

Mani's Fort in the Big Rubble

By Ian Thomson

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Common Knowledge

"Mani of the Many Lives is an ancient hero of Mani's clan, which rules this fort; he is reborn among them every two or three generations. His reign is always heroic and much benefits his people. They revere him and his customs above all else, for Mani has preserved them through all times. He uses strange powers to protect the residents, who are very loyal to him and his cult."
(Summarized from P&BR p59 + p183)

"The Twin Hills rise about 100m each, and on the sides that face each other have steep cliffs. The bare rock of these cliffs is brick red. Mani's Fort is an occupied human settlement on the eastern hill." (P&BR p186)

Most people know little about Mani's Fort: only that a small independent clan of Pavic traditionalists is protected here by their sometimes incarnate ancestor, and that it sits on one of the Twin Hills, south of the Wyvern Road. Some people may also have heard stories that, when incarnate, Mani uses unusual magics to decisively drive away attacking trolls and nomads alike, although he never otherwise shows his strength. The Clan apparently deals as little with outsiders as possible, presumably having become used to their insular lifestyle during the troll occupation.

Rubble experts, who are questioned about Mani and his Clan, can additionally explain that the entire Clan is of an odd racial stock. They share the olive-brown skin and predominantly fair hair common to the variant groups of Oasis Folk, rather than any evidence of nomad characteristics. Although they speak Old Pavic or Trade during relations with outsiders, they have often been heard to converse amongst themselves in some unknown tongue. Apparently members of the Clan rarely travel any distance from the Fort, other than on occasional trading trips to the Real City, where they sell their homemade crafts at the market. Apart from the atypical Indagos family, the Clan very much chooses to keep itself apart from their neighbors.

Rubble specialists might also mention that the Clan is not keen on casual visitors, highly valuing their isolation. Even so, the natives of the old city know them as 'good people', reliable neighbors, who have also on many occasions assisted and sheltered Rubble travelers who were in trouble. Unexpected visitors are customarily given refreshment, asked to make a donation to the Clan coffers in return, and then

encouraged to leave as soon as it is safe to do so.

Such visitors may engage in courteous, but totally uninformative, conversations with the Clan members, and even Sages have given up on visiting the Fort. (One expressed the opinion that trying to get the Clan to reveal their traditional secrets was like “trying to collect ten measures of sand in a newtling’s net”.)

It is understood that the entire Clan are followers of Mani as their chief ancestor, but nothing specific is known about this ‘Cult of Mani’, as it is sometimes referred to. It is thought likely to be some form of straightforward ancestor worship, although it does not resemble any Praxian style of ancestor reverence. Since the Clan seem racially related to the oasis people, it is quite likely that their religious traditions are archaic remnants of a former age.

Directly approaching Clan members at the Real City market, as they sell their goods, will similarly produce little information of benefit. Aside from which, the Real City Watch very much frown upon harassment of traders. A typical trading group will consist of 3-5 adults, accompanied only by 1 or 2 warriors as bodyguards. Perhaps surprisingly, a posse of the Real City Watch collects each trading group, and later escorts them home.

The Indagos Family

Sir Indagos of New Pavis, and his family, are originally from Mani’s Clan, and are exceptional in their decision to relocate to New Pavis. Indagos the Elder was amongst those who greeted Dorasar in 1550, and was able to produce centuries-old Pavic legal documents, proving his ownership of parts of Manside, the Rubble Salt Mines, and an unremarkable oasis half way up the Scritha River. His family lives very comfortably on the payments they receive from those who mine salt in the Rubble. It is obvious on first meeting the Indagos family, that they are of the same general stock as other Oasis People who may have been previously encountered.

Adventurers who approach the Indagos family respectfully, seeking information about Mani’s Clan, will gain a few further impressions: information that would definitely not be forthcoming from the Clan. Perhaps they will even be introduced to old Sir Indagos himself, formerly Indagos the Younger who lived in Mani’s Fort as a boy around seventy years ago. Whilst Sir Indagos fully respects the privacy that the Clan requires, he can confirm that they are amongst the last of the people of Genert. They were here first, and will still be here when everyone else has departed and even the Rubble crumbles into the sands. He may also admit, to a careful questioner, that the Clan worship an earth spirit surviving from the Green Age, and that Mani is a champion of this Spirit.

