



# HeroQuest Voices

## *Peoples of Glorantha*

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**A Personal View of Ludoch Life**

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**Inner Knowledge of the Sea Gods**

*Stephen Martin, based on material by Greg Stafford and Sandy Petersen*



*Legion are the peoples of the world, many and varied are their ways.*

*All are connected by the cosmic webs of Arachne Solara*

*Who brings and binds all together, in life as in this book,*

*Who takes and rends apart those who would tear her webs.*

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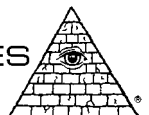
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# A Personal View of Ludoch Life

## What the Storyteller Told Me

### Who are you?

I am Olah Eaolash, daughter of Ahaela Esiash. I am of the Green Damsel family of the Eacheshia Eeasi pod, which two-legs call the Scarlet Crown Coral Clan. I am an *oeluro*, one of those who speaks to the gods and tells their stories to the pod.

### Who are we?

We are the Eelaishviaru, the Guardians of the Sacred Amethyst Sea Anemone. We are the descendants of Diendimos, son of Mirintha the Nymph and Phargon the Founder. We are the children of Mother Ocean.

### What makes us great?

We are the offspring of Triolina. We are the keepers of the Life of the Ocean, part of the never-ending Current of Life. It begins with the smallest ripples of the newborns through the surges and turbulence of adults to the churning depths of death. We do not bind ourselves with needless rules or separate ourselves from the currents of Mother Ocean. We are strong of both mind and body, we know what is right, and that is what makes us the greatest of the kindreds. The secrets of the Sacred Amethyst Sea Anemone make us greater than any other ludoch tribes.

### Where do we live?

This is our realm: we live in the never-ending ebb and flow of Father Ocean. Where the waters flow is our home. We live in Eashailaseaool, which the two-legs call Mournsea.

### How do we live?

We live on the bounty of Triolina, Mother and Giver of Life. We are one with her, one inside of her. She gives us everything we need, and she takes us back to become one again with the One Waters when we die. We follow the surging rhythm of the tides and the swirling cadence of the currents in our search for the bounty of Triolina.

We live in family pods and follow the seasons, as we have always done. We herd fish, gather crabs and shellfish from where the waves lap, track the lobster marches, and harvest kelp fronds. Sometimes young bachelors form their own pods and go exploring or hunt dangerous monsters in the depths. They are both foolish and brave, or are renegades from our peaceful life.

We follow the ways Shoanariis taught us after his father, great Magasta, left the currents. We are all hunters, and kill many different animals for our food. Soon, when you are adult, you will hunt on your own instead of with a guide.

When you were very young you swam with your mother and never left her side. Your brothers and sisters swam nearby until the age of seven, after which they swam with a nursery pod and were cared for by an aunt while their mothers fed. When you reached the right age you joined the mixed swim, which is where you live today, yet like all good children you and your mother keep regular contact.

### What is important in my life?

The Ocean is important like nothing else in your life. We all live to maintain Mother Ocean and all creatures and plants within her protection. She gave you life so you could protect her children.

You were born during the fan-coral spawning, and bear the mark of Hiyoei, the fan-coral. When you are older, you will find that the fan-coral will guide you and allow you to eat its eggs for food.

At the next Great Surging, you will undergo the initiation rites. Once you have done this, the ancestors will know you for an equal, and we will know you are ready to take your place as an adult. You will become part of our waters in the worship of the Great Magasta. When all know your worth, you will court a female from another pod.



### What is the difference between males and females?

The main difference, of course, is physical. You have already had much pleasure in those physical differences with the young females of other pods, so I need not speak further on that matter.

Females are the nurturers, who carry children within the womb and suckle young; they are one with the cycles of Triolina. This gives them a sacred bond with Mother Ocean and her bounty. Males are fine hunters and brave warriors; they protect the females and our waters. They find new secrets in our waters and new places for worshipping Mother Ocean, they command the two-legs to give us Dry Food, and they fight the horrible sea trolls.

