Call for Submissions

AGE OF SAVAGERY is the working title for David Powell's (New Wasteland Fairy Tales, Rising Stars vol 1, Shock Value Green) latest project. It will be released through Deadstar Publishing in Spring 2018.

The project will be a full colour graphic anthology of approximately 80-120 pages. Several artist and writer teams have already expressed interest in supplying stories to be included, and concept work exhibited at March 2017's Showmasters event was extremely well received. This is an opportunity for other creative teams to join David by contributing work to his shared world.

Background:

The Eldar races have long since departed the world of Genodd (Gen-oth). Elves, dwarves and monsters are all just myths now. All that remains of their legacy in this world are the Monuments; colossal and mysterious structures from the lost age of wonder.

Nobody remembers now who built the Monuments, what they were for, or why they were created. Now, some are revered as avatars of sleeping gods, while others are utilised for shelter and security against the elements.

In this world, mankind struggles against itself for petty dominance over nothing but ancient ruins and glory. In terms of themes, the worlds of Willow, Mad Max, or Conan the Barbarian are a good place to start. People persist, as they always have, but most distrust strangers. Action will focus largely on those who are not content just to live but instead want something more – whether it be fame, glory, or wealth.

For most of the denizens of Genodd, people are simply trying to live their lives in peace, congregating in small villages and communities – scratching out their lives, fearing harsh winters as much as roving bandits.

Safety is only guaranteed for the powerful and the strong and even that has its limits. There is a loose idea of civilisation and a few scattered cities exist with walls and occasional trade caravans, but as with all things, being part of it has its price in freedoms and gold. There are few large cities and most settlements either attempt to survive alone or suffer under the dominance of the clans

With the loss of the old races, magic has faded to little more than superstition. There are those who claim it once covered all things, but now the only people who profess to practice magic are either lying or crazy.

There are those who have seen magic; a few bone-weary elders, the oldest of the old, still remember a time when magic shaped the world but what they have witnessed is the last trickling of power… and among their descendants this is just as likely to be considered the ramblings of age as it is the wisdom of ancients.

Artefacts of power, handed down from generation to generation and closely guarded by those that possess them, have also degraded to the level where they are little more than fancy trinkets. Superstitiously held in awe by the communities that have them, most "magical" items are now just relics with stories attached to them. If they appear to have had any real effect in this age, then it has been a fortunate coincidence rather than a genuine magical event.

Technology varies from village to town, so you have some creative freedom in your stories. Some places, people subsist with little more than Stone Age tools whereas in the larger settlements blacksmithery and medieval skills are common.
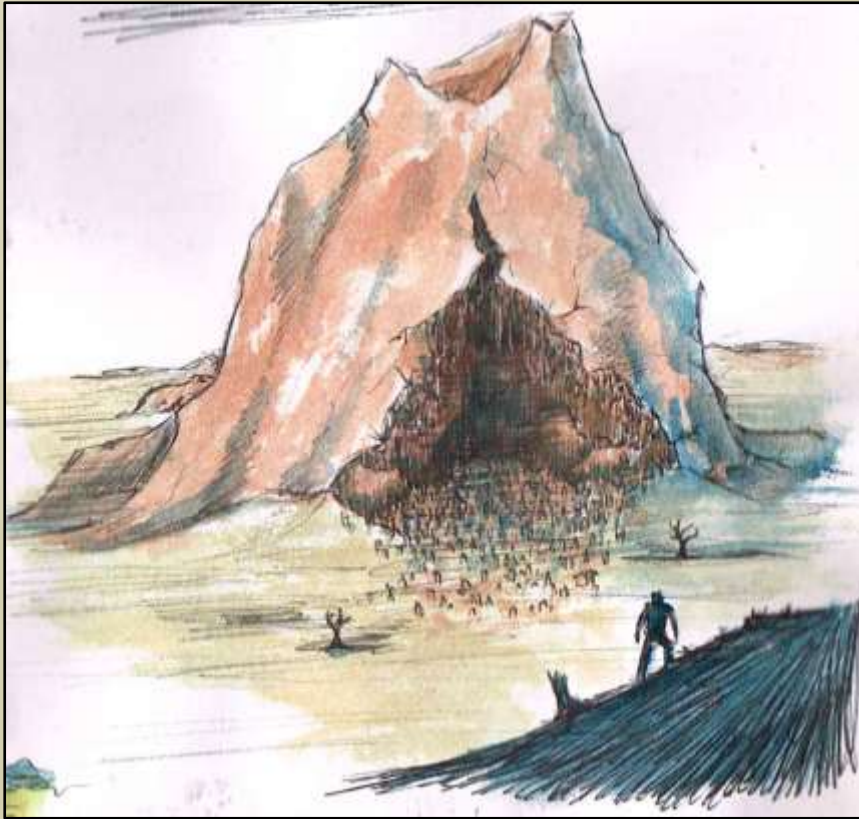
Cities and Towns

As mentioned, there is a form of larger civilization in the world of Genodd. That is to say, there are cities and rulers, but they too are still pretty barbaric. Cities are held by those that can control those that reside there – either through coin or with strength of arm.