Clever and courteous visitors who ask Indagos about his own beliefs may discover that he too follows this deity, which he refers to only as one of Genert’s people. Indagos has an unflinching belief in reincarnation, and is certain that his soul will return to the great cycle, leading to his rebirth amongst the Clan some time in the future. He may admit that Mani’s reincarnation is different only from the rest of the Clan in that his memories of previous lives remain intact. Despite his relative willingness to converse, Indagos will not talk about Mani in any detail, other than confirming he is the hero of the Clan, and that without him they would have died out long ago. Sir Indagos and many of his household also worship Pavis, and are respected citizens of the new settlement.

If asked why his family left the Fort and moved to New Pavis, Indagos will say that his parents simply realized that New Pavis would become a great local power and that the old city’s interests would be well-served by having a presence there. (Wily characters might correctly suspect that the Clan made this decision, not purely the Indagos family, and that there is some greater reason behind the move. Sir Indagos will deny such allegations calmly and rationally, seemingly amused at such a ‘conspiracy theory’.)

Uncommon Knowledge

The Clan claim to have been here since even before the founding of Robcradle, and make no denial of suspicions that they, like other tribes of Oasis Folk, are descendants of the Golden Age people of Genert’s Garden. Rumors abound as to their allegiance to various deities, but the Clan only admits to one thing: they worship an Earth Spirit unique to this location.

Those people able in some way to access Lunar intelligence will be able to find out what they know. The 1613 ‘Report on the Pacification of Prax’, for instance, is not available for public perusal; however, certain of its contents have recently been declassified. In it, the Lunar Survey Captain described Mani’s Clan as:

“...in many ways similar to the varied tribes of oasis folk, but in several ways unique. Firstly they live with the same apparent ease and lack of focus as is typically found, but behind this is an air of purpose and strength of will that I have never before observed in their race. Perhaps what we are observing is the single example of Golden Age descendants who have survived the destruction of their gods without losing their vitality? This may, or may not, be connected to their legendary hero Mani. It will certainly be interesting to question him if he reincarnates once more. The Clan, despite its pride, does not appear to pose any significant threat to the Lunar occupation, however...” <following text has been deleted>.

Admission to the Fort

Those approaching Mani's Fort will note that its outer walls are of similar dwarfish manufacture to other strongholds in the Rubble, such as the Real City and Zebra Fort. (The Clan accepted the assistance of Opili and the Dwarves during the great fortification period after Garngar's death.) Apart from the few guards customarily patrolling these walls, the only other obvious object of note is the crenellated roof of a small central tower. Depending on the weather, and current levels of activity of the various hostiles of the Rubble, members of the Clan can often be seen tending their small plots of vegetables, berry bushes, and wildflowers surrounding the Fort walls.

On seeing people approaching more closely, the guards will sound horns to alert the rest of the Clan that visitors draw near. Either a delegation will be sent to meet these visitors, should they appear to be friendly, or else warriors will muster on the walls, and inside the gates, to deal with a potential threat. It will then be up to the visitors to convince the Clan that they mean no harm, if they wish to avail themselves of the Fort's hospitality. On the rare occasions when outlaws, chaotics, or trolls are so foolish as to chase humans close to the walls of the fort, pits open beneath their feet, rocks hurl themselves at their heads, and vines and bushes twist and turn about their legs. The Clan will not talk about these effects, saying only that their spirit watches over them.

Tambrak of the Guard will lead a typical reception, accompanied by an appropriate number of warriors, armored in the Clan's unusual style. The guards are never threatening unless provoked, in which case they fight well and ferociously, their bodies protected by heavily stacked magics. Groups judged worthy to speak with a higher authority are escorted to an audience with Artamis, or perhaps even with Pallinu Vibi himself.