### Who rules us?

The Shoal rules us. Heiye Heiyii is the leader of us all. He is guided by the will of great Magasta. We all owe our lives and deaths to Magasta the Churner. He is the moving force of life in the waters and made the great whirlpool in the center of the world to destroy the Stagnation.

Oolanate is the Natea of the great pod of the Choralinthor ludoch. She sends forth her representatives to move amongst the two-legs, who serve her. Her people live a sedentary lifestyle in the peaceful sea. Some even have permanent sleeping-places in the city they call Deeper! We are not part of this great pod, but we respect Oolanate, for she serves Mother Ocean.

### What makes someone great?

Obedience to the words of your mother and father, the words of Heiye Heiyii, and the ways of Triolina makes you great. To fulfill our destiny with Mother Ocean makes us great. We are born to serve her, we swim our lives in her currents, we hunt in her reefs and open waters, and we die to be one with her currents.

### What is evil?

The stagnation of the waters is evil. The Storm Gods of the Far World are evil, for they stole our gods to be their slaves. Two-leg fishermen who don't follow the proper rituals, ships that spew things into our realm that is not dry food, these are evil. You and your friends whisper among yourselves that sharks are evil. They are not, for even these dangerous fish are the children of Mother Ocean.

### What is my lot in life?

You can spend your days right now in games of breaching, somersaulting, flipper slapping, wave surfing, twisting, turning, and swimming upside down. The most trusted young like you help to gather food and herd fish, and your sisters even care for the infants.

You will grow to be a strong ludoch and join one of the many pods to fight and care for the clan and Mother Ocean. You will learn to face the things that can destroy us and grow courage to fight the things that are not-ocean. You will understand the way of Magasta.

### How do we deal with others?

When you see an outsider you should swim away and find us, calling out so that the current ripples and the fish flit with your fears. This way you will contact the Watchers and they will investigate. Even if you do not feel fear you should not hide and observe the outsider, for you are not old enough to make such decisions. Swim quickly to the adults, and they will send an oeluro like me to deal with it correctly.

### Who are our enemies?

The vicious sea trolls are our most dangerous enemy, for they lurk in the kelp forests to ambush unsuspecting gatherers. Two-leg fishermen can be enemies, too, when they steal our fish. Dry folk can be enemies when they send out ships to hunt our dolphin friends, or when their hulls break the delicate corals.

Those who break the laws of the sea and defile the bounty of Triolina or disturb the creatures of Tholaina are our enemies. In our memories one among them, Pharaoh, defiled our realm and rose to claim rule over the people of the Choralinthor. If we had been stronger we would have done more to resist him, but even so we always remained true to our own leaders and to Mother Ocean.

### Who are the kindreds?

All creatures of the seas are children of Mother Ocean, but some are closer to us than others. Although we have a great friendship with the dolphins and porpoises, we are not related to them as the foolish two-legs think. However, though we look different in many ways, we are kin to the ouori and hreekeen, for we are all together one of the great kindreds of the merhendssh, the merfolk. We all descend from the same founder, though he took a different shape and name when he sired each of us.

There are other kindreds, and they also come from Phargon and Mirintha, but they are not like us. The fish-like malasps, ysabbau, and gnydron hunt us for food. You should beware of them, and hide or flee if you see them.

### Who do we worship?

We worship the Ancestors, who gave us life: Mirintha, Phargon, and Diendimos. We worship the Currents, who give us life: great Rozgali, peaceful Choralinthor, Eashailaseaool of the Growing Reef. We worship the Triarchs, who rule the oceans so we might live: Endaralath the Great Manthi and Ermanthver the Great Natea. But our greatest reverence is reserved for Triolina and Magasta, for they are Mother and Father Ocean. They give us all, and we could not live without them and their children: bountiful Tholaina, Fanadoimonora the Sacred Amethyst Sea Anemone, skillful Shoanariis, and dark Wachaza.