There aren't many communities large enough to be considered a city. Densely populated areas are few and far between – and most of those that do exist fall inside the territories of one of the four clans. These aren't fixed groups, and are more akin to stereotypes that several related tribes fall into. You are able to rename them, or create a minor tribe if you need to for your story. There are four predominant clans, Rhino, Snake, Bat and Frog with more detailed descriptions below.

Outside of the cities, the surrounding regions are dotted with small villages and communities that hold no allegiance to any clan, but inevitably get bullied by the nearest for taxes, slaves, food or even just for being within a day's ride.

Where there are cities, its occupants are rarely the original inhabitants. Large settlements are often the repurposed stone ruins of the cities once used by the elder races long ago. Any additions made by their current occupiers are likely to be crude in comparison.
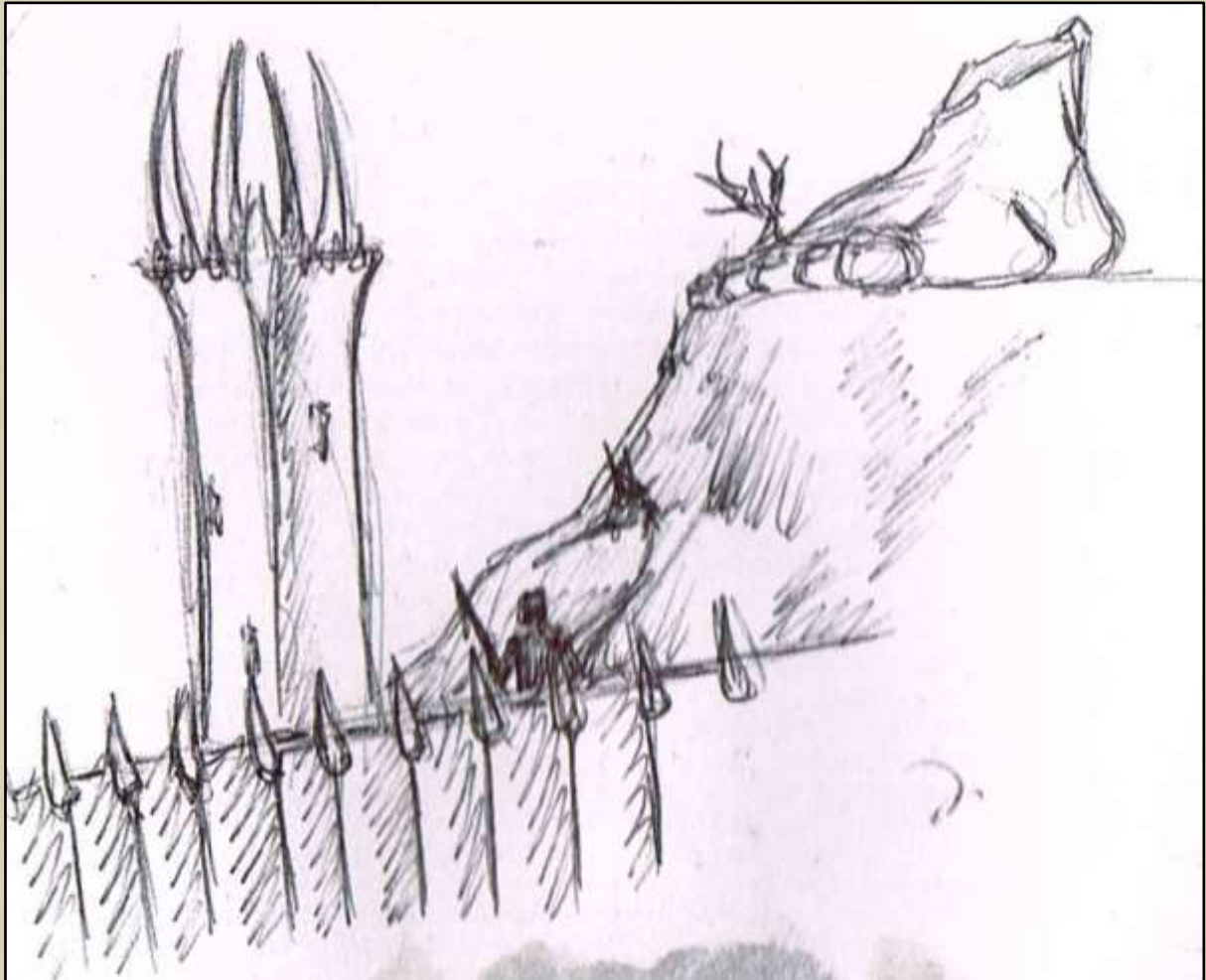
Due to the geographical nature of Genodd and the constant changes to borders due to skirmishes and uprisings, clan territory almost resembles kingdoms within kingdoms. For example, Rhino clans frequently hold territory comprised of open space – vast areas of flat prairie or scrubland that may include the odd swamp or forest defended by Frog or Bat Clan settlements. These isolated clan affiliated locations are just part of the vague and varied nature of the world. Just because a village is built in a forest doesn't make it automatically a Bat Clan settlement. Likewise, a large city found in the heart of Snake territory could be independent of all clans (though it would need to be very well protected to remain so for long).