As previously mentioned, visiting the Fort is not encouraged, although actually gaining entry is not that hard for the determined. Posing as a reputable trader (perhaps one offering budget deals on useful commodities), will likely gain at least an interview, although the Clan require little from outsiders. Actually being adventurers in trouble (such as being visibly chased by Chaotics from the Devil's Playground) will almost certainly convince the Clan to open the gates with speed. Once unexpected visitors are inside, the questioning is friendly, but thorough, and the guards make sure nobody wanders the Fort unescorted.

The Clan provides basic accommodation just inside the gates if visitors need to stay for a while. They also explain politely that their Fort is not a hostel, and their way of life is fragile. Whilst they will not stand by and let people be slaughtered at their gates, all 'emergency visitors' are asked to make a substantial donation to the Clan from any wealth they are carrying, or else asked to agree to perform tasks on behalf of the Clan. Such tasks usually involve tending the Clan's gardens outside the Fort for several days, or more rarely helping them transport food or crafts to the market at the Real City. These entry requirements for casual visitors are a deliberate discouragement for adventurers and outlaws who might otherwise try and use them as a regular stopping point. It is also useful for the Clan to have such go-betweens, which lessen their exposure to other outsiders.

Nobody has yet challenged these conditions, so the Clan's reaction to refusal is unknown. (Presumably none wish to risk the gates remaining closed, should they be again in urgent need of shelter in the future.) Once a person agrees, one of the Priests will bind them into a magical oath.

Visitors to the Fort include reasonably regular deliveries of supplies from the Real City, but only known warriors from that settlement form the escort. Personal visits to the Fort are very rare, as day-trips across the Rubble are still more likely to be motivated by necessity than by whim. It might be possible to find an individual outside of the Indagos family who has personal connections to the Clan, but probably as few as half a dozen people of this type exist.

Inside the Fort

Within this small settlement, upwards of 300 people dwell, but it somehow doesn't seem too crowded, and the residents seem very content. Several will come forward to greet any visitors, seemingly fascinated with them and any tales of life in other parts of the world. Interestingly enough, this curiosity is very playful, and soon it can be noted that the Clan regards such stories as mere entertainment. They evidence no desire to visit these places or interact with the outside world. Anyone who asks about their life here in the Fort will be told that the residents enjoy a richness of spirit that is worth any civilized comforts or goods that might be available elsewhere. The thrill of travelling is nothing compared to the peace of friendship and contemplation available within their home.

The Clan dress in tunics and leggings vaguely reminiscent of Old Pavic design, but modified with such things as unusual sashes and odd-seeming flourishes of fabric. Men and women alike let their hair grow long, but also tend to keep it well groomed. Only the Priesthood wears obvious religious markings, but apart from the Earth Rune these are all obscure and unrecognizable symbols from long ago. The Clan members are in no way arrogant, and express the calm acceptance common to other Oasis peoples, although without the common bland fatalism. It is not totally unheard of for casual friendships to form between individual Clan members and outsiders, although deeper relationships are not encouraged, as those who wish to pursue such relationships must leave the Fort and choose another way of life.

Of the 300 or so Clan members, approximately two thirds are adults, and children and adolescents play and run amidst the buildings. The Fort could muster around 60 competent warriors and 80 more irregulars if required, although such an event has not occurred within recent history. Depending on the weather, many adult Clan members will be found in the open-air, engaged in simple chores, like weaving baskets, sharpening and manufacturing tools, or teaching simple lessons to the children. In the evenings they entertain each other with singing and dancing, accompanied by drums, bells and horns. On their holy days many decorate themselves with flowers and with colored paint and mud as they dance and play. (Few outside the clan have even been permitted to observe these ceremonies however.)

The buildings are sturdy and utilitarian, resembling the standard adobe buildings of Sun County more than Pavic mansions. The chief exceptions are the Chief's House, the Tower, and the Shrine, which are more remarkable stone constructions. A stock of zebras are also at the Fort, penned near the Main Gate, and every day it is safe enough they will be exercised near the Fort and watered at the river. They are either enchanted or extremely well trained, as they need only a few outriders to control them (leading to the old misconception that the Clan herded zebras in the manner of nomads).