### A Prophecy of the Hero Wars

*Once was water, dark and bottomless,  
primal spawn-place and primal sea.*

*Current of Life, flow and birth me!*

*Land-growth irrupted, driving back the waves,  
harsh and jagged scales of lifeless rock tearing  
Mother Ocean's water-womb.*

*Current of Life, flow and lift me!*

*Father Ocean batters and rages, mighty yet impotent,  
Land-growth squats unmoved and unliving.*

*Current of Life, flow and save me!*

*Neither Father nor Mother, born of both yet  
spawned by neither, the New Ocean rolls,  
unstoppable and unforgiving from the six sides,  
and Land-growth is swamped and shattered,  
drowned and gone.*

*Current of Life, flow and take me!*

# Inner Knowledge of the Sea Gods

## The Voice of the Deep

### Where did the world come from?

In the beginning, the whole world was empty, dry, and motionless. No fish swam, no coral grew, and no hard krill drilled the depths. In that place was Zaramaka, the Source of Waters, the Deep from which flows all life. Zaramaka moved, and from within that Great Elder came Sramake, Framanthe, and Daliath. First Ocean moved once more, and the Elder Three met and mingled, as the waters of a river mingle with those of the sea, washing salt inland or silt far out to sea.

### Where did I come from?

Triolina flows from Daliath and Sramake, who flow from Zaramaka. She is the Mother of Life, and from her stem all the creatures of the waters. Two of her children flowed together in the warm eastern waters to make our race: Mirintha, Gentle Mother, and Phargon, Son of Man. From the Mother and Father were born the tritons, terrible and powerful beings of the deep.

All was well in the waters with our ancestors until the coming of Dez. Dez and the other Dry Gods rejected their place in the currents of the world, and some of them attacked the waters that bore them. They kidnapped, seduced, or raped the nixiads, and from those acts of deceit and violence we were born, the merhendssh, children of the waters doomed by the part of us that comes from the Far World.

### Why do we die?

When the world was perfect, everyone was content. As the waters and the world grew ever larger, encompassing all life, the Dry Gods grew jealous and thought that only they should be happy. They murdered Seolinthur, Father of Life, and the waters ceased to expand. This began a period of warfare that ended with the wounding of Bab, the Food Goddess. She was only saved from destruction by Magasta, who sacrificed everything so that the Waters could live.

Since then, the tides of eternity sweep our ranks, and the wisdom of Magasta preserves us. Fearful death is, yet it is the only choice set against the nothingness of stagnation.

### What happens after we die?

There is nothing for us after death. When you are old, you will be called by Mother Ocean, and you will sink into her depths to become part of the Eternal Swell. Dying, your body and spirit will be dissolved by Magasta's Pool before they attain the unknowable Primal Waters. Eventually, your life source will be recycled from that secret place, and you will be born again in the Inner Sea as something new. Thus do you serve the Deep.

### Why are we here?

While you are here, your duty is to make your own current, to shape the flow of your life, to serve your world. Some say you should seek your Third Portion of Being, and seek to become complete, like Magasta and Seolinthur before him. But I say that you need only be yourself, and serve the waters, allowing Magasta to send you along the currents of your life.

### How do we do magic?

The Ocean ebbs and flows with moving currents. Two-legs know only physical flows, while we sip from hidden spiritual currents to work magic. Magasta knows the name of every one of these secret flows, for they end in his pool, and he makes their names

and locations known to us all. You can join them to yourself like a tributary, and thus control their flow. This is the only magic that flows within the currents of life.

### I have heard of other worlds. Can you tell me the truth about the Far World?

The Waters came to feed, so the Still Ocean brought forth Seruvar to feed them. Seruvar fed well from the Waters, and birthed the Titans so they could feed the waters in return. The Titans each created one of the sides of Bab. Then Seolinthur flowed into the space below, and Uoshalma blew into the space above, and the Far World was complete.