A Note On The Clans

The Clans are provided as a rough template for narrative purposes. These descriptions will give artists and writers some ideas to work from so that there remains some continuity in design and culture between stories as well as providing narrative hooks like religious friction between clans, beliefs on trespassing, etc. If a clan features heavily in one story then it should have a similar characteristic throughout all the stories. There will be an editing phase during production to address this. If you choose not to include a clan, then just write the characters as independents.

Snake Clan: Similar to ancient Egypt in culture and design, the snake clan are zealots with a belief that they can revive magic in the land through human sacrifice. Unfortunately this is falsehood told by the Clans priestly masters to control the lower members. Slavery and manipulation are big business giving them one of the most far reaching territories.

Snake Clan — Less Barbarian more cult/priestly. Well kept and groomed. Geometric Tattoos

Rhino Clan: These could be considered your stereotypical Barbarian clan. If Conan lived in Genodd he would likely be part of the Rhino Clan. They prefer the direct approach to border disputes and problem solving in general. Violent and quick to anger, but honest and loyal once befriended. Though their territory is large and covers a lot of open ground, the borders are usually fluid and feature multiple forested regions leading to continual fighting against both the Bat Clan and the Snake Clan.

Bat Clan: Slight of build and savage in appearance (more so than most barbarians) the Bat Clan prefer to occupy the forested realms of Genodd. Many ancient ruins lie deep within these areas and all are closely guarded. From an early age, *all* members of the clan are taught the basics of hunting. They are a society that leaves no unnecessary waste. They are mistrusted by outsiders because even the bodies of their dead disappear, giving rise to the rumour and reputation that Bat Clan members practice cannibalism. The rumours are untrue, however, but nothing goes to waste; animals are consumed as usual, but humans are not part of the Bat Clan's diet. Instead, bones are used as weapons or jewellery, skin is tanned for clothing, organs are repurposed as tools (ie, intestines stretched for bowstrings, blood used for pigment etc).
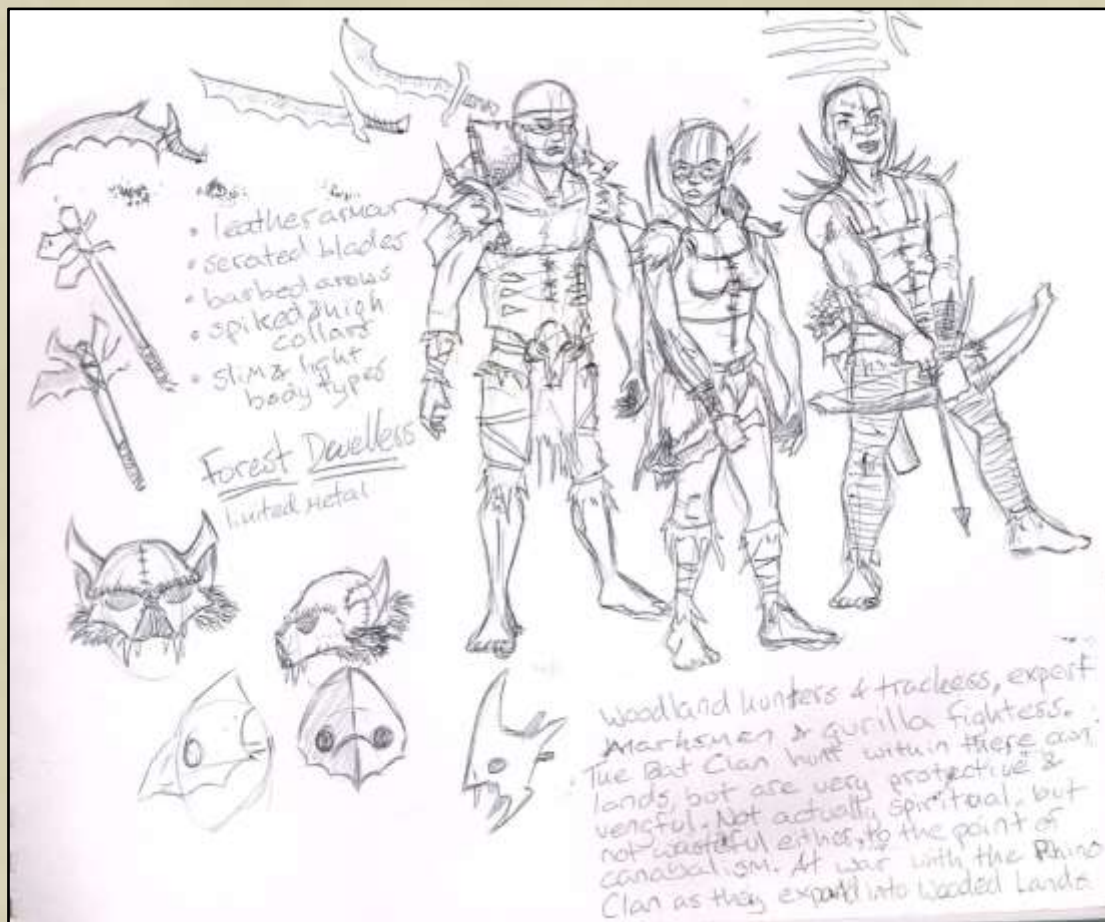
Frog Clan: A mysterious group that frequently dwell in the half sunken ruins within large swamp lands. The Frog Clan seldom travel outside their own territories and are reluctant to trust strangers. Though they do have trade camps outside of their ruined city homes, this is as far as outsiders are allowed to travel. Their cities are sacred and outsiders are forbidden to enter them. A unique quirk to the Frog Clan is that they openly claim to practice necromancy as a form of ancestor worship. They believe that when they die, their corpses should be interred in the swamp where