On the rare instances that an outsider is invited into the family rooms of one of the residents, they will find a place of comfortable serenity. The Clan make the very most of their limited facilities, keeping their rooms spotlessly tidy and all goods shelved or otherwise stored to make maximum use of space. Decoration consists of hand-woven rugs and wall hangings, homemade sculptures, and other pottery ornaments. Amongst these sculptures a keen observer may spot some that appear to have religious significance; however, their owners will always explain them away as mere good-luck charms, or items of purely personal symbology. Beds and other furniture, where they exist, are of sturdy wicker design, however most families use simple cushions, sleeping mats, and bolsters only. Commonly a low table and a raised work surface are the only items of furniture.

Locations

1) The Chief's House – This building has a columned portico out in front and is a large house in the traditional Pavic style. It is in a magnificent state of preservation, and even the simple furnishings and ornaments it contains would be worth a fortune for their historical value. In front of this building, one on each side of the steps, are two 1m tall statuettes of animals no longer known in Prax.

2) The Tower – This building clears the walls by more than 6m and is the main lookout position for the Fort. Also, on the roof is Mani's bier, a holy object upon which his body is burned after each time he dies. Only Mani and the Priesthood now enter the upper levels.

3) The Work Barn – Although guarded whenever visitors are present, no attempt is made to hide the view of its contents. In here are stored wood, reeds, pots, and tools. During good weather the Clan work outdoors, but during rainy and hot seasons they may be found in here, making pots, weaving mats, and repairing and maintaining the necessities of their existence.

4) Residence Block – The largest of the purely residential buildings, and the only one built almost entirely of stone. It has been repaired and rebuilt many times, and has stood on this spot since before time began. (Only an expert mason or historian might notice the subtle hints indicating its extreme age.)

5) The Shrine – This building is another impressive relic of bygone days. Its lower walls (forming the square base) are vertical, but above this lower story the Shrine slopes backward into a flat-sided pyramid. The doorway is a most impressive feature, being formed from two roughly hewn standing stones and a similar lintel. Ancient and unfamiliar runes can still be made out engraved upon these, although the wind and rain of the centuries has worn them almost to nothing. Details of this shrine's inner sanctum are unknown, as nobody outside the Clan has ever entered, and the Clan will not talk of it.

6) The Community Hall – This building is the place for social gathering, drinking and talking. The Clan has decorated it themselves, and produce their own paintings and other art forms. It is unusual if at least one complex sand-mandala is not being worked on here. Here is where the Clan congregates for simple meetings and possibly for other, more unusual, purposes. A raised stone platform is at one end, behind which a large Earth Rune is inlaid into the wall. Barely visible now within the stone, many other small (and largely unknown) Runes were once painted or chiseled.

7) The Stables – The Fort owns more than 20 zebras. When replacements are needed they are bought from the Real City, but all the Fort zebras maintain excellent health and longevity, so such a purchase is rare.

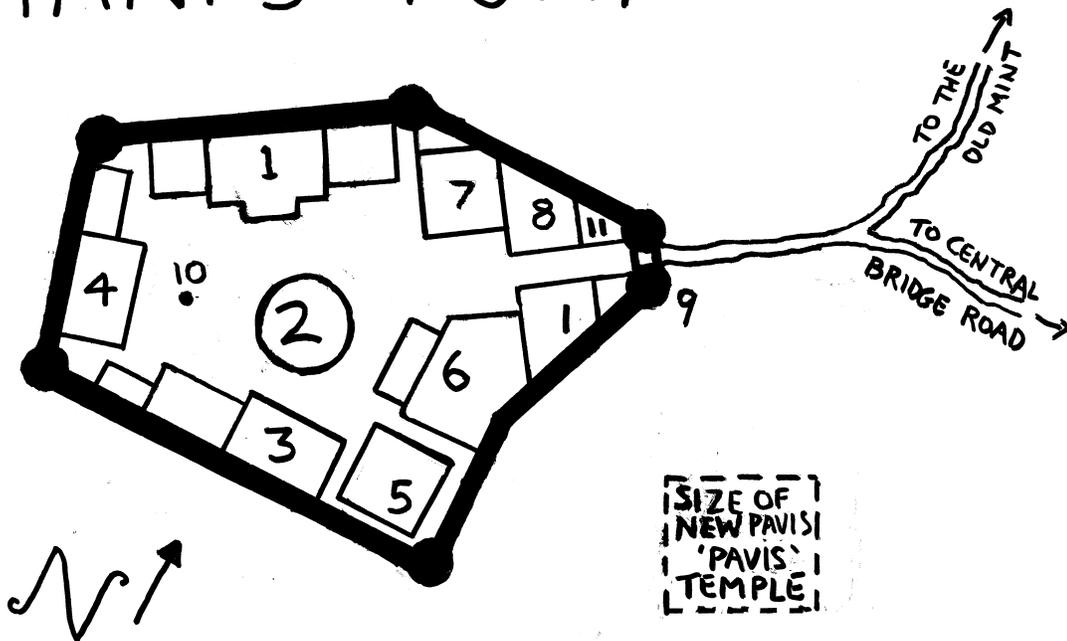
8) Office of the Guard - From here stairs lead up onto the gate towers and the walls, and behind it is the fort's armory. Despite the Clan's relaxed demeanor, several guards will appear, as if from nowhere, if visitors try and sneak into this area (or indeed any other restricted part of the Fort).

