTPOST LEADER	DESCRIPTION
1	Zump	When Acridaehtruix needs something to get smashed, he sends in Zump. For some reason, the dragon also believes that this makes Zump a good leader (?) when in fact, Zump is just a very big, exceedingly strong frogre.
2	Deezix-Ukit	Poison mage Deezik-Ukit is the foremost magic-wielder among the rangols. This is decidedly not an impressive accolade, as few rangols possess any proclivity toward magic whatsoever. Deezik-Ukit has a very loose grasp on poison spells, but he makes up for this with gusto and superior battle tactics.
3	Yag the Mistaken	Anyone in the outpost could be Yag the Mistaken. This serpentfolk illusionist prefers to take the mantra of "lead by example" literally. She dons the visage of one of her soldiers whenever she is not giving orders in an attempt to sniff our dissidents.
4	Sigil In Shadows	Sigil in Shadows is a wraith, the spectral form of a rangol assassin thwarted by Sir Varion decades ago. From beyond the grave, Sigil in Shadows has sworn an unending crusade against Belciennes, birthplace of his killer.