they will rest until ready to return. At times of need, when the elders of the clan seek advice they will perform rituals calling out to their kin for wisdom from beyond the grave, and if they are lucky and ancestor will return to guide them. What actually happens is that they bury their dead in the swamps and through natural disturbances over time the swamp sends a mummified corpse back to the surface (This is an actual thing that happens, go check google). The Frog Clan believe that this is a returned ancestor and put the corpse in the temples of their cities so that others may seek the wisdom of the fore-fathers.

FROG CLAN

Pale skin, painted mouths. softly spoken and sneaky.

What We Want

Prose short stories of around 500-1600 words.
- You can use any of the clans or create your own. Remember: quick, snappy, stories are better than background to the world.

Comic shorts of between 2 and 10 pages. Full colour preferred, please allow space on opening page for title and credits.
- If in doubt for how to add in title/credits, look to publications like 2000AD to see how they integrate their titles into the story.
- Unless there's an exceptional reason for it, keep it to less than 6 panels per page.
- Stories should be complete and self-contained.
- Minimum of 300DPI resolution. We can work with higher.
- Files should be unflattened .tiffs where possible and sent as individual pages, not one combined file. For large uploads we recommend mailbigfile.com
- When lettering, please use standard computer fonts – including those available from Comicraft. Hand-lettered strips mean more work during editing.
- Pages should be prepared at 183mm by 272mm, which includes a 3mm bleed. The live area is 177mm by 266mm. We recommend any panel borders, text and sound fx be within the central 171mm by 260mm unless intentionally designed to be trimmed off.
- There's a page template with technical details available from the Resources section of the Deadstar Publishing website.

Spot illustrations of full page art based off the short stories or inspired by the synopsis.
- These will be used to flesh out the book and pair with prose works.

Submissions of ideas are being accepted immediately via ageofsavagery@deadstarpublishing.co.uk This email address is monitored by David Powell and the Deadstar Publishing team. Deadstar Publishing's contract will be with David Powell directly, with contributors working in hand with David Powell.

Due to the anticipated print deadline, pitches and story scripts will be required by October 27th 2017 to allow artists to begin work. The final deadline for all submissions (finished prose and illustrated work) will be December 22nd 2017. Work received before this will be prioritised for the editing process. Edits will be conducted from August 2017.

All contributors whose work is featured in the final book will be granted a copy of the book on completion and have access to purchase to the book from Deadstar Publishing at a reduced rate for resale purposes.