9) Gatehouse – As in the Real City, a sturdy double wall, with a room above, connects the two strong towers. Facing the Rubble are large double-gates of huge bronze-bound wooden beams, including the smaller postern gate with a tiny grille. Behind these is an enormous portcullis, creating a small retaining area under the gate's huge arch. Also like the Real City, the Fort may admit unknown visitors into this space, if leaving them outside even for a few minutes is tantamount to a death sentence. In a small room off the Gatehouse is the Fort's shrine to Pavis and Opili.

10) City Well – The wellhead roof is carved into the likeness of two reclining water nymphs, and is actually a Shrine to Zola Fel. If anyone in the Clan donates a magic point to it, it will fill several buckets of water, operating the hoists under its own power. Visitors have occasionally seen and remarked on this, but do not understand it.

11) Guests' Residence – Close by the Main Gate, this building is reserved for visitors and contains only the barest furnishings. Compared, however, to a night in the Rubble, with the company of broo and trolls, it is sheer luxury.

MANI'S FORT



The Clan

The organization of Mani's Clan is simple: running as a co-operative. Individuals have free time to pursue their own hobbies, and these are usually traditional arts and crafts, or maintaining the vegetable gardens around the fort. Some members of the Clan do have special positions, such as Master of Kitchens, Gardens, Zebras or Refuse, but these are mostly casual on a rotational basis. Exceptions include the Priesthood of Mani, and the officers of the Guard. Whilst Ernalda is worshipped here, and certain subcults are recognizable, the customs and rituals are unusual and archaic, and even the magic can be at variance with that accessible by local Heortlings.

Pallinu Vibi

High Priest of the Cult of Mani, Pallinu is also the Chief of the Fort. He is an accomplished diplomat and a powerful magic-user. Pallinu is approaching 60 years of age, and has a long grey beard. He is rarely seen without his tall ceremonial wooden staff, topped with a bronze fitting in the shape of an Earth Rune.

Virtues: Cautious 15, Devoted to Getenak 18w, Frail 13, Friendly with Flintnail Cult 18, Love Mani 18w, Loyal to Mani's Clan 19, Patient 19.

Abilities: Administer Fort 8w2, Lead Worship of Getenak 13w, Leadership 12w2, Speak Mostali 15, Speak Old Pavis 2w, Speak Trade 16.

Magic: Earth Magic 10w3, Green Age Ceremonies 2w2, Growing Magic 18w3.

Artamis

A junior priest of Mani, only recently in his 40s, he speaks little but watches keenly, and is an excellent judge of character. His beard is still mostly golden.

Virtues: Devoted to Getenak 2w, Keen Eyed 15, Quiet 15.

Abilities: Close Combat 13 (shortsword), Distrust Lunar 3w, Judge Person 12w, Lead Worship of Getenak 18, Oasis Lore 14w, Praxian Geography 18, Ride Zebra 16, Rubble Lore 17w, Speak Mostali 12, Speak Old Pavis 3w, Speak Trade 15.

Magic: Earth Magic 15w2, Green Age Ceremonies 12w, Growing Magic 12w2.

