

CASTLES & CRUSADES®

RUNE LORE

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A VERY KIND THANK YOU

TO DERRICK "OMOTE" LANDWEHR FOR HIS TIRELESS ASSISTANCE IN WORKING ON THE RUNE LORE
CLASS AND READING THE COUNTLESS RENDITIONS OF MY RAMBLING MECHANICS! ~ STEVE



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INTRODUCTION – USING RUNE LORE



une Lore is the end product of a long line of thought here at Troll Lord Games. Originally conceived in the halcyon days of d20, it was part of a series of books, the first of which we titled *Winter Runes*. Eight follow up books were planned, each highlighting a type of runic magic.

The second one we worked on was *Blood Runes*. We developed the runes to our mode of play, with a focus on the storytelling aspect of any adventure and heavy emphasis on player interaction and interpretation. All spell use and magic had long enjoyed a broad interpretation with the Trolls. This, coupled with the “rules-light” philosophy, led directly to the creation of rune magic. Here we envisioned a type of magic that broke the normal rules of cat and roll, allowing the character to use singular spells (or in this case, runes), to have a wide range of effects. Controlling fire means you can ignite it as easily as you can extinguish it.

The rune magic we designed for the d20 system, and the rune mark itself, we presented as a prestige class. As good a system as d20 is and was, it was an imperfect fit for our concept of the rune magic, for the mechanics of the game severely limited the broader interpretation of the rune’s magic. After *Winter Runes* was released, work on *Blood Runes* was halted as the d20 market shifted and *Castles & Crusades* became our main focus.

The move to *Castles & Crusades* opened up a whole new vista for the rune mark and his magic. The rules-light approach, the simplicity of game play, and the heavy reliance on the adjudicating powers of the Castle Keeper all play perfectly into the concept. Development problems arose early on as it took some time to break free of the d20 mechanics built into the class

in almost all legibly written forms. But once the breakthrough came, the class opened up, and has become, we hope, the perfect addition to the C&C game.

A cautionary note for all those CKs and players embarking upon the rune mark class play. The runes themselves are not given levels. Any rune mark can possess any rune, and, once translated and mastered, use that rune. Some of the runes are very powerful and CKs should limit their distribution until higher levels. This is, however, left entirely up to the CK. *Castles & Crusades* is your game, to tailor as you see fit. The runes themselves may require some adjudication as players attempt to do things with the runes, or to weave the runes together, in such a way that doesn’t work for the campaign or the world. As always, the CK stands in command of the Challenge Level of any action the players attempt. Raising it puts an end to the rune’s effectiveness.

The book is presented in three parts. The rune mark is first, complete with rune magic and how it works, the class itself and 45 runes. A huge swath of the Aihrde setting is next, the region of the Gottland-Ne, with town and area descriptions and an encounter chart. The third part of the book contains about a dozen short adventures. These are only loosely tied to the acquisition of rune magic, allowing for a broader use of the adventures in a variety of settings and times.

Rune Lore captures the essence of the C&C game, requiring imaginative play from both the CK and Players.

2 CASTLES & CRUSADES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RUNE LORE	1	THE HALFLINGS	33
INTRODUCTION – USING RUNE LORE	2	HUMANS	34
BACKERS PAGE	6	COMMERCE	34
RUNIC MAGIC	7	PLACES OF INTEREST	34
WHEN THE ALL FATHER SPOKE	7	AERALUTH WOOD	34
DWARVEN MASTERY	7	ASHLAND	35
THE SORCERER’S RUNES	8	CAPIDISTRIA	35
A MAGI’S QUEST	8	HARBOR SQUARE	36
RUNE MARKS	9	CROWLEY’S RIDGE	36
THE RUNE MARK	10	DANTE’S PASS	36
RUNE MARK	10	DORIANNE’S DELVE	36
ABILITIES	11	THE DRAB SINKS	36
BONUS RUNES	11	DUNHOLLOW WOOD	37
CREATING THE RELIC	12	EASTERN SPUR	37
THE CREATION	14	FAINGASZ RIVER	37
THE RUNEMARK IN AIHRDE	15	FEADOR PLAINS	37
PLAYING THE WHITE ORDER	15	GRANDBRIDGE FORT	38
GUILD TITLES	15	GRAY COAST	38
COMMON SAYINGS & EXPRESSIONS	15	GROSSENBRÜK	38
PLAYING THE PATHS OF UMBRA	16	HALMSROOF	38
RUNE MAGIC	17	HORNS OF UNKLAR	39
RUNE MAGIC DEFINED	17	HRALAND FOOTHILLS	39
USING RUNES	17	HUNDRED FALLS	39
TRANSLATING RUNES	17	INGTON RIVER	39
MASTERING RUNES	17	KALOGREANT CASTLE	39
TYPES OF RUNES	17	KLEBEROCK PASS AND CASTLE NACHT	39
DAILY USAGE	18	LAKE TEIFSICH	41
THE CODICES	18	LIFORINNI	41
OTHER CLASSES	18	LYNTH & THE WHITE TOWER	41
RUNES OF THE INITIATE	19	MAENLUTH PLAINS	43
WINTER RUNES	19	MAIDENSBURG	43
AIHRDIAN RUNES	19	MAMMOTH RIDGE “THE BEORMOT”	43
RUNES OF THE INITIATE	20	MAMMOTH SPRINGS	44
WINTER RUNES	25	MÖNCHKREUZUNG	44
THE WINTER RUNES IN AIHRDE	28	MOST	44
AIHRDIAN RUNES	29	MOUNT BREGA	45
GOTTLAND-NE	31	MOUNTS EOYOTTEN AND SKAELIN AND THE HALMSROOF	45
OF THE LAND WITHOUT GODS	31	MOUNTS ISELDRIM AND GARDRIM	45
TRAVEL	31	NACHT, CASTLE	47
HILLS & MOUNTAINS	32	NAEBAR RIVER	47
LORDS OF THE GOTTLAND	32	NGOLINGA	47
THE TROLLS	32	OSSFORD	47
THE ORCS	32	RACKENBERG FORTRESS	48
HOBGOBLINS	33		