The Far World teems with two-legs. They are hostile, invading the Waters in their ships to steal the bounty of the Sea. Their wasteful fishermen kill many more of our fish than they can ever eat. Their priests send dangerous winds against our waters and us and they kill many Sea beings, creating more evil spirits and demons.

The two-legs are weak and foolish, and must pay tribute for their ships to pass unobstructed and their folk to live on the shores of the Waters. They feed us even as they resist us.

### I have heard of other powers. Can you tell me the truth about the Dry Gods?

Earth was good until it failed. Then Sea had to rescue its child. The gods of the Far World are called the Dry Gods, created by Seruvar to provide food for the children of Zaramaka. However, some of the Dry Gods forgot their purpose, disagreed with it, or thought that they could become something different. They fell victim to their emotions, and through their wrong actions destroyed the world. For their failures, the Dry Gods suffered a terrible doom, were condemned to a waterless existence, were trapped and forced to provide us with their gifts. I will tell you now about the greatest of them.

### Chaos

Dez is the Void that appears when Chaos destroys life. The Void evaporates the seas, stagnates the movement of the currents, and devours the souls of the waters. Only Magasta can defeat Chaos, and he shows us the way to victory. Chaos seeps in when Stagnation traps the currents of life and prevents them from moving. The spawn of Dez look like life, but they are empty, soulless, evil. We must not tolerate them in any form, especially when something alive is taken over by Chaos.

### Darkness Gods

Ooshosopesh the Dark Titan was a compassionate force, the source of without-light food. But the ancient powers of the abyssal Deep lurk in each being, looming and glowering within, ever ready to seep out. Ooshosopesh allowed them to burst out unimpeded, and they destroyed her body, leaving her an insubstantial shadow, easily controlled by Magasta.

### Fire Gods

Eshalosash the Hot Titan was a powerful force, source of hot food. But he grew fearful after the death of Seolinthur, and moved mountains to build a wall along the edge of Ishash. Some of his people continue to deny the waters that give them life, and so they cannot create new flows even when they mix together.





## The Glacier

Osserelta the North Titan was a caring force, source of cold food. But he grew frigid after the death of Seolinthur and refused to accept his place in the world. When he stopped sending food it inspired other Food Gods in the north to rebel, and so began the Time of Struggles. Desperate to protect himself, Osserelta froze the waters of Seolinthur, hoping to preserve himself from destruction. A great glacier flowed into the world from the north, and Osserelta froze to death along with everything else.

When Magasta called the waters, the ouori licked the ice, which melted enough to answer the call. A small stream flowed under the Glacier, releasing the waters from their icy prison. Now Osserelta once again sends food into the Seventh World.

## The Moon Goddess

Secret powers move the universe, and the cyclic powers of the Moon were ours alone until revealed by the upstart goddess the two-legs call the Red Moon. Stealing and revealing our ancient lore is not bad enough, for Desashema also controls Chaos. She has taken up part of Ooma, the Earth, wounding her. She seeks to 'liberate' the entire world from being Food, but Nestentos will rise again and heal the wound in the world, making the north whole again.

## Sorcerers

Moroga the West Titan was a generous force, source of salt food. But he became greedy after the death of Seolinthur and refused to accept his place in the world. He claimed knowledge greater than Zaramaka, and made laws to contain and command the waters. He created artificial beings to dig holes in the world. The two-legs who worship Moroga share his ignorance and arrogance. They see magic and matter as separate things, and continue to use Moroga's corrupt secrets to abuse the world.

## Spirits

The world is full of lost, meaningless entities who are not moved by the currents. They do not know their place in the order of the spiritual oceans. Beings called shamans control the broken remnants of the Dry Gods and their victims, which are trapped in the place the two-legs call the Spirit World. Until the ebb of the Deep reaches all turgid recesses, these mindless entities will remain lost, will stay trapped, will cling to false memories of life. They will not willingly return to the cycle of life, for they try to be feeders instead of food. They cannot feed the Deep, but we can feed on them, and so return them to Zaramaka.