Shorna Tovik

Shorna is one of the youngest in the Priesthood, being only 36 years old. She is a strong woman with unusually dark hair, and is the Clan's Priestess of Ernalda (Roitina). Shorna replaced the old Priestess who died only a year ago, and is still somewhat nervous of her new responsibilities.

Virtues: Devoted to Ernalda 14w, Devoted to Getenak 4w, Exotic Looks 14, Find Another Way 19, Love Children 17, Strong-willed 14.

Abilities: Close Combat 16 (Spear and Shield), Distrust Stranger 14, Leadership 1w.

Magic: Earth Queen 5w2, Earth Rituals 7w, Find Another Way 16w.

Mirash

The Clan healer, who is an acolyte of Ernalda (Jera), Mirash likes to help and is very sociable. She is certainly the most talkative of those listed here, and often shows the beginnings of understanding in the ways of foreigners. She becomes very pleased when commended for correctly pronouncing a new word, or completing a social ritual unknown to the rest of the Clan. Mirash is 27 years old.

Virtues: Devoted to Ernalda 4w, Devoted to Getenak 17, Innovative 15, Talkative 5w.

Abilities: Calm Fear 9w, Eager to Learn 12, Ease Patient 17, Heortling Customs 13, Herb Lore 2w, Pavic Customs 18, Speak Old Pavic 15, Speak Trade 16, Treat Disease 4w, Treat Injury 18.

Magic: Heal People 7w, Heal Relationships 18, Make Medicine 14w.

Tambrak

Captain of the Guard, his life has been dedicated to protecting the Clan. He is their acknowledged master of traditional fighting forms, despite being only 35.

Virtues: Brawny 2w, Dedicated to Mani's Clan 4w, Devoted to Getenak 14, Devoted to Opili 18, Scarred 15,

Abilities: Archery 14w2, Battle Tactics 14w (small unit), Close Combat 8w2 (Great Axe, Lance, Sword and Shield, Dagger, Brawling), Comprehend Outsider 17, Leadership 4w2, Ride Zebra 2w, Scan for Danger 16w, Speak Tersely 17, Speak Trade 19, Train Warrior 5w.

Magic: Defend the People 12w, Earth Magic 18.

Officers of the Guard – At present they are four men and two women. When interacting with outsiders they are typically polite and yet brief, saying only what needs to be said, and evidencing an air of seriousness and calmness about any task they set themselves to. One of these officers will normally be leading any group of Clan members encountered outside of the Fort, whether it be hunting, trading, or some other more mysterious mission. On the rare occasions when in-depth communication is required with outsiders (other than residents of the Old City), members of the Guard are clearly more understanding of the ways of foreigners.

The Fort Guard – The Guard alone of the Clan conform to easily recognizable Pavic tradition, sporting the ancient armor of the city. However, unlike at the Real City, these men and women seem almost to be playing at soldiers, evidencing an easy-going lack of discipline, and having no regular patterns of behavior. Also, their weapon of choice is the standard broadsword rather than the Pavic Great Axe. Only the officers of the Guard worship Opili and bear the Pavic Runes, the other warriors sport Earth Runes and more that are unknown. The Guard has less than 20 full-time members. One Sage has speculated that the Guards act as specialists in communicating with outsiders more than they are actual warriors, although they can certainly fight well when required.

Relations with Outsiders

The Lunars – The Clan are not known ever to visit New Pavis, and have expressed quiet displeasure that they should be required to fill in paperwork merely in order to travel around their traditional home. Whilst Sir Indagos clearly favors locals over Lunars when voting on the city council, he is never other than the most cordial in relations with people of any background. Lunars who visit the Fort are always greeted with similar courtesy, however no Clan member will ever address a Lunar without being first spoken to, and the Clan tend to retreat into their homes, emerging once again only when the Lunars have departed.

Sartarite-descended Pavisites – It is clear from the attitude of the Clan that Dorasar's people are foreigners; however, Mani's people do not evidence the same antipathy to them as they do towards Lunars. Occasionally clan members might even question an Orlanthi about their culture and beliefs, but always seem bemused at any responses.

Old City Pavisites – Outsiders tend to lump Mani's Clan and the Old City Pavisites in the same category, and certain points of similarity exist. Educated observers would note that their cultures are actually very different, although relations are definitely friendly, having been forged across centuries of mutual aid in survival.

Dwarves – The Clan give no clear indication of how they regard Dwarves, as the two groups are rarely seen interacting. However, on occasional instances when Clan members visit the Real City one has conversed with a dwarf, and unconfirmed reports are bandied about of dwarves having been seen within Mani's Fort.

Aldryami – Other unconfirmed reports say that members of Mani's Clan sometimes visit the Garden. In fact, the Clan members are welcomed on certain Aldryami Holy Days, and have a special relationship with the followers of Aldrya. No aldryami have been seen at the Fort itself, however.

Trolls – Trolls are not normally allowed access to Mani's Fort, although once an adventurer party containing one successfully argued that a gang of broo would slaughter him if he was left outside, and so he was permitted into the Gatehouse only. At the Real City market, the Clansfolk treat troll traders with cool restraint if forced to communicate, and no troll has ever succeeded in doing business with them.

Nomads – Nomad groups are not known to have ever visited Mani's Fort, although nomads within adventurer bands have certainly been admitted. One such visiting nomad apparently was used to pushing oasis folk around and tried to impose his wishes onto a Clan female. The Captain of the Guard challenged him, and slew him in a fair fight.

The Secrets of Mani's Clan

What Uncle Pallinu told me: A Private View of Life in Mani's Clan

Who are our people?

We are the children of Genert, and it is our duty to endure until Genert comes again. We hope that he comes soon, because now only our clan and some of the Priestesses at the Paps remember him truly.

Who is Mani?

Mani is a hero of the old days, who is so pious that he can remember all his lives. It was Mani who discovered that a piece of Genert's Garden was safely hidden near here, and led his people to its safety. We are all descended from him and his followers, so he is our most honored grandfather.

What is this city around us?

Long ago, but much more recently than when Genert was here, a man named Pavis came from the West, and built a great settlement. He had also learned of Genert and had become one of his children through visiting the past. For a short time many people were here, dedicated followers of Pavis, but enemies fell upon them and the city was reduced to ruin.

Why do we live here on this hill?

Our home is at the site where Getenak hid his garden when Chaos came. Mani found him here and became his friend. We stay here to remain close to Getenak, who is the last son of Genert and who must be preserved.

Who are our friends?

The people of the old city are our friends, although they no longer understand us, and you would be wise to treat them with caution. We helped them during the dark days, and without the Dwarves and ourselves they would have perished. The Dwarves and elves of the old city are also our friends, although our dealings with them now are few.

Who are our enemies?

Chaos is our enemy; it destroyed Genert and his Garden. We must resist it always. The people of the Red Moon are our enemies, because they embrace Chaos. We must tolerate them because they are strong, but soon the winds of the desert will blow them away. Trolls have made themselves our enemies by attacking our friends. Things are not as they once were, but trolls still cannot be trusted, although they are not Chaos. Nomads are our enemies because they attack our allies and us. They do not respect the old ways and want only to take from others.

Tell me more about our Gods!

Getenak, the son of the Earth, is our benefactor. Without him we could not dance our way to the Garden that gives us food. Ernalda is the goddess of the Earth who embraces us with her protection, healing and love. The Circus of Peace still offers the gift of harmony when enemies threaten our home. Some of the warriors here worship Opili, who is a young local spirit who helps defend the city. You will have no need of his services directly. Zola Fel, the river, is our neighbor whom we also respect.

What is my role?

You are to be trained as a Priest, and it is your duty to learn our ceremonies and the stories of Genert's Garden, so that they are never forgotten. You will learn to lead our rituals in time, and may even become the High Priest one day.

What are your duties, Uncle?

Being the High Priest, I watch over all the ceremonies of the Clan, and take care of your spiritual and physical well being. I act as the voice of Mani.

What happens after we die?

Our bodies are taken to the garden and buried, and our spirits reside there in peace until we are reborn here amongst the Clan. This is the way things will be until the Green Age comes again.