REDLICH	48	GREAT HALL	75
RODZEK'S FALLS	49	DWARVES IN THE SAND	76
SOLNEGANGHAVN, "SUNSET HARBOR"	49	IZARIAN'S PARAMOUR	78
SORGON RIVER AND THE POOLS OF DUNHOLLOW	49	A DIVINE BOAST	78
STONE BAND	50	BACKGROUND	78
TROLL DOWNS	50	A FOLLOWER'S ANSWER	78
TROLL TONGUE RIVER	50	THE FITTING SACRIFICE	78
TWIN RIVERS	50	ORE-TSAR'S ANGER	79
TWIN TOWNS	51	UPON THE NORTHERN SHORE	79
TWR ISLAND	52	SAILING INTO THE CURSED LAND	79
UMBRAGA'S SPIRE	52	TO PATRODL	80
UNKLAR'S IRON	52	PATRODL	80
URIPALS	53	THE ROAD TO THE STRONGHOLD	80
USTASKIAN COAST	53	THE STRONGHOLD OF IZARIAN	81
VALLEY OF STONE	53	THE STRONGHOLD	82
WARDEN PLAINS	53	THE OUTBUILDINGS	82
WEBB ISLE	53	THE COMPOUND	82
WINTER WOOD	53	DUNGEON - LEVEL 1	83
WHITE TOWER	54	DUNGEON - LEVEL 2	85
ENCOUNTERS IN THE GOTTLAND	55	PATRODL	86
INTRODUCTION – THE GOTTLAND-NE	63	REWARDS	86
ADVENTURES IN THE GOTTLAND	64	LEAVING PATRODL	86
HARBORS FOUL	64	HEIGAR'S WAY	89
OPENING GATES	64	HISTORY UNFOLDING	89
UNFORTUNATE SAL	65	QUESTIONS FOR ORN	90
ALL ROADS TO THE HARBOR	65	THE TOWER	90
MERMAID'S ROCK	66	HEIGAR'S WAY	90
MENDLETHRONE'S RARITIES	66	BARREN STONE	91
THE LIBRARY	66	GODSTORM	91
OPPORTUNITIES	67	REIGN OF FIRE	92
LIVING HAS A PRICE	67	THE STONE GIANTS	92
RAGE OF VANDEYA	68	THE CROMLECH	93
WHEN WATER RUNS DRY	68	ESCAPE	93
THE ISLAND	69	OF GODS & IRON	93
THE LANDING	69	GOLDEN THREADS	94
THE FOREST TREK	69	JUNLUTH'S HOUSE	96
THE CASTLE	69	THE HILLS HAVE EYES	96
THE WELL	70	OVER CHASMS DEEP	97
THE THRONE	70	FIRTHNACH	97
THE RAGE OF VANDEYA	70	THE CHASM	98
MEETING THE GHOST OF HOLFGAR	70	ACROSS THE SPAN	98
ADVENTURE HOOK	70	REFUSING THE CHALLENGE	98
HOLFGAR'S HOWE	71	CHASM DEEPS	98
HOLFGAR'S HOWE: ENTRANCE	74	THE LONG STAIR	100

STINGING SAND	100	IGNITH DOGS	134
THE LONG STAIR	101	JOLNOCH	135
THE STAIRS	101	MAMMOTH	135
THE ELEMENTS	101	MORDIUS DRYADS	136
FIRST ENCOUNTER	102	PANDAREEN	137
SECOND ENCOUNTER	102	SABER TOOTH TIGERS	138
THIRD ENCOUNTER	102	STONE GIANTS	138
JAREL'S COL	103	NEW EQUIPMENT	140
THE MERE OF ALENERDE	103	OGL	144
HALMSROOF PASS	104		
GIANT HOME	105		
HALMSROOF	106		
KRAL-NAK-FIL	106		
VALYANA - MORDIUS DRYAD	109		
INTO THE DUNHOLLOW	110		
DIETRICH	111		
DUNHOLLOW	111		
FREYJA, THE MAID OF DUNHOLLOW	112		
OVERLAND	114		
WERNHER ROAD	115		
THE ROAD	115		
WEATHER ON THE WERNHER	116		
FOOD	116		
THE BAERLUN	117		
DEEP LAKE VALLEY	117		
SADDLETOP	118		
BROKEN ROCK	118		
BITTERDROP CANYON	119		
THE CLEFT	120		
THE LAND OF TALL MEN	121		
BEER GIANTS	122		
THE END OF THE ROAD	122		
DOOST PLAINS	123		
SPOTTED	123		
THE FOR-DU	124		
THE HALFLINGS OF BEORMOT RIDGE	124		
OF THE HORNED GODS WINTER	126		
MOUNTAINS HIGH TO BANDS OF STONE	128		
WHERE GIANTS LIE	129		
APPENDIX A – NEW MAGIC ITEMS	130		
APPENDIX B – NEW MONSTERS	133		
ANU BEAST	133		
CARADULZ (LADY OF THE DEEP)	133		
BLETUK	134		