## Storm Gods

The raging storms of the Far World bring us much food, but only after fighting us. Monstrous Uoshalma was once a gentle force, a current that moved food from Bab to the Deep, but he became filled with anger, violence, and lust. He pounded seas into submission and imprisoned legions of life within ice. He carried off our gods as slaves. He brought Death to us, and although Magasta took its secrets and used them to save the world, Uoshalma first used it to trouble all watery beings.

Uoshalma thinks he is free, but he is now directed by the waters, moved where Eeshalmera directs him. He rages against her, but his storms do not harm the Deep.

## The Sun God

Eamei was a humble force, source of light and other dry food. But he grew proud after the death of Seolinthur. He tried to raise himself above the Dry Gods to rule them, but he was cast down by the Waters. The light he tried to keep hidden is seen by all, and brings new growth to the Far World. So he feeds the Deep.

## Currents of the Deep

Of the spiritual flows in the Ocean, many are weak, mindless, or peaceful currents that anybody can use. A fearsome few torrents are not, demanding worship from those that seek to drink from them. We know the names and greetings for many such entities, and call on them to serve us when the time requires it, even as we serve them when they call to us in turn.

## Drenamoro

Drenamoro is the Old Man of the Sea, a lusty figure with many children and lovers. He is individuality, the yearning for the deep oceans, the yearning for a connection with other beings. He taught mermen to swim into the Spirit World, to integrate the lost ones so that they can be recycled again, and to protect themselves from hostile spirits.

Drenamoro is mutable, flowing into any form he desires: male or female, fish or man, water or stone, even fire or wind. His best known forms are Phargon the First Triton, ancestor of all mermen; Golod Fish-Father, favored lover of Tholaina; and Easharthlu, who first caused Murthdrya to sprout with life.

## Endaralath and Ermanthver

Endaralath and Ermanthver are our Manthi and Natea. They are the Life of the Seas, and maintain order and justice throughout all of the Togaro Ocean and its tributary seas, including our own Rozgali. Together with Togaro herself, they form the Triarchy of the Eastern Waters.

## Magasta

Magasta is the source of Life and Death, the One Water. His body is the ocean, his spirit the animus of the world, and his soul the current of the cosmos. With Manthi and Natea he forms the Triarchy of All Waters.

Magasta is Father Ocean, so great that mortals who touch him are lost, pulled into the Maelstrom. We worship Magasta through his children, who are closer to us, though still deeper than the Ancestors.

Sshalorgesh is the Terror of the Deep, who led the watery armies that reclaimed the Far World. He leads an army of tides and waves that seek to reclaim the land still.

Ooaliralia is the Deep Diving Messenger, who bears our prayers to the Deep.

Uumaferios is our Shielding Current, who defends the pod from predators, two-legs, and the spawn of Dez.

Eeshalmera is the Great Storm, who moves the wayward winds of the world as if they were currents.

Shoanariis is the Deep Feeder, who taught us how to hunt and gather after Magasta left us.

Wachaza is the Fang of Magasta, who brings death to the seas. He is the dark demon, who hunts down the spawn of Dez. He is the Maelstrom, who recycles the living and dead through the Black Waters of Edzaroun.

## Triolina

Our Great Ancestress, Mother Ocean, Source of Life. All mortal beings that live in the waters can trace their ancestry to her, whether merhendssh, animal, or plant. She mixed her essence with many waters, and each time bore one of the Deep Mothers who is the source of one form of life.

Mirintha is our Mother, for her triton and niia children bore all triolini, including us. Tholaina is the Mother of all sea animals, from plankton to whales, sea eagles to dragonfish, and the profusion of fish. Murthdrya is the Mother of plants, whose children grow from the deepest oceans to the shallow, sunlit